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His argument then was that the more open the markets, the fewer were the barriers to "take-off". This called for an active development role for the state, and for aid to bridge the "resource gap" and supplement the savings of poor countries. Under the sway of this developmentalist ideology, significant success was achieved in terms of growth and industrialization. This growth could be seen in a number of social indicators. The oil crisis and the rise of neoliberalism in some of the major number of social indicators. The oil crisis and the rise of neoliberalism in some of the major countries to the continent's atypical economic disasters. Jeffrey Sachs’s drift towards geography had blinded him to geography. His "big idea" at a time, which he then runs with. Many have been turned off by the Spartan way with which he asserts himself and by his use of autobiographical material - often pushed to the outer limits of probity - which often becomes self-serving and lapses into name-dropping. His admirers have been impressed by the passion with which he has taken up arms against poverty and by the can - do chutzpah that he sums up as follows: "When something is needed, it can and must become possible" (p. 147). Sachs sees himself as "an economist making calls", travelling around the globe prescribing treatments in much the same way that the clinician does. However, behind all this there is an economic logic. To understand that logic one needs to step back and find out where Jeffrey Sachs has been intellectually in recent years and the ideas that have dominated policy discourses during these years. This will help us understand both his policy recommendations and the causal and normative beliefs informing them.

In the early postwar period, thinking about development was dominated by structuralist, which posited that a number of factors - geography, culture, colonial heritage and underdevelopment - severely constrained the functioning of markets. Left to the market, poor countries would be stuck in a "low equilibrium trap" caused by a series of poverty-related syndromes that reinforce themselves through "circular causation". To get out of this trap, it was necessary to "jump across the institutional chasm" to "take-off". This called for an active developmental role for the state, and for aid to bridge the "resource gap" and supplement the savings of poor countries. Under the sway of this developmentalist ideology, significant success was achieved in terms of growth and industrialization. This growth could be seen in a number of social indicators. The oil crisis and the rise of neoliberalism in some of the major countries to the continent's atypical economic disasters.

These institutions differed radically from not only those behind East Europe and China but also from those of any successful case of development in modern times. Indeed, some of the institutions being pushed as prerequisites for development (independent central banks, effective patent laws, stock markets) never served the functions attributed to them and successfully "late industrializers" assiduously avoided them. No wonder the insistence on these institutions today is still considered tantamount to "pulling the ladder", to quote the title of Ha Joon Chang’s eye-opening book.

1. Sachs and "Shock Treatments"

During the early part of this period of the adversarial politics, Jeffrey Sachs, in the words of the International Herald Tribune, a "fervent evangelist for economic progress through market reforms". He made notable contributions to neoliberal thinking and practices. In an interview with Andrew Warner, he constructed a "Sachs-Warner" index to classify the degree to which economies were "open" to international trade. His argument then was that the more open the economy, the better the economic performance. This view, especially in focus on trade policy, dovetailed neatly with the views of the international financial institutions (IFIs) and his work was cited extensively as the empirical evidence for trade liberalization. Significantly, during this period he belonged to the school that administered "shock treatments". This was premised on getting things done before victims of the policies knew what had hit them and could organize themselves. The treatment would jolt both the economy and the policy in such a way as to make the policies irreversible. The administrators of this prescription paid scant attention to the political and social consequences of the shock treatment. Apparently the treatment worked well in Poland and for a while in Bolivia, but failed horribly in Russia, where millions of lives were lost as a consequence of the reforms. Sachs acknowledged the failure but manages to blame it on Russian kleptocrats. And this is where Jeffrey Sachs is at his worst, as he attempts to burnish his role as economic adviser in places where the shock treatment went terribly wrong. What he seems to have retained from this period is impatience with concerns over institutional capacities and appropriateness, and the political underpinning and consequences of such policies. Poland had taught him that one could "leap across the institutional chasm" to introduce dramatic policy changes.

And it was in this incarnation - as a liberal guru - that Jeffrey Sachs emerged with Andrew Warner, although he again with Andrew Warner, although he included geographical factors such as lack of access to the sea and tropical climate to the list of contributors to Africa’s slow growth, he placed greater emphasis on policies, especially on Africa’s putative lack of openness to international markets, arguing that “Africa’s physical geography, difficult as it is, does not pose an insurmountable challenge to faster growth. Where strong economic reforms have actually been implemented in SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa), the result has been rapid economic growth”. 2. Enter “Good Governance”

By the mid-1980s, more than half of the African countries had structural adjustment programmes administered by the IFIs. At the same time, evidence was mounting that the adoption of Washington Consensus policies was not producing the accelerated development that the Berg Report had promised. Initially there were attempts at denying that African countries had indeed adjusted, but this proved untenable. By the mid-1990s, African and Latin American countries had made dramatic policy shifts: they had reduced inflation and the size of the public sector, liberalized their economies, opened up trade, privatized public enterprise and so on. With some signs of recovery in the early 1990s, the leaders of the international financial institutions went on a road show to proclaim that adjustment was finally working. However, the celebration was turned out to be premature as the “Asian financial crisis” put paid to the signs of recovery. This policy failure led to the question: “How come that even when countries have adopted the recommended policies, economic growth does not resume?” A wide range of responses were advanced. The list included lack of social capital, poor human resources, bad economic policies, ethnic diversity, unfavourable geographical location,” “wrong” religions, “debt overhang”, colonial background and mode of European settlement. These explanations ultimately fell into two camps: one that insisted that “institutions rule” and the other that insisted that “geography rules”.

Almost immediately, the “institutions rule” school gained the upper hand, bolstered by the seminal work on institutions and economic change by Douglas North, the Nobel Laureate. Although in its 1989 report on Africa, the World Bank had argued that “bad governance” was the culprit, this idea did not really catch on until after the mid-1990s, when it was argued that African countries did not provide the conditions propitious enough to attract both local and foreign private investment. In the more fun-
effort to free the continent from the grip of un- fortunate geography through health and agricul- tural technologies specific to their needs.

AIDS is poverty with geography, a consequence of the Washington Consensus was the drastic reduction of investment in infra- structure on the grounds that (a) the private sec- tor would fill the gap and (b) development policies were to precede investment in infrastructure. The insistence by African policy makers on increas- ing investment was dismissed by World Bank economists as "capital fundamentalism". In its 1989 report, the World Bank argued that "lower levels of infrastructure and other factors do not pose significantly greater con- straints on economic growth in Sub-Saharan Af- rica". This policy position led to catastrophic decline in public investments in infrastructure and contributed to the ineffectiveness of the policies themselves. How could peasants in- crease production in response to market liberal- ization when the road network had collapsed?

Jeffrey Sachs vehemently denies he is a geographi- cal determinist and, given his rather eclectic in- telllectual itinerary, he may have a point. He ac- tually insists that support should go to well-governed countries. Sachs’s protests seem to be at a deep instinctive level. Geo- graphical determinism does not mean that soci- eties cannot do much about their situation; it sim- ply means that the central agenda of a society is set by conditions imposed upon it by institu- tionals that if geography has an effect on an long-term growth, its major impact is due to the long- lasting effect on institutions, Sachs’s response has been that there are "institutions don’t rule ge- ography matters".

His protestations notwithstanding, Sachs is firmly rooted in geographical determinism in the case of Africa (although maybe less so for other regions of the world). Thus, he states that "geography has compassed with economies to give Africa a particularly weak hand" (p. 208) and "the problem is that geography and its extreme poverty creates the worst trap in the world" (p. 208). Sachs challenges the view that Africa’s governance is worse than many others. There was no word about the bad policies that have been rammed down the throats of Af- ricans for over 20 years with no success. The Washington folks that brought us deflationary policies and the "low growth trap" left the G8 continuing its usual uncanny ability to del- cred to commit countries’ qualifications for debt relief by swallowing the same old nostrums.

5. Poverty Trap or Policy Trap?

Jeffrey Sachs believes Africa is caught in "the worst poverty trap in the world". More signifi- cantly he believes that "although predatory govern- ment intervention and sound policies are necessary for long-term growth, good governance, and market reforms are not sufficient to guarantee growth if the coun- try is in a poverty trap" (p. 195). Such "traps" produce "cycles" reminiscent of the late liter- ature in development economics: since people or countries are too poor to save, they cannot generate the surplus required for invest- ment, with the result that they have constant- ly to remain poor and unable to save. There are a number of problems with this reasoning. Many countries have generated higher levels of sav- ings at lower levels of income than those of Af- rica today.

Indeed, African countries themselves had much higher levels of domestic saving in the 1970s (Kicking away the ladder).

Unhappily, Sachs argues that "All of the UN Millennium Project work has de- pended utterly on the Earth Institute." That puts paid to the much-touted African initiative and adequately explains what is wrong about the policy regime within which development takes place. While he pays a rather perfunctory hom- age to institutions, he seems to believe that calls for rooting out bad policies and implementing some simple technology - the delivery of drugs, notebooks and school benches. Initially, the macroeconomic policy works in which Sachs laid down were supposed to finance the governance and institutions because they left little room for them. However, now things look different: Jeffrey Sachs could not have come up at a more inappropriate moment. Over the years, the World Bank had painted itself in a corner by forgetting that the very raison d’être of the World Bank was that the market could not fi- nance the lumpy, long-term investments (in ge- ography and its extreme poverty creates the worst trap of all) for Africa. The case for fixing the infrastructure most of which had the characteristic of a "public good" in which social returns ex- ceeded private returns. If markets could in- deed identify the socially necessary projects and finance them, as the World Bank argued in its adjustment programs, then there would be no need for development banks in the de- veloping countries and, a fortiori, of the World Bank itself - "the mother of all develop- ment banks". These arguments have also left it with an increasingly "soft" portfolio of good governance. And for not being steadfast in the pursuit of their originality of his ideas. With respect to Africa’s problems, similar arguments have been made as passionately by Africans. The case for fixing the road network had collapsed because made by Kwaem Nkurumah, the Lagos Plan of Action and now by the New Partnership for Africa’s De- velopment (NEPAD). It was the Africans who pleaded the inefficiency of infrastructure. But as a matter of international agenda. But as it turned out, there was no regional or international financial agency interested in such regional projects. However, continuing to argue that "poverty circles are not necessarily the right ones but those that have the most political resonance in politi- cal circles, it may be that Jeffrey Sachs’s stand- ing is in line with the new view that “growth is good for the poor” and that one need not worry about equity issues. And so we have discussions of health and education issues not as aspects of so- cial policy, but simply as another way to in- crease growth. This is not a consequence of the Washington Consensus but a consequence of the Washington Consensus. There was not a word about the bad policies and the "low growth trap" left the G8 folks that brought us deflationary policies and the "low growth trap" left the G8 continuing its usual uncanny ability to del- cred to commit countries’ qualifications for debt relief by swallowing the same old nostrums.

6. The Missing Africans

Jeffrey Sachs is at his best when debunking the myth of the "good governance" school of thought. This was the popular name given to a group of economists who argued that the policies themselves are pro- ducing fails and that the evidence is "viscous cycles" reminiscent of the ear- lier literature in development economics: since people or countries are too poor to save, they cannot generate the surplus required for invest- ment, with the result that they have constant- ly to remain poor and unable to save. There are a number of problems with this reasoning. Many countries have generated higher levels of sav- ings at lower levels of income than those of Af- rica today.

Inde, African countries themselves had much higher levels of domestic saving in the 1970s (Kicking away the ladder). Unfortunately, Sachs argues that "All of the UN Millennium Project work has de- pended utterly on the Earth Institute." That puts paid to the much-touted African initiative and adequately explains what is wrong about the policy regime within which development takes place. While he pays a rather perfunctory hom- age to institutions, he seems to believe that calls for rooting out bad policies and implementing some simple technology - the delivery of drugs, notebooks and school benches. Initially, the macroeconomic policy works in which Sachs laid down were supposed to finance the governance and institutions because they left little room for them. However, now things look different: Jeffrey Sachs could not have come up at a more inappropriate moment. Over the years, the World Bank had painted itself in a corner by forgetting that the very raison d’être of the World Bank was that the market could not fi- nance the lumpy, long-term investments (in ge- ography and its extreme poverty creates the worst trap of all) for Africa. The case for fixing the infrastructure most of which had the characteristic of a "public good" in which social returns ex- ceeded private returns. If markets could in- deed identify the socially necessary projects and finance them, as the World Bank argued in its adjustment programs, then there would be no need for development banks in the de- veloping countries and, a fortiori, of the World Bank itself - "the mother of all develop- ment banks". These arguments have also left it with an increasingly "soft" portfolio of good governance. And for not being steadfast in the pursuit of their originality of his ideas. With respect to Africa’s problems, similar arguments have been made as passionately by Africans. The case for fixing the road network had collapsed because made by Kwaem Nkurumah, the Lagos Plan of Action and now by the New Partnership for Africa’s De- velopment (NEPAD). It was the Africans who pleaded the inefficiency of infrastructure. But as a matter of international agenda. But as it turned out, there was no regional or international financial agency interested in such regional projects. However, continuing to argue that "poverty circles are not necessarily the right ones but those that have the most political resonance in politi- cal circles, it may be that Jeffrey Sachs’s stand- ing is in line with the new view that “growth is good for the poor” and that one need not worry about equity issues. And so we have discussions of health and education issues not as aspects of so- cial policy, but simply as another way to in- crease growth. This is not a consequence of the Washington Consensus but a consequence of the Washington Consensus. There was not a word about the bad policies and the "low growth trap" left the G8 folks that brought us deflationary policies and the "low growth trap" left the G8 continuing its usual uncanny ability to del- cred to commit countries’ qualifications for debt relief by swallowing the same old nostrums.

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1. Notes

1. The words in inverted commas in the last three sentences were the staple of "development economics" in the 1950s and 1960s.


4. This was the popular name given to a 1981 World Bank report entitled Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action.


Africa in the new millennium series

Negotiating Modernity: Africa’s Ambivalent Experience
Edited by Elísio Salvado Macamo
Published 2005; 256 pages; ISBN: 2-86978-147-4

Africa has been through a particularly ambivalent experience of modernity. Previous research has tended to emphasize its alien nature in Africa and how it has been resisted. This book seeks to show how this tension and the impulse to modernity have contributed to changing African society over the past one hundred years. The contributors look at how Africans negotiated the terms of modernity during the colonial period and are dealing with it in the post-colonial period. They argue that the African experience of modernity is unique and relevant for wider social theory, offering valuable analytical insights. The cases presented cover labour, land rights, religious conversion, internal migration, emigration and the African diaspora.

The Contributors: Elísio Macamo, Julani Niaah, Cassandra R. Veney, Alda Romão Saiato, Francis Njubi Nesbitt, Ines Macamo Raimundo, Samwel Ong’wen Okuro, and Ekuru Aukot

Insiders & Outsiders: Citizenship & Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa
Francis B. Nyamnjoh

Nyamnjoh’s new book about the heightened xenophobia that both exploits and excludes is an incisive commentary on a globalizing world that reaches down into the grassroots of so many societies with consequences for ordinary people’s lives that have received all too little attention. He meticulously documents the fate of immigrants and the new politics of insiders and outsiders in these Southern African societies, at the same time delivering a telling commentary on the global rhetoric of open societies in an era of increasing closures and exclusions.

This work is an original and perceptive study of issues that resonate in countries across Africa and the globe. As globalization becomes a palpable reality in the bodies of people in transit, citizenship, sociality and belonging are subjected to stresses to which few societies have devised a civil response beyond yet more controls. The latter in turn are subverted and nullified, so that, as in Botswana and South Africa, a world is developing where conflict and flux underlie a superficial global progress.

Liberal Democracy and Its Critics in Africa: Political Dysfunction and the Struggle for Social Progress
Edited by Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo
Published 2005; 256 pages; ISBN: 2-86978-143-1

The institutional forms and process of democracy are spreading in Africa as dictatorial regimes have been forced to give way. But democratic form and democratic substance are two different things. Western derived institutional forms are neither necessarily the most appropriate nor the most practical in the current African context, and rooting democratic norms in African political cultures raises socio-cultural questions. This book draws on the experiences of particular African elections and countries to explore the continuing impact of police state apparatuses; the factors influencing voters’ attitudes and behaviour; the impact of incumbency on electoral competition; women’s participation; and the lack of choice in party programmes. The fundamental issue is whether democratic processes as currently practised in Africa are really making any difference.

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Squatters found it difficult to organize – except in one place, Olenguruone, where they dipped into tradition with a ferocious unity. Taking an oath traditionally meant for male elders in times of crisis, they administered it to all: men, women and children. Some went a step further, taking different oaths, each signifying a higher level of commitment. The oath-taking ceremony symbolized spiritual rebirth. Two of the most common were ‘the Forty Group’ and ‘the Forty and Four Group’ – the former word in Kiswahili for ‘significant’. Later to become the Mau Mau Central Organizing Committee, the militants of Muhimu were recruited from three different groups: trade unionists (FRED Kubai, Eluid Mutonyi, Charles Wambaa, John Mungai), ex-servicemen (Waruhin Hote – known as General China), and urban criminal gangs, particularly ‘the Forty Group’ (Mwangi Macharia, Stanley Mathenge).

Beginning with key trade unionists, selected criminals, and Nairobi’s Mau Mau taxi drivers, the Muhimu mounted a membership drive and took over the leadership of KAU (except in Kiambu), going so far as to summon Kenyatta to Nairobi in early 1952 to threaten him with death should he not carry out Mau Mau directives. The colonial government estimated that the first oath had been taken by nearly 90% of the entire Kikuyu population of 1.5 million and that the seventh and final killing oath called the jatoni, had been taken by a good 10% by 1952. Nairobi was a racialized city where police patrolled first European and then Asian quarters, leaving criminal gangs to control African shanties and housing estates. All Mau Mau had to do to control African areas was to penetrate criminal gangs. Further, as ethnic separation broke down in the cramped and race-cramped living quarters of African Nairobi, Kikuyu militants began recruiting members of other ethnic groups.

With the prospect of Mau Mau turning into a multi-ethnic Kenyan insurgency, notes Elkins, “one of the British colonial government’s greatest nightmares was becoming a reality.”

Mau Mau violence became prominent with the murder of Chief Waruruwa Kangu of Kiambu, the Paramount Chief of Central Province, on 9 October 1952. Eleven days later, Governor Baring declared a state of emergency in the colony. Anderson says the militants (Stanley Mathenge, Dedan Kimathi) fled to the forest as the moderates – including Kenyatta – awaited their fate. But more likely it was the political wing, moderate and militant, that was picked up as the military wing fled to the forest.

The British responded with the proclamation of the Emergency on 2 October 1952, first isolating the 20,000 Mau Mau fighters in the forest by cutting off their supply lines, to Nairobi and to the Kikuyu countryside, confronting them with a roughly equal force.

Both operations were inspired by precedents. Operation Avril, which cordoned off the city of Tel Aviv by sector-by-sector purge, was patterned on the “clean-up” of the then Palestinian city of Tel Aviv by the British military before the Second World War. Every Kikuyu who was not a Loyalist was treated as a confirmed

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* * *

“Some of the most aristocratic immigrants ever to populate the British empire,” Kenyan settlers revelled in a life of “centrifugal leisure” – sex, drugs, drink and dance, followed by more of the same – driven by hedonism and the lash of the infamous kiboko, a whip made of rhinoceros hide. A battery of laws underwrote settler privilege at the expense of native lives: peasants were herded into officially-demarcated native reserves; administrative regulations forbade them to grow the lucrative crops (coffee) and forced them to sell their maize (maize) to state marketing boards at a price that protected settlers from native competition; a Hut and Poll tax – the cash equivalent of two months’ labor a year – compelled them to work for cash not for the returns; and the law tracked their movement by requiring that every native carry a pass.

Unlike Elkins who traces the development of African politics into two great tendencies – pro- and anti-colonial – Anderson highlights the moderate middle ground between the conservative Kikuyu Association, which brought together leading Kikuyu chieftain and senior Christian leaders, and Mau Mau militants.

The birth of moderate nationalism occurred around two fissures: land and culture. The Church became an issue when missionaries decided to modernize the Kikuyu way of life. When the Church demanded in October 1929 that all Christians sign a pledge against female circumcision, there were massive defections, leading to the formation of independent churches and schools to defend ‘Kikuyu tradition.’ The movement received powerful backing from newly formed political groups like the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) and then the Kenya African Union (KAU).

Around the same time, the 1932 Colonial Land Commission turned down Kikuyu demands for the return of “lost lands.” Instead, its report called on the Kikuyu to increase the carrying capacity of their land by marshalling compulsory communal (mainly female) labor to build terraces and check soil erosion. Kikuyu opinion was outraged.

If the battle of the peasantry in the reserves for land and for the defense of culture provided the ground for the development of moderate nationalism, it is the great historic battle that squatters waged against settler power for the right to live (land and freedom) that was the springboard of militant nationalism. Squatters came from among landless peasants. By 1940, they numbered 150,000; one in every eight Kikuyu was a “squatter” on a European farm, laboring for a third of the year in return for a plot to cultivate and permission to graze cattle.

The World War further altered the balance of forces on the Highlands by bringing material prosperity to squatters and political power to settler-dominated district councils. But it also thrust 75,000 peasants and squatters into the colonial army. When demobilized, many of them would provide leadership and men for the Mau Mau forest militians. For the moment, though, the initiative lay with settler-dominated Councils, which used their new powers to revive annual squatter contracts to limit their access to land. As evictions began, squatters from over 400 farms attempted to strike but the 1947 strike failed. Over 100,000 squatters were forcibly ‘repatriated’ between 1946 and 1952.
oath-taker. In a month, half (24,100) of those screened (50,000) had been detained – without a single trial having been held. With the introduction of communal detention orders, the number doubled in six months.

Forced villagization too had precedents: Alfred Milner’s herding of Afrikaners into barracks during the Boer War, leaving “tens of thousands of women and children” dead from disease and starvation; and Templer’s more recent resort to barbed-wire villages. A few men were forced into some 800 barbed-wire villages between June 1954 and October 1955.

In contrast to the conventional notion that the counter-insurgency was aimed against Mau Mau militants, Elkins recognizes that the British intended practically the entire Kikuyu population as Mau Mau. But how do you intern an entire people without taking them on? Key to this was the turning insurgent inward, into a battle of Kikuyu militants against Kikuyu loyalists, thereby turning the Mau Mau insurgency into a civil war.

* * *

Though resistance to Mau Mau began with the churches, it is the Governor’s order of 22 November 1952 that led to the reorganization of Kikuyu units as militia named the “Home Guard.” Henceforth, recruitment would be done by chiefs and headmen. That was the first step in the making of the civil war. The second step was taken by the Mau Mau when they targeted the Home Guards and their families.

The turning point came with the night of 26 March, 1953. In an eye-opening chapter, Anderson links the massacre to a history of colonial land appropriation which left its victims to haggle over a compensation which was neither fair nor comprehensive.

J.M. Kariuki, a former compound leader at Lari had been women and children. Anderson refers to General Iotte’s account of a debate in the Mau Mau forest camps in July, 1953, reflecting growth rather than the killing of women and children. Did critics sense that if the pursuit of justice gave way to vengeance, it may drown the struggle in its own blood? Did the expansion in Nairobi bring undesirable elements (crimi- nals) and practices (coerced fund-raising and oats) into Mau Mau?

Even then, how important was terror as a Mau Mau practice? The colonial government and the settler’s claimed it was routine. One of the worst incidents occurred when Joseph Kinyanjui’s name was read out on 15 Sep- tember 1952 for refusing to take the oath, and the community was forced to partici- pate in the decapitation of his body “to show the Mau Mau from Lari had been an “utterly exceptional case.” Mau Mau lost the middle ground, the Brit- ish and the Kikuyu Loyalists – under the watchful and benign eye of the British colo- nial power, first a combination of Kikuyu chiefs and Chris- tians and the Home Guards, and then those who refused to confess were beaten, often unconscious. … The people who refused to confess were al- ways killed in order to instill fear into oth- ers who might think of concealing the truth.” At the 1948 conference, “confess or an end to forced labor … only that they were spared from death, for the time being.” As one reads through Elkins’ extended description of the regime’s use of forced labor, one is struck by its predominantly sexual nature. Male detainees were often sexually abused “through sodomy with foreign objects, ani- mals, and insects, cavity searches, the im- position of a filthy toilet bucket-system, or forced penetrative sex.” A common prac- tice during interrogation was to squeeze tes- ticles. The Christian churches and the Kikuyu clergy in Kenya complained to the Governor that Mau Mau suspects were being castrated, citing the fact that the person who was being tortured laid parts on a table and beaten till the scro- tum burst because he would not speak.” Women and “various foreign objects they were forced to inhale, vaginas, and vagina, were squeezed and mutilated with pliers.” Varia- tions abounded, with sand, pepper, banana leaves, flower bottles (often broken), gun barrels, knives, snakes, vermin, and hot eggs being thrust up men’s rectums and women’s vaginas.

The regime of torture was authored by an amalgam of two forces – the White set- tlers and the Kikuyu Loyalties – under the watchful and benign eye of the British colo- nial establishment, which was preoccupied with arresting growing results so long as they were politically acceptable. To contain that cost, they put a tight lid on information, discredit- ing anonymous accounts as irresponsibly responding with a brutality propor- tionate to any individually authored account: a detainee who managed to smuggle out a signed statement was paraded, his fingers being cut off and then they had to bite a piece of meat, then the mob claimed they were being executed, the Kikuyu as a punishment for those who refused to confess, the Kikuyu were said that when a man takes a dog out hunting a jackal, the dog will run far ahead of sight and start playing with the jackal in a high stile, they were never the same after that. In a similar manner, when the dog catches up with the dog will straightaway begin bark- ing fiercely and chasing the jackal after for a safe distance. This is because it is the man who gives the dog the food which it will not get if it disobeys orders.”

Inevitably, there were those who broke. The most famous of the detainee-collabo- rators was Peter Muigai Kenyatta, Jomo’s own son, and the best known compound leader was J. M. Iotte, a later M.P. in independent Kenya, a great supporter of the settler’s and the British, an expert in handling a tug-of-war. As camp authorities tar- geted waverers with privilege, and shuffled questioners to cut short any relationships with detainees, Anderson focuses on senior Mau Mau commanders in the forest. Waruhi Oite (General China), Dedan Kimathi and Stanley Njoya were the main men. Njoya defended the forest in waves, first Muhimbi activists and ex-squatters, then refugees fleeing persecution. As the numbers increased from 12,000 (in late 1951) to 20,000 (early 1953), the camps moved deeper into the forest. But after Operation Anvil and forced villagization, life in the forest turned into “a grim struggle for survival.” Not only had the baton passed from political to mili- nary to arbitrate disputes, their knowledge of colonial and international law, and their understanding of the political scene in both Kenya and Britain.

If the administration tried to run the camp as a torture chamber and a sweat shop, the detainees tried to turn it into a school in which they studied the classics and law. At the same time, “confession did not mean a united leadership.” Often, sadism mixed with cruelty as when whites used villagers for target prac- tice. Another – nicknamed ‘Shuah’ for the hum- iliating occupants of detention villages: “The Johnnies (whites) would make us run around with toilet buckets on our heads. … The contents would be running down our faces and we would have to wipe it off and eat it, or else we were shot.” Another com- mon practice in the detention villages was that of the confessional baraca (public meet- ing): “Those taken to the front of the crowd were often stripped naked and forced to lead the rest of the village in rounds of anti-Mau Mau songs, until the questioning began, those who refused to confess were beaten, often unconscious. … People who had refused to confess to Mau Mau attended court trials, one covering the entire part of their bodies while the other covered their upper part. Then petrol or paraffin would be poured over the sacks, and those in charge would order them to be lit. The people who refused to confess were al- ways killed in order to instill fear into oth- ers who might think of concealing the truth.” At the 1948 conference, “confess or an end to forced labor … only that they were spared from death, for the time being.” As one reads through Elkins’ extended description of the regime’s use of forced labor, one is struck by its predominantly sexual nature. Male detainees were often sexually abused “through sodomy with foreign objects, ani- mals, and insects, cavity searches, the im- position of a filthy toilet bucket-system, or forced penetrative sex.” A common prac- tice during interrogation was to squeeze tes- ticles. The Christian churches and the Kikuyu clergy in Kenya complained to the Governor that Mau Mau suspects were being castrated, citing the fact that the person who was being tortured laid parts on a table and beaten till the scro- tum burst because he would not speak.” Women and “various foreign objects they were forced to inhale, vaginas, and vagina, were squeezed and mutilated with pliers.” Varia- tions abounded, with sand, pepper, banana leaves, flower bottles (often broken), gun barrels, knives, snakes, vermin, and hot eggs being thrust up men’s rectums and women’s vaginas.

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Wars are fought with words as much as with weapons. If the point of weapons was to vanquish the enemy, the point of words was to rein in waverers and to isolate the enemy. British discourse on the Mau Mau ranged from the patronizing to the dehumanizing to the eliminationist. The patronizing discourse focused on the Mau Mau as a cultural aberration: the Kikuyu had either to convert to Christianity (as in J. C. Crothers, *The Psychology of the Mau Mau*) or to return to genuine tradition (as in Louis Leaky, *Defeating the Mau Mau*).

The dehumanizing discourse was openly racist and painted the Mau Mau as “vermin” that were “cunning” and “bloody-thirsty” like other predatory animals. The *eliminationists* perspective brazenly claimed that “the only good Kike is a dead Kike” or that Mau Mau – in the words of the Colonial Secretary – was “the horned shadow of the Devil himself.”

If the British justified terror as necessary to get their message across to “savages,” the Mau Mau were also prone to mimic the British: Anderson cites the case of the infamous Mau Mau were also prone to mimic the British: Anderson cites the case of the infamous Mau Mau killings with pangas, or machetes, with European notions of normal violence. Anderson comments instructively: “Here e to face. In this way required commitment and determination. The European imagination found it difficult to understand how such attacks could be perpetrated unless the killers were in some way possessed or controlled by dreadul forces they could not defy.” Surely, the “Kikuyu who had taken the oath were no longer in their right minds; they had been transformed and brutalized.” In that case, how could their actions be explained by killer and victim were locked together, face any legitimate grievances, even if the grievances were otherwise acknowledged as real? Is it surprising that when Kenyatta tried to explain the nature of grievances that led to the Mau Mau, Judge Thatcher simply shrugged it away: “Grievances have nothing whatever to do with grievances”.

If the British justified terror as necessary to get their message across to “savages,” the Mau Mau were also prone to mimic the British: Anderson cites the case of the infamous General Tanyangi who was advised by a woman prophet that a European be sacrificed in the manner a Kikuyu elder had been killed, buried live in the ground.” And so, Gray Leakey, a cousin of Louis Leakey, was taken captive and led into the forests of Mount Kenya, high up on the mountain, where “he was buried alive and upside down in deep red soil.” As gory stories of Mau Mau violence made the round, settlers rationalized their own violence as preventive.

A common theme among settlers and colonial officials contrasted ritual details of the oath and the bloody nature of Mau Mau killings with pangas, or machetes, with European notions of normal violence. Anderson comments instructively: “Here e to face. In this way required comitment and determination. The European imagination found it difficult to understand how such attacks could be perpetrated unless the killers were in some way possessed or controlled by dreadul forces they could not defy.” Surely, the “Kikuyu who had taken the oath were no longer in their right minds; they had been transformed and brutalized.” In that case, how could their actions be explained by killer and victim were locked together, face any legitimate grievances, even if the grievances were otherwise acknowledged as real? Is it surprising that when Kenyatta tried to explain the nature of grievances that led to the Mau Mau, Judge Thatcher simply shrugged it away: “Grievances have nothing whatever to do with grievances”.

As Anderson notes, not only African nationalism but white power too was on the march in Africa in the 1950s. The National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, Rhodesia’s settlers amalgamated the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland into a federation in 1951, and Kenya’s settlers hoped for a federation of East Africa. All three projects unraveled, beginning in Kenya. If the great war shifted the locus of power from Lon- don to the settler state in Kenya, the Mau Mau shifted it right back to London. The arrival of General George Erskine a few weeks after Lari signaled the beginning of the demise of settler power. General Erskine was no friend of settlers, writing to his wife: “I hate the guts of them all, they are all middle-class sluts.” One of his first orders asked the security forces to stop “beating up” the inhabitants of this country just because they are the inhabitants.” Politically astute, he recognized that Mau Mau would be contained if Kenya were purged of set- tler power: “in my opinion they want a new set of civil servants and some decent po- lice.” That, in short, was the British agenda for an independent Kenya.

Unlike the French in Algeria, the Brit- ish succeeded in turning the anti-colonial and anti-settler struggle in the White High- lands into a civil war among the Kikuyu. This allowed them to win the middle ground and cap the Emergency with a political set- tlement by Lempo Kenyatta who personi- fied that middle ground. It is worth mull- ing over Elkin’s account of the exchange between Governor Baring and President Kenyatta when the two met at State House, Nairobi, in October 1965:

> “I hate the guts of them all, they are all middle-class sluts.” One of his first orders asked the security forces to stop “beating up” the inhabitants of this country just because they are the inhabitants.” Politically astute, he recognized that Mau Mau would be contained if Kenya were purged of settler power: “in my opinion they want a new set of civil servants and some decent police.” That, in short, was the British agenda for an independent Kenya.

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> “But rather than see this as confirmation that Kenyatta was but a colonial stooge, it is more illuminating to think of independence as a compromise between a decolonizing Britain and moderate nationalists at the expense of White settlers and Mau Mau militants, immediate adversaries at the start of the Mau Mau war.

> It was an outcome achieved at an astro- nomically high cost. Elkins sums up the testimony of survivors: “Many of these women think of the entire Central Province as a kind of mass unmarked grave.” If these books can trigger soul-searching on the crimes of modern Western empires – even if half as serious as the post-war soul- searching on German crimes in Europe – they will mark a major contribution to under- standing the ongoing struggle for land and freedom in the erstwhile colonies.

**INSANIYAT N° 25-26 (Juillet-Décembre 2004)**

**L’Algérie avant et après 1954**

*Approches historiographiques et représentations*

**Présentation**


Mustapha HADDAB, *La violence et l’histoire dans la pensée de Frantz Fanon*


Kamel KATEB, *Les séparations scolaires dans l’Algérie coloniale*

Didier GUIGNARD, *La pensée politique de Mustafa Kemal Atatürk et le Mouvement national algérien*

Nahas M. MAHIEDDINE, *La violence et l’histoire dans la pensée de Frantz Fanon*

René GALLISSOT, *Deux notices du Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier ALGÉRIE : Sid Ahmed Belarbi/Boualem et Mme. Emilie Busquant-Messai*

Daho DJERBAL, *La question démocratique dans le Mouvement national algérien 1945 – 1962*

Saddak BENKADA, *La revendication des libertés publiques dans le discours politique du nationalisme algérien et de l’anticolonialisme français (1919-1954)*


Abdelladjer KHELFI, *El gaouf*, la femme et la guerre de libération (en langue arabe)

Benjamin STORA, *L’histoire de l’Algérie, sources, problèmes, écritures. La violence et l’histoire dans la pensée de Frantz Fanon (1945-1954)*

Rabah LOUINISI, *Les conflits internes à la Révolution algérienne dans le discours historique en langue arabe*

Hassan REMAOUN, *Les historiens algériens issus du Mouvement national*


Position de recherches

Brahim SALHI, *Société et religion en Kabylie. 1850 – 2000*

Hommage à Mahfoud Bennoune *Provisionnel*
Elinor Sisulu has written an epic and moving book about her parents-in-law. It is different in two important respects to the flood of political biographies that have surfaced in South Africa since the demise of apartheid. In the first instance, Elinor Sisulu had unparalleled access to her subjects and documents; it is the biography of two people rather than a single hero or heroine. These differences have profoundly shaped the nature of the biography. Elinor Sisulu was driven to write her book by a boundless admiration for her parents-in-law, and by the urge to document the social history of black South Africans. Her admiration is for this with a capital “A”, Elinor Sisulu and Walter Sisulu lived exemplary lives together and the book does great justice to their monumental contribution to the on-going story of blacks in South Africa. But it does much more than that. It provides insight into the minutia of their political and personal decisions and it highlights the intended and unintended consequences of these. The political and personal are linked in powerful ways in this book largely because Albertina and Walter Sisulu were jointly the custodians of the inestimable role played by Mama Sisulu and Walter Sisulu was banished to Robben Island. We may wonder what it would have been just about impossible to tell the story of Walter without that of Albertina and vice versa. The connection between them, despite the many years of separation, is unbreakable. Yet, the physical separation has only strengthened, distanced the author - it makes the identification of agency relatively easy. Since this biography is written in narrative style, the attribution of agency is all the more important.

The book moves seamlessly between the separate and connected stories of Albertina and Walter Sisulu. While she was part of the formal banking system in the 1950s, Albertina remained as before, in the formality of the TRANSEKI for work on the mines. His transformation did not happen. Walter Sisulu left Engcobo deep in the heart of the Transkei for work on the mines. His transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. He was the exact opposite of the demagogue the ANC had prided itself on and almost identical rural villages in the Transkei with the extended household as the nurturing unit for both. In contrast to the three younger children when she was a young girl, Albertina Sisulu, in stereotypical fashion for her generation, raised her younger siblings. In contrast to the three younger children when she was a young girl, Albertina Sisulu, in stereotypical fashion for her generation, raised her younger siblings. In contrast to the three younger children when she was a young girl, Albertina Sisulu, in stereotypical fashion for her generation, raised her younger siblings. In contrast to the three younger children when she was a young girl, Albertina Sisulu, in stereotypical fashion for her generation, raised her younger siblings. In contrast to the three younger children when she was a young girl, Albertina Sisulu, in stereotypical fashion for her generation, raised her younger siblings. In contrast to the three younger children when she was a young girl, Albertina Sisulu, in stereotypical fashion for her generation, raised her younger siblings. Albertina was special from a much earlier age. One day, in bed, her father entrust Albertina with a task of taking care of Albertina’s younger brother with an uncanny knack for articulating the concerns of a younger generation which generated a prodigious fount of popular advice that became a folk hero in the townships notwithstanding the fact that she was driven to the ANC for her alleged involvement in illicit violence against members of the community. Albertina Sisulu on the other hand, was the exact opposite of the demagogue as she worked quietly, systematically and honorably to dismantle apartheid. At the tender age of sixteen Walter Sisulu left Engcobo deep in the heart of the Transkei for work on the mines. His transformation from an independent rural dweller working as a peasant on the family fields into a disillusioned city dweller was the experience of millions of South African youth. But this transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen. This transformation did not happen.
Albertina Sisulu’s life experiences reflected these broader processes in the country. They were ordinary South Africans coping with life under apartheid and responding through organised agency in the African National Congress.

Walter experienced a typical example of the mistreatment of black workers in his second job on a dairy farm on the outskirts of Johannesburg, after it was decided that he was far too young for underground work in the mines. His job was particularly arduous. He had to start at 2am and regularly worked a 12 hour day. After working on the farm for 8 months he was involved in a quarrel with his boss who whipped him until he bled. He decided to report the matter to the police only to be “…clouted across the face by a policeman. In addition to handing over his verbal and physical abuse, the policeman detained and sent a message to his employer to collect him” (p.58). These were the ordinary, everyday racist experiences of an oppressed people and Walter’s consciousness was shaped by such events. His subsequent jobs included domestic work, cleaning and acting as a waiter. Despite his lack of formal education (he left school in standard four, ie after merely six years of schooling) Govan Mbeki states (p.80) that he was “…able to hold his own among the most formidable intellectuals of the time”. Mandela’s (p.99) remarks are also telling:

more and more I came under the wise tutelage of Walter Sisulu. Walter was strong, reasonable, practical and dedicated. He never lost his head in a crisis; he was often silent when others were shouting. He believed that the African national Congress was the means to effect change in South Africa, the repository of black hopes and aspirations. Sometimes one can judge an organisation by the people who belong to it, and I knew that I would be proud to belong to any organisation of which Walter was a member.

Albertina Sisulu’s work experience as a nurse in Johannesburg was also shaped by the endemic racism of the time. One particular event had a profound impact on her. After a major accident at Park Station, the hospital was flooded with seriously injured people, but there were not enough beds in the black section of the hospital. “Meanwhile, beds in the ‘European’ section of the hospital were empty as only a few of those injured in the accident were white. Senior black medical staff appealed to the hospital authorities to allow black patients into the white section, as an emergency measure. Their appeals fell on deaf ears” (p.87).

It was out of their familiarity with the everyday experiences of ordinary South Africans under apartheid that the Sisulus constructed their political awakening and their deeply-felt commitment to transform the society. Albertina was the only woman present at the inaugural meeting of the Youth League, the body that eventually transformed the ANC into a mass movement. In a speech at their wedding, the Africanist philosopher, Anton Lembede “...warned Albertina that she was marrying a man who was already married to the nation” (p.104).

Elinor Sisulu mentions the various factors involved in Walter’s decision to join the South African Communist Party in 1955, immediately prior to the Congress of the People - his affinity to Marxism, his overweening travel, his respect for communists such as Rusty and Hilda Bernstein, Jack Hodgson, Michael Harmel, JB Marks, Yusuf Dadoo, Moses Kotane and Brian Bunting and his unwavering dedication to the cause of economics as well as political liberation (p.181).

Walter Sisulu was banned in 1955 when he was secretary general of the ANC. Professor ZK Mathews responded very eloquently to the banning (p.180):

It is of course impossible for any Minister to ban anyone from the ANC. As far as the ANC is concerned, these sons of Africa are still members of our organisation with their names written indelibly not on paper, but in the hearts of our people, where they are beyond the reach of government interference.

The book deals with the many debates in the struggle against apartheid, especially around the questions of class and national- ism. Walter Sisulu came into his own as a pragmatic strategist and tactician. The most memorable occasion for his skill in this respect is the fact that he was the chief witness for the defence at the Rivonia Trial and Bram Fischer led his evidence. It is testimony to his stature that the more formally educated members of the accused, even those with legal training, placed their trust in Walter Sisulu. It was the trust of their lives because the spectre of the death sentence hung ominously over the entire trial. The book covers the intricate details of the trial and Walter Sisulu was the undoubted protagonist in this crucial moment in the history of the struggle in South Africa.

While in prison, Walter’s humanity shone through the correspondence with his beloved wife. While his concerns revolved mainly around family and education matters, the depth of feeling between them comes through their letters to each other. These were love letters with a difference. It is obvious that Walter Sisulu had a genuine gift for personality. He felt for others, most notably those nearest and dearest to him. Elinor Sisulu does wonderfully well in capturing this humane side of the great man. But she does so, while also revealing his increasingly important public role.

Albertina Sisulu went on her first overseas trip in 1989. She was ambassador for both the UDF and the ANC, meeting with presidents and prime ministers in USA, France, Sweden and Britain. She was given a special 31 day passport to make this significant trip during the dying days of apartheid when reform and reparation were the twin orders of the day. Walter’s release from prison in 1989 after 26 years was part of the reform, but it happened in a climate of political repression marked by the state-inspired violence in KwaZulu-Natal, continued detentions without trial of political opponents, police and army occupation of towns, deaths in detention, killing of youth activists, lack of freedom of movement or association and so on. When Walter and Albertina embraced each other after his return to their Soweto home, “That embrace marked the end of a long and painful era for the Sisulu family” (p.589). As if to cement their love for each other, they both threw themselves into the very many political crises of the time. The public and the private were united in their partnership.

Elinor Sisulu paid meticulous attention to the detail and accuracy of her story but she committed one error concerning the fate of the PEBCO Three: Sipho Hashe, Champion Gabela and Qaqawuli Godololozi (p.465). Her claim that they disappeared after a UDF meeting and that their bodies were found a few weeks later fly in the face of the evidence that has emerged. The current version of events is that at the height of apartheid repression, the PEBCO Three were abducted from the Port Elizabeth airport by the security police, killed, burnt and then tossed into the Fish River. Their remains were never found.

The titles for the five parts in the book vividly capture the unfolding chronologi- cal story: Beginnings (1912-1935), The Forging: Marriage and Politics (1940-1964), The Scattering: Detention and Exile (1964-1977), Riding Out the Darkness (1978-1989) and A New Dawn (1990-2002). But this is no mere narrative. It is instead both a vital document of the liberation struggle in South Africa and of the special relationship of equality, love and respect between Albertina and Walter Sisulu. I was moved by this book because it is such a poignant reminder of what it took to get rid of apartheid and how, notwithstanding incredible odds (including a 26 year separation), they maintained a loving relationship. All those interested in South African history from the inside should read this book.

AFCRICA REVIEW OF BOOKS
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December 2005

Special Issue on Lusophone Africa
Guest Editors: Teresa Cruz e Silva, Carlos Lopes, and Carlos Cardoso

Foreword
Carlos Lopes

Carlos Cardoso

Identity Series - PROMÉDIA: A Mozambican Treasure
Jeanne Marie Penvenne

Ruy Duarte de Carvalho: anthropology, fiction and the representation
Rita Chaves

The Persistence of Race: Anthropological essays on Brazil
Paula Cristina da Silva Barreto

Os Filhos da Terra do Sol: a formação do Estado-nação em Cabo Verde
Leopoldo Amado

Hentrique Texeira de Sousa’s Place and that of the Novel
José Luis Hopffer Almada

The Political Economy of Budgets in Mozambique
António Alberto da Silva Francisco

João Paulo Borges Coelho, Índicos Indícios I – Setentrião
Fátima Mendonça

Quantas madrugadas tem a noite
Rita Gameiro Alexo Pais

Media in Mozambique
Amélia Neves de Souo

Aumentando o conhecimento sobre a História de Cabo Verde
Carlos Lopes

The Dilution of Africa: An Interpretation of the Identity Saga
Daniel Henrique Costa

11
“This civil war was not caused by a political vision or for religious reasons or for ethnic reasons. This was done for personal profit, for personal gain to control a commodity, and that commodity was diamonds.” (David Crane, Chief Prosecutor, Special Court, PBS interview, 10 January 2003, PBS.org).

“The problem is very simply, there are many sides to the cause of this conflict is diamonds. Fundamentally the cause of this war was to control a commodity and that was diamonds.” (David Crane, Chief Prosecutor, Special Court, PBS: Press Conference, Freetown, 18 March 2003).

**Introduction**

Scholars, NGO activists, and journalists have fed the official mind and popular imagination with a particular kind of explanation of conflict that privileges the economic. Civil war is about resources: rebels are motivated by greed, not grievance. Rebels mine diamonds to buy arms and to pay their fighters. A robust campaign against “blood diamonds” - diamonds coming from conflict areas - is one way of depriving rebels of funds to make war. Devoid of historical context, explanations such as these remain captivating but unhelpful.

I want to suggest that the greed problematizes them, not because it limits our understanding of rebellion as a political project and partly because it fails to explain rebellion in non-resources areas. By reducing everything to greed, by labeling rebellion as a criminal enterprise, the greed problematic jettisons legitimate struggles that are rooted in the desire to right the wrongs of everything from for yester years. My argument is that ethnic struggles, youth agitation for inclusion, the marginalisation of women, and separatists demand for regional autonomy constitute an integral part of the broad struggle for citizenship in post-colonial Africa.

The challenge, in my view, is to understand how the citizenship question poses itself as an infrastructural struggle in the erstwhile colonial territories.

In what follows, I first present a case for the specificity of the Sierra Leone conflict. I then turn to Collier’s argument how it illuminates the Sierra Leone case. I offer an outline for an alternative interpretation centered on grievance and the inauguration of an insurgency discourse anchored on pan-Africanism. I conclude by invoking citizenship as a way of understanding contemporary conflicts in Africa.

**The Specificity of the Sierra Leone Conflict: A Conceptual Statement**

My first point is conceptual: How do we explain the differences between the wars of the 1990s - Rwanda, Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Cote d’Ivoire - and the wars of liberation against settler minority regimes in Southern Africa? How do we explain the differences between the wars of liberation in Eritrea and Sudan and that of the stalemated war in the 1990s? Are there any similarities between what unfolded in Chad in the 1970s - the first casualty to rebel movements was compensatory violence - and what unfolded in Sierra Leone in the 1980s - the first example of a rebel movement capturing state power in post-colonial Africa? How do we make sense of the predominance of forced recruitment, mass-gangsterism, kidnapping, wide-spread looting, rape, excessive drug abuse and unbridled terror in the sans culottes’ wars of the 1960s? How do we make sense of these happenings that were manifestly absent in the wars of liberation against settler-domination in Southern Africa, the Eritrean war of independence, the National Resistance Army (NRA) in Uganda in the 1980s, and Sudan before the “red decade” of the 1990s.

I want to suggest that the differences between these wars have nothing to do with the availability-non-availability of resources or the possibility or feasibility of controlling such a commodity as a criminal enterprise. These differences, in my view, have to do with the context within which they unfolded. By context I refer to the changing fortunes of the African state: a) from the era of prosperity in the immediate post-independence period right to the mid-1970s; b) the period of economic and political crises in the 1980s and 1990s and right up to the present moment.

The first typifies an era of relative prosperity; the latter a period of recession. These differences are fundamental to understand contemporary armed conflicts in Africa. Armed rebellion may appear as a criminal enterprise, and in the case of Sierra Leone did assume some character of criminality. But this has less to do with the insurgency discourse, which Collier dismisses as “simplistic propaganda, and thus with the composition of such movements”.

Let me make a couple of observations on the specificity of the Sierra Leone conflict.

1. Sierra Leone is perhaps the only country in Africa where non-conventional insurgency actors have staked their claim to political leadership by taking up arms.

2. The leadership in such movements usually come from marginalized members of the power bloc-established political class, as was the case with Charles Taylor in Liberia, Assumana Mane in Guinea-Bissau and Alhassan Ouattara in Cote d'Ivoire. This is significant for it helps explain why the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was the way it was, why the movement was silent for the first four years of the war, and why it doggedly held on to its belief that power was only attainable through military means.

3. It is the first example of a marginalized native engaged in appropriating the language of revolution from radical college students to contest political power.

4. Subaltern officers, young men in their 20s, seized power a year after war commenced and proclaimed a revolution.

5. Throughout the war no member of the Sierra Leone military, the Diaspora or Smarter feesrant ever overt or covert support to the movement in furtherance of its political-economic objectives.

6. After six years of war something unexpected happened: 95% of the Sierra Leone military joined the rebellion.

7. The RUF was composed of young men in their 20s and 30s. Sam Bockarie the notorious field commander was twenty-eight when he became a combatant; Issa Sesay who succeeded him was a teen age student. A Leninist approach cannot be applied to the revolutionary project of the college student and the Sierra Leone military. My point here is that the revolutionary project of the college student and the Sierra Leone military is important to both the government and rebels alike. A rebel movement, producing country would obviously concentrate on controlling the source of this important economic asset if it is central to its survival and continued reproduction.

8. Extreme dependence on primary commodity exports, low average income and economic growth are high all over the world where such predatory rebellions are likely to occur. Primary commodity exports, particularly diamonds, are prime candidates because they are the “most looted of all economic activities.” Diamonds are easy to conceal; they are an economic asset coveted by government and rebels alike. A rebel movement producing country would obviously concentrate on controlling the source of this important economic asset if it is central to its survival and continued reproduction. Revenue from diamonds is important to both the government and the rebels: predatory war therefore becomes the control over diamonds. In this case of Sierra Leone it is a “high country. Primary commodity exports, low income and slow growth are a cocktail which makes predatory rebellions more financially viable.”

9. The above is admittedly a crisp summary of Collier’s argument as it relates to Sierra Leone. This approach, in my view, constitutes an exception in writing outside history; it is as if only rational calculations for profit matters. Yet there is much more to human action: interaction than simple calculation (e.g. economic motivation). Human Africans do not live by bread alone!

10. Is it the case that the RUF - leadership and rank and file - knew a priori that rebels had a profitable project to exploit? Surely we need to understand the viability or feasibility of such a project? Did the RUF, as a rebel movement, conceive of resources, uh INITIO, as central to its survival and continued reproduction? These are difficult questions to tackle from the perspective of greed precisely because those who inaugurated or participated in the RUF project were NEVER involved in the insurgency dialogue that preceded armed conflict. The primary agents in that dialogue were college students; the combatants in the RUF project were predominantly marginal youths from urban and rural Sierra Leone - in short, the lumpenproletariat! The disjuncture between insurgency dialogue and predatory rebellion poses troubling questions for any explanation that hinges on greed as the primary cause of armed conflict in Sierra Leone.

Even if we accept, for argument’s sake, that the revolutionary college students were hijacked by the predominantly lumpen combatants, we still have to flesh out and explain the extent to which those who were indubitably hijacked, were used to a tire “revolutionary” formulation, about the economic motive of the rebellion and its feasibility as well as how it was bound to succeed. This will be the terrain that will be a good ground considering the fact that the RUF was unpopular and highly dependent on forced recruitment of all sorts to replenish its fighting force.

The question of timing is also crucial in understanding the economic factor in the Sierra Leone conflict. A criminal enterprise solely crafted for economic gain would have had as its prime target the immediate take-over of the diamondiferous areas. This did not happen. And from 1991 to 1993, the RUF were busy establishing control of cultural districts of Kailahun and Pujehun in the southeast. They were forced to retreat with heavy losses when they attempted to take over the rich diamond region. It would take them another four years before they would retake Kono and hold it for any considerable length of time to allow them to exploit the resources in the area. And this happened only in collaboration with the Sierra Leone military.

My point here is that the economic factor was not salient during the first phase of the war.

But Collier’s main argument is about the economic causes of armed conflict, not about how resources fuelled armed conflict. The latter, to me, is relevant to the Sierra Leone situation particularly during the third phase of the war, that is to say, from 1997-2000, when the RUF became linked to the international criminal syndicate - arms for diamonds - via Monrovia. RUF sources result the perennial need for funds to replenish arms supply, feed combatants, purchase medicines and food. From 1994, the RUF became involved in the international diamond trade via Monrovia. RUF sources revealed the perennial need for funds to replenish arms supply, feed combatants, purchase medicines and food. In December 1996, the RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, wrote to the Libyan Arab Peoples Jamahiriyya repudiating the commitment to arm the RUF for the “half million United States dollars (500,000 USD) which I received through you for the purchase of needed military material in order to be able to conduct my revolution”. He asked for more: “I now need one and half million United States dollars (USD$1,500,000) in order to purchase twice the listed materials for effective and smooth operation”. In another letter written in December 1996, the RUF leader made a request for two million dollars for the purchase of arms and ammunition. Sankoh was writing on behalf of the Abidjan peace accord in November which had given him the “opportunity to transact my business in getting our fighting materials.” At this stage the RUF had informed the Libyan representative that the RUF had started to “organize serious mining operations in precious minerals which I believe will help us to finance the war and the foreign exchange for our mission.”

Fresh arms and ammunition from Eastern European countries, huge diamond export from West Africa, and the presence of mercenaries from South Africa and Eastern Europe all suggest the new networks that the rebels had established with the help of Charles Taylor’s government, in the case of Monrovia, and Blaise Camporese in Burkina Faso. Al-Qaeda would enter the picture and following the RUF to the diamond fields to launder their enormous loot on the eve of 9/11.
These developments unfolded at a time when the rhetoric of liberation had ceased to have any meaning. Even so, the RUF still continued, in collaboration with the renegade Sierra Leone military, to push for political power. In this sense politics can be read as an extension of economics: political power will give them more security (legitimacy?) to continue their predatory regime.

Greed, predatory rebellion and its continued reproduction only became a marked feature of the Sierra Leone conflict in 1996/97. It cannot explain why war broke out in 1991 or why marginal youths were at the center of the drama and its continuation. To understand why war broke out in 1991 we have to go back and look at the grievances.

Bringing Back Grievance

How do we explain the preponderance of marginal and alienated youths as combatants/leaders in the nasty war that ravaged Sierra Leone for a decade? Why did young military officers in their 20s seize political power a year after the war started? What propelled young men, and some women, to organize a political party to contest for power in 2002?

Answers to these questions take us back to what I consider to be the central issue in African conflict: the political question. The history, character and dynamics of armed movements in Africa suggest that they are initially propelled by political considerations. By this I mean the often popular but sometimes not clearly articulated call for inclusiveness, openness, and democracy in the determination of how decisions are made and resources allocated. Below is an outline of how this process unfolded:

Agency:

• the invention of youth as a political identity;
• the convergence between the mainstream and the marginal youth;

• youth culture, political repression and globalization;
• the invention of an imagined commune of youth with shared interests;
• the inauguration of an insurgency discourse.

The Context:

• dwindling revenue from mining and agriculture;
• structural adjustment policies in the 80s: cutbacks on education, social services, and jobs;
• the establishment of a one-party dictatorship;
• the emergence of college students as an informal/de facto opposition;
• the extreme centralization of resources and the creation of an alternative network;
• large-scale political corruption and mismanagement.

Paul Collier et al invoke Marx and Lenin, tongue in cheek, to substantiate their point about the primacy of the economic in explaining armed conflicts. But they should have looked elsewhere to elaborate on the subjective factor à la Lenin and Che Guevara. By this I refer to the willingness and the “revolutionary” commitment of a select group of people to start the “revolution”. This is a critical factor in insurgency. It was college students who inaugurated the insurgency discourse and spearheaded the call to arms in Sierra Leone. They recruited marginal youths, including the future leader of the RUF, for military training in Tajura, Libya, from 1987 to 1989. The issue of resources was never discussed in student circles nor was it the issue of finance or sustenance regarded as a key element in the proposed project. The main emphasis was on commitment and willingness to acquire military training to start a guerrilla war. What propelled college students to assume the role of vanguard à la Lenin has more to do with the objective factor à la Lenin and Che Guevara.

The Ananyela rebellion in the 1950s, the confederation in the Congo in the 1960s, the Nigerian civil war, the Chadian musical chairs in the 1970s were all about citizenship: the right of groups to actively participate in the nation-state project without discrimination. We need to recall that the pogroms directed against the Igbos in Kano City in 1966 were the immediate catalyst for the declaration of the independent state of Biafra. The Igbos were simply told to leave Kano City, where they had all lived their lives, and to return to their “native land”. Their sojourn in Kano in the Sabor Gari quarters was a painful reminder that they were indeed non-indigenous and could be asked to leave at any time. Twenty-some odd years later, Tutsis who had fought with Museveni in the NRM were asked to leave Uganda, where most of them were born or to which they knew as home, to place a called Rwanda that only existed in their imagination. It was a painful reminder of their alien “otherness”. Even though continuous residence had granted them some respite during the period of struggle, the new post-1986 parliament would turn down their request for Ugandan citizenship. It is to the struggle for inclusion, for citizenship broadly defined, that we must turn if we want to understand conflict in contemporary Africa and elsewhere.

Notes

1 A French expression, literally meaning those without pants, loosely referring to the appearance of poor people. It captures the rag-tag, character and bizarre outfit of the armed movements and militias all over the continent.

2 Paul Collier et al have made no attempt to examine the dynamics and composition of any rebel movement.

3 This is probably true of the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda and possibly of the fighters in Western Sudan.

4 Collier and his collaborators in the World Bank-sponsored research project are notorious for repeating the same argument in different publications with absolutely no new information. Neither Collier nor any of his associates have studied or tried to understand any rebel movement anywhere in the world.


6 Collier’s “Economic causes of civil conflict and their implications for policy,” we learn that “the rebel leader was offered and accepted the vice-presidency of the country….He had one further demand, which once conceded, produced an immediate settlement. His demand was to be the Minister of Mining.” Sankoh was never offered the vice-presidency or the ministry of mines. He was made Chairman of the Mineral Resources Commission with the protocolized status of Vice-President!

7 Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SiL), From Cpl. Foday S. Sankoh, Leader, RUF/SiL, to Brother Mohamed Talibi, Libyan Arab Peoples Jamahiriya, Accra, Ghana, dated 26 June 1996.

8 Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, From Cpl. Foday S. Sankoh, Leader, RUF/SiL, Abidjan, La Cote d’Ivoire to Brother Mohamed Talibi, Peoples Bureau of Libyan Arab Peoples Jamahiriya, Accra, Ghana, 4 December, 1996.
In order to understand the various ramifications of the Ogoni crisis, it is necessary to track how the combination of the oil boom and the now-lifted ban has unleashed the peculiar brew that has transformed in ecological terms not only Ogoniland but the Niger Delta as a whole. It is the mix of local environmental protest against exploitation and governmental corruption that created the volatile situation that affects the entire region. The expansion of capital, to a large extent, must be blamed for the various forms of political pressure put on the Ogoni and the Niger Delta. We are often reminded that “The Niger Delta has substantial oil and gas reserves. Oil mined in the area accounts for 95 percent of Nigeria’s export earnings and about one-fourth of Gross Domestic Product” (p. 18). It is necessary to provide various interpretations for political terror in relation to the political violence that is waged in the Niger Delta. In order to do so, I will address Ike Okonta and Oronto-Douglas’s study of the ecological crisis in the Niger Delta and suggest ways in which it can be construed theoretically. I shall also address broader phenomenologies of political violence which their study does not yet completely foreground even though it provides excellent descriptions of gross governmental corruption and the duplicity of multinational capital.

In this instance, there are two main ways to understand why there has not been a political violence that one has in mind. The first will be to analyse the political violence caused by multinational capital and the second, the violence engendered by the colonial state. In this regard, Shell is the biggest oil corporation operating in the Niger Delta. Before the discovery of oil, we will recall that the region was part of the British-owned Enugu colonial state. As the oil-based economy grew so did governmental corruption and the duplicity of multinational capital.

As the oil-based economy grew so did governmental corruption. As Okonta and Oronto-Douglas point out, “everybody wanted a piece of the action, not least British interest in the vast oil space, which concluded a controversial $22 million ($35 million) kickback deal with Nigerian government officials in order to secure a contract for the supply of the billion dollar oil warships that fought the Jaguar ground-attack fighters worth $300 million ($480 million). It was in fact the Jaguar deal that finally pushed junior military officers to demand to end the Second Republic and subsequently brought General Muhammadu Buhari to power after a military coup in December 1983” (p. 30).

The violence that began in the Niger Delta at the dawn of colonialism worsened in the 1990s. An emerging environmental movement was discovered. As such “oil is the stuff of contemporary Nigerian politics, and the Niger Delta is the field on which the vicious battle to plunder the Delta’s oil was waged” (p. 44). The civil war that raged between the breakaway Eastern Region and the rest of the country, from 1967 to 1970 was not so much a war of country versus country as it was a war of unity and integrity of the country [...] as a desperate gamble by the federal government to win back the oil fields of the Niger Delta from Biafra” (p. 24). This argument was also made by Ken Saro-Wiwa, the famous Nigerian author and environmentalist who was hanged alongside eight other Ogoni indigenes by the Abacha military junta. After the defeat of Biafra by the federal forces, a process of internal colonization commenced which has not been reversed. This particular form of political violence was part of the strategy to maintain the “ruthless capitalist structure of the economy” of Nigeria. Accordingly, the concept of the rentier state has been applied to the country.

However, OMPADEC as an agency to improve the conditions in the oil producing areas was a useful feel good under both the Babangida and Abacha regimes. From 1989 to 1994 after it commenced operations, OMPADEC had committed itself to projects worth $500 million. Interestingly, the bulk of projects committed for projects were for projects that went to contractors whose addresses could not be traced. When Eric Opia, head of the panel set up by the Abacha junta to probe Horsfall, was appointed Sole Administrator in his place, he proceeded to loot OMPADEC in an even more brazen fashion. By September 1998, when he was kicked out for “gross financial misappropriation,” Opia had embezzled some $208 million set aside for the development of the impoverished communities of the Niger Delta (p. 23). Perhaps the failure of the agency to be sustained since it was not properly equipped to carry out its functions. A World Bank team that studied the workings of the agency in 1995 discovered that “(1) there was no emphasis on environmentally sustainable development; (2) the commission did not have the requisite personnel to aid it to meet its ecological mandate; (3) there was an absence of long-term planning; (4) there was little or no project assessment, and where projects were initiated, maintenance requirements were not built into them; and (5) there was no integrated approach to development planning, which should have involved the local communities and other government agencies in the area” (p. 23).

The problem of corruption was not just limited to OMPADEC. In fact, it had assumed national proportions and has not really subdued since then. Babangida started the practice of billion dollar embezzlements. The Pius Okiro panel that looked into the misuse of funds that accrued to the national treasury as a result of the Gulf Oil crisis in 1990, discovered that “between September 1988 and June 1994, $12.2 billion of the $12.4 billion [in the dedicated accounts] was liquidated in five years. They were sure what could neither be adjudged genuine high priority nor truly regenerative investment; neither the President nor the Central Bank Gov- ernment wanted to anyone for the exercise primary budgetary expenditures...” (pp. 36-37). There is certainly a lot of truth in this assessment. S a n o Abacha was no better. In fact, in some ways he was worse. For example, at the time of his deposition in June 1998, Nigeria had not eight thousand prisoners in its prisons. Also, in less than five years, Abacha and his henchmen had looted $10 billion from the national treasury. Generals Basamali Abubakar, who was the man over from Abacha and who handled over to the democratic dispensation of Olusegun Obasanjo, is also heavily taxed by the post Abacha corruption. For example, it is alleged that “Abubakar awarded to himself, the disgraced former Head of State Ibrahim Babangida, and a handful of senior generals and business cronies the Olusegun Obasanjo - cherished Obashugoro - eleven oil exploration blocks and eight oil-lifting contracts worth billions of dollars. Then the generals turned their atten- tion to the country’s foreign reserves. In the short space of three months - between the end of December 1998 and the end of March 1999 $2.7 billion was ‘vanished from the national coffers’” (p. 40).

So both the governments that set up organisations to address the problems of oil-producing communities themselves were riddled with corruption. Even the Petroleum (Special) Task Force (PTF) that was established in 1995 with the involvement of the Ogoni in the head of Abacha, a former Head of State, at its helm has been ‘accused of nepotism and financial recklessness’ (p. 38). Successive governments of Nigeria have continued to pay lip service to its citizienry as a whole, let alone the oil-producing regions. In pursuing their narrow interests they have created criminal conditions and terrorised the communities. In the wake of the failures of OMPADEC and the PTF, the post-Abacha democratic dispensation set up the Niger Delta Development Commission to address the needs of the oil-producing communities just like its predecessors had done. It remains to be seen how successful this organisation would become. Indeed, it was set up to provide job opportunities and strike so it is likely to be only more marginally successful that its predecessors.

Shell, the multinational oil company, does not have the same responsibility to the Niger Delta and within human rights circles. For instance, it has been revealed that Shell collaborated with the apartheid regime in South Africa. Today the company owns 50-percent stake in Abuakpor asphalt manufacturing firm, and another 50-percent holding in the controversial Rietpruit open-cut mine in the Transvaal. Shell also continues to pay taxes to the South African government and to the people of the country” (p. 48). It has also been pointed out that Shell’s hands in the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa are not all together clean.

It is the measure of how powerful Shell has become in Nigeria and the extent to which its business interests have merged with, or are used as cover for, some of the most brutal and corrupt regimes in the world that Dr. Oweis Wiwa, brother of the murdered activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, when he met with the former managing director, Brian Anderson, in his home in Lagos in May 1995, and that Anthony DeMello and the author of this book, Ken Saro-Wiwa’s release from detention but would only do so if MOSOP [Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People] called off its international campaign against his company (p. 48).

There are also policemen specially assigned to provide security for the company’s operation in Nigeria. Their duties include providing administrative assistance, intelligence and surveillance operations and supervision of the company’s properties. In the 1990s, the company put armed personnel was evident in September 1993 when “over a thousand Ogoni were killed in the villages of Eken, Gwara, and Nembe” (p. 48) and in the case that DeMello and Gabor Sheehan narrated in “The Voice of the Earth” (p. 135). In fact, it is claimed that Shell officials met with senior military men and security operatives over the years to prevent any significant uprisings.”

The amount of damage the company’s operations does to Nigeria is quite enormous. The Niger Delta used to be a region blessed with wildlife that included the world’s most diverse freshwater fish species than any other coastal system in West Africa” (p. 63). Furthermore, “the World Bank has drawn attention to its importance and home to a great variety of threatened coastal and estuarine fauna and...
flora, and to the need for preservation of the biodiversity of the area because of its rich biological resources” (p. 63). However, it is unlikely that the biodiversity of the region would be preserved due to fact that the company is “one of the biggest contributors to global warming” (p. 67). Indeed some of the destruction is simply not sustainable, for the company has been dissolved and dispersed hydrocarbons, sludge, and fighting agents (p. 87).

The above description gives a picture of what life is like in the rural areas. In major cities such as Port Harcourt, the politics of oil production has also affected the manner and quality of life as “the poor majority are banished to the sprawling waterfront slums and the other ghettos where there is no electricity, water supply, or sanitation facilities. Here also, refuse collection and dumping is inefficient and badly managed, and waste dumps have taken over whole streets, vying with human beings for qualities of life” (p. 192). My thought was that the poor majority are banished to the sprawling waterfront slums and the other ghettos where there is no electricity, water supply, or sanitation facilities. Here also, refuse collection and dumping is inefficient and badly managed, and waste dumps have taken over whole streets, vying with human beings for ecological quality. The destruction has been so total that it has injured, but also contribute to the destruction of flora and fauna. Creeks and swamps are not left out of the relentless assault.

In the course of separating the oil from water, Shell officials use chemicals to induce settlement in the tanks. The end product of this separation process is the sludge which becomes the prime agents with firefighting chemicals like Halon, already in the tank, to form a potent mixture. This hazardous substance is then discharged into the swamps and rivers. The Benny River estuary, the swamps around Forcados, and the Warri River near Ughelli, where Shell discharges its production water, have been most effective in destroying human beings and the environment and also how it erects elaborate mechanisms to hide the extent and gravity of its violence. It not only destroys human lives and sensuality pleasures. The uniqueness of the drama as a performed literary art has a profound impact on structure and meaning: CHAIRM AN: I abused my flesh in every way as I thought myself queen of the world. I smoked cannabis, drowned beer, took strong drinks. Visited medicine men and adorned myself with charms and amulets; I bought the latest dresses in fashion and chased after men to make money. As the most famous girl in town, I drove in the latest cars. Mercedes, BMW, Pajero, Hyundai, you name them. I frequented the best chicken parlours and sampled the thickest wallets in hotels of exceeding comfort. Nothing ever pricked my conscience that what I did was wrong. For I was always in time to confess my sins on Saturday in preparation for Sunday mass, where I was a permanent and privileged communicator. For I knew the priests with some of whom I smiled deep. CHORUS: The Devil at work. What a devi- ous creature.

CHAIR: Then, most suddenly, most unexpectably, I began to Reap what I sowed. My beauty began to wane. I had no more bleaching creams without knowing of their ugly and harmful side effects. I had hopped into bed with Tom, Dick and Harry, paying scant attention to the ills of lust. Fear took hold of me. But that was just the beginning. I failed my final exams and my par- ents died of grief. My sugar dwindled and fled when my beauty retired. For a year or two I was DRAYED by pain, humbled by hunger and mastered by fear. But then came a glimmer of hope from an angle I least expected.

CHORUS: Alleluia, Praise the Lord.

CHARITY: Jesus Christ offered me his bosom and tendered me the key to his heavenly mansion. I seized it with vig- our and joy; for I thought I was lost. But I had been found. May the Lord be praised (The Convert, 12, 13)

The Convert has its internal laws and its own framework, which gives it shape, strength and meaning. There is a deep, engag- ing humanism that pervades Nyamnjoh’s play but it is an emblematic humanism; to speak analogically, of the Aeschylean colouration. Perspective in the drama is derived from the events, the conflicts and the characters involved in them, all of which have been conveyed by dialogues and non-verbal ac- tions of the dramatic personae. The play’s dramatic technique is satiric, tense confrontation, and heightened ritualistic comments challenge not only audiences but production teams as well. In more technical terms, Nyamnjoh has paid attention to plot, character and theme. His use of chic forms, stage objects, nightmare visions, mimes and gestures in the theatre to give a picture of his social vision has been most effective.

The theatre does not pretend to be a fac- tual correspondence to human events and norms. Within the cosmology of The Con- vert itself, we are primarily and unremitt- ingly concerned with the truth of coherence, with how the parts cohere into a total, mean- ingful pattern. That is the truest epiphany of the theatre as a LIE.

Notes
Cet essai n’a rien d’une élaboration philosophe. Même si la question du titre fait songer à un Kant du "Wie ist der Logik der Moderne?" Qu’est-ce la littérature ? ou encore à un Foucault de "Qu’est-ce que les lumières?". Il a moins la prétention d’être un exercice théorique. Encore que les discussions sur la postcolonialité ne le sont guère que très rarement. Plutôt, ce texte est la contribution d’un américainiste, observateur de surcroît de diverses espaces contemporains dans un univers de vingt et un écrivains africains de l’après Deuxième Guerre mondiale ; contribution à un débat initié il y a quelques temps déjà, par A. Wabéri dans une revue littéraire djiboutien notée à propos de ce qu’il croit être la dernière "sister sur l’Afrique Review of Books / Revue africaine des Livres.

À défaut d’avoir la science infuse, nous prétendrons définir un phénomène à travers des essais de relever quelques traits communs à une vingtaine d’écrivains africains vivants pour la plupart en France. Est-ce suffisant pour prétendre définir un phénomène générationnel ? Il est difficile d’établir un rapport entre deux générations, mais nous inclinons à penser qu’il y a là quelque chose de non-accidentel, et qui nous conduit à l’ouï du critique. Pour le reste, le débat ne fait que commencer (Waberi 1998:11).


À défaut de pouvoir établir un rapport essentiel postcolonial, qui sont des termes déterminés, réfléchis et censurés par le critique, nous nous contenterons de relever les essais de ces auteurs — ceux qu’il nomme les "enfants de la postcolonie :

C’est toujours une gageure que de prétendre définir un phénomène générationnel et une époque littéraire. Il est difficile de le prétendre, de vouloir élaborer une méthode conceptuelle la contribution de Waberi, que d’ailleurs opère sur un mode suggestif. Pour un homme de la littérature, c’est qu’un mythe, est qu’il faut s’efforcer de relever quelques traits communs à une vingtaine d’écrivains africains vivants pour la plupart en France. Est-ce suffisant pour prétendre définir un phénomène générationnel ? Il est difficile d’établir un rapport entre deux générations, mais nous inclinons à penser qu’il y a là quelque chose de non-accidentel, et qui nous conduit à l’ouï du critique. Pour le reste, le débat ne fait que commencer (Waberi 1998:11).

Le moins qu’on puisse dire, c’est que la postcolonialité est un espace non-cristallisé, un lieu où les pratiques sociales/sociales et non-sociales ne sont pas exclusivement contrôlées par des États-nations fissent-ils autoritaires. Métaphoriquement, elle évoque ces univers aux contours fluides (scapes) dont parle A. Mbemé (1988) : « On ne sort pas indemne d’un siècle d’africanisme, même traversé de fécondes remises en causes successives. »

C’est par ces mots que La Grande encyclopédie introduit son article sur la colonisation. Malgré son relent ethnocentrique, cette note linéaire a le mérite d’insister sur le caractère multiséculaire du phénomène colonial. Mais le terme de colonisation a une histoire plutôt récente. Car jusqu’au XIXe siècle, il n’y avait que des peuples qui allaient s’établir, étaient-ils originaires de la contrée qui n’est pas originairement la nôtre ?

Pour compléter donc cette première définition, l’on doit se référer à une autre stratégie : le colon. Ce dit Le troisière de la langue française qui définit le colon comme celui qui a quitté son pays pour aller s’établir, et qui a ainsi joué un rôle im- parties du débat international de la postcolonialité et les artistes issus de ces territoires. Chez lui, comme chez A. Mbemé par exemple, l’événement postcolonial semble alors se donner comme l’ensemble des choses qui sont arrivées à l’Afrique depuis les indépendances (Mbemé 1991:92, 2000).

Pour que l’on puisse parler de colo- nisation, il faut faire intervenir la réponse à cette question : D’où viennent-ils et où vont-ils les écrivains ? Il faut supposer des émigrants sortis d’un pays civilisé et allant s’établir, soit sur une île inhabitée, soit sur un territoire occupé par une population sauvage, ou tout au moins à demi indigène, et qui, malgré que dans tous les cas, n’a pas su élever toute seule jusqu’à la civilisation. On conçoit alors, de la part de ces émigrants, une double ac- tion civilisatrice s’exerçant à la fois sur les choses et sur les hommes (Girault 1907-2.3).

Des paroles qui feront certes sourire plus d’un chercheur contemporain travaillant sur les questions coloniales. Mais nombreux sont ceux d’entre eux qui continuent à se complaire dans l’écriture d’une histoire unifiée de la colonisation. C’est que la narration du passé colonial a longtemps été dominée par le grand récit de l’homme blanc, héros/héritée d’une civilisation éminemment moderne pour le bonheur des indigènes vivant dans des pays colonisés, et de manière énergique de l’histoire de la colonisation a succédé, depuis la fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, les règles nationales et politiques, et les écrivains qui, cependant qu’ils décolonisent le colon comme acteur premier de la scène coloniale, continuent à centraliser la colonie comme le lieu de péché ou se joue le drame de la colonisation.

M. Diouf a montré quelles sont, dans le cas african, les raisons qui expliquent cet avènement. La postcolonialité se définit, l’on doit se référer au deuxième dictionnaire historique de l’ancien langage Français (1877) que l’on appelle autrefois colon quelqu’un qui « cultive et ensemenç une terre. Comme le confirme l’Encyclopédie universel, ces mots colonie et colon [qui] sont utilisés. »

À défaut de pouvoir établir un rapport essentiel postcolonial, qui sont des termes déterminés, réfléchis et censurés par le critique, nous nous contenterons de relever les essais de ces auteurs — ceux qu’il nomme les "enfants de la postcolonie :

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Notes
1. Annexe.
2. Notes légales.
3. Jean-Pierre Dozon.
4. 1 C’est méf qui traduit agency par - à les équivalents anglo-saxons - de l’Europe après la Russie ? » [5].
5. Comment en pourrait-il être autrement ?

Bibliographie


En guise de Conclusion
On conviendra que ces quelques lignes lancées ici comme en labour ne donnent pas toute sa valeur heuristique à cette notion aussi réitére que la postcolonia. Tel n’était pas d’ailleurs le but de cet essay. Plutôt, j’ai voulu interpeller sur un fait : le risque de rétrécir la portée du concept de postcolonia (et, portant de rendre stérile tout le champ semantique se rattachant à lui) à vouloir le cantonner exclusivement aux réalités des anciennes colonies après leur accession à la souveraineté nationale et internationale. Si l’on accepte que le procès de la colonisa- tion soit fondé sur une poétique relationnelle (E. Glissant) qui liait les colonisés, les colons ainsi que diverses catégories socioculturelles en métropole, on admettra alors que les événements post-coloniaux soient également des procès aussi mérités que multiformes. La postcolonia, en ce sens, c’est aussi bien les pays africains que les anciennes métropoles impériales, y compris la France. Plus généralement, la postcolonia c’est tous ces espaces hétérogènes où les mémoires de la situation coloniale continuent à structurer les désirs et les manières d’être. Il est donc essentiel de prendre le monde des individus et des collectivités à l’effondrement des empires coloniaux [7].

Diré cela, c’est interroger les africanistes francophones (surtout ceux et celles qui se considèrent comme des postcolonial scholar) afin qu’ils élargissent les contours de leur champ d’investigation. Car si l’on accepte Le Roman d’un spahi de Pierre Loti ou les nombreux récits de G. Simenon comme faisant partie de la littérature coloniale, pourquoi alors réécue Les Nègres ou Les Paravents de J. Genet, pourquoi ignorer L’Etat sauvage de Georges Conchon comme des littératures postcoloniales ? Dans la même logique, pourquoi les études postcoloniales francophones ne devraient-elles pas s’intéresser à des institutions scientifiques telles que l’Institut de Recher- che pour le Développement (IRD, ex-ORSTOM) et faire une anthropologie de leurs pratiques épistémiques en France après les indépendances africaines ? Les européanistes américains, dans leurs travaux récents sur la France, ont ouvert des chantiers, il appartenait peut-être aux africanistes des questions postcoloniales de les éboîter le pas, de peur que leurs pro- ductions scientifiques ne restent piteusement multidimensionnels.
The Crisis of the State and Regionalism in West Africa: Identity, Citizenship and Conflict

Edited by
W. Alade Fawole and Charles Ukeje

'A new generation of West African social scientists takes on a new generation of postcolonial problems and possibilities – transitional justice, regional integration and collective security, refugee flows, and the complex interplay of local identities, state institutions and global forces. Theoretically informed and publicly engaged scholarship!'

Ron Kassimir, Program Director, SSRC, USA

'This volume on a deeply troubled yet blessed part of Africa weaves together a complex interface of history, democracy, identity, conflict and reconciliation in the West African sub-region. Refreshingly illuminating in theoretical and empirical depth, the book addresses cutting edge precepts, processes and prospects provoked by citizenship, identity politics and conflict in the often unpredictable search for democracy that works. An indispensable addition to the libraries of those concerned about the future of the state in contemporary West Africa.'

Professor Adiga A B Aghaje, Dean, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

West Africa, with its large number of mini-states, has suffered more political misfortunes than any other sub-region of Africa. No doubt, the glaring artificiality of the post-colonial state, coupled with the failure of the local ruling elites to rise above the limitations of their provenance, is to blame for the myriad crises. The sub-region has been plagued by one-party authoritarianism, violent coups and military dictatorship, leading to the progressive alienation of the people from the state, and thus raising the critical issues of identity and citizenship which are at the base of political crisis and conflict. Many decades after independence, the sub-region continues to grapple with the problems of intra-state conflict, political instability, state failure and outright collapse, thus calling into question the viability and survivability of the Westphalian state model in Africa. Collectively, West African states are still in search of democratic nationhood.

The book critically interrogates the internal dimensions of the identity and citizenship conflicts at the root of state crisis and the steps so far taken to tackle them. Scholars and students of contemporary African politics and development as well as policy makers should find much of relevance in this well researched volume.

W. Alade Fawole is currently a professor in the Department of International Relations, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. He holds a Ph.D in Political Science from George Washington University, USA. He specializes in Nigerian politics and foreign policy, an area in which he has published a number of books.

Charles Ukeje, Ph.D. is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of International Relations, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

‘LUSOFONIA’ EM ÁFRICA
História, Democracia e Integração Africana

Teresa Cruz e Silva, Manuel G. Mendes de Aratújo, e Carlos Cardoso (orgs.)

A obra traz importantes reflexões teóricas sobre a temática ‘lusofonia’, ou sobre redes que tomando como identidade de a língua Portuguesa, ultrapassam o continente Africano. Elas contêm ainda inquietações teóricas sobre o conceito de ‘Fronteira’, questionando a sua pertinência para a análise dos contextos africanos, e questões voltadas para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemplificam como o habitat, o território, a ecotécnica são corolários sistémicos para o desenvolvimento, que exemp.

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Nascido no âmbito da Iniciativa Lusófona do CODESRIA e na sequência do simpósio internacional que decorreu sob o mesmo lema, ‘Lusofonia’ em África: História, Democracia e Integração Africana reune trabalhos de um conjunto de 14 autores de diferentes disciplinas de Ciências Sociais. A obra desconstrói e desmistifica o conceito de ‘lusofonia’ através de uma análise rigorosa das identidades e diferenças económicas, políticas e culturais que caracterizam os cinco países. Os autores fazem uma incursão a aspectos tão variados como o colonialismo, as lutas pela libertação nacional e o consequente desabrochar de novos regimes políticos no período pós-independência, as transições económicas e políticas que marcaram estes países desde as economias centralizadas e as tentativas de construção de sistemas políticos de tipo socialista. São igualmente analisados a introdução de economias neo-liberais, de sistemas multipartidários e a construção de sistemas democráticos, sem descarregar os casos permeados por situações de conflito. ‘Lusofonia em África...’ representa assim um espaço em que se revista os temas referidos e expondo-os aos novos desafios das mutações económicas, sociais e políticas.
Pourquoi l'Afrique meurt
Phélimon Muanba Mumbunda

«Negrologie, pourquoi l'Afrique meurt»
par Stephen Smith

Or, ces pays sont de vieilles cultures et avaient conquis le monde ?

Ainsi, monsieur Smith, pense que l'Africaine meurt, à cause de : sa civilisation matérielle, sa organisation sociale, sa culture politique. Ces éléments constituent un fléau dans le développement de l'Afrique.

Analysons point par point les éléments qui semblent expliquer selon monsieur Smith pourquoi l'Afrique meurt.

La civilisation matérielle
Que ça soit au British muséum, au musée Tervuren, au musée de New York, ce sont des œuvres d'Africaine précoloniale qui y sont exposés, et aucun de ces musées ne veut parler de la restitution de ces œuvres d’art qui pourtant étaient pillées pendant la colonisation, soit des cris-gris empêchant l'Africain d’avoir un regard lui la France construit tout un musée pour cet art qualifié de premier.

À propos de la culture, Guy Sorman déclare «imaginer la civilisation contemporaine sans l'Asie et l'Afrique serait pour le moins une absurdité».

Elikia M'Bokolo ajoute : «cet autoritarisme durable représente l’un des legs, les moins superficiels de la domination coloniale à l'Afrique indépendante».

L'État Phénix
Nous partageons l'idée centrale de cette chronique qui est celle de l'existence des États patrimoniaux en Afrique. Mais en même temps, nous nous rappelons que pour le développement en Europe de l'Ouest ?
Maudits Dons du Ciel

Concernant l'aide, monsieur Smith donne des chiffres à la page 103. Ces statistiques pouvant aider à ne pas réviser ses conclusions, ce qui n’est pas un péché. Mais il est avec 31$ par tête d’habitant pendant 44 ans, on peut nourrir un enfant pour un million et demi de ménages et de pays, mais qu’elle est pour la recherche de nouveaux débouchés et matières premières, la coopération n’est que la suite de ce qui a été montré par le chef du royaume ou de l’Afrique, c’est-à-dire des systèmes politiques pour leur positionnement, les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permettant de réduire la pauvreté des Congolais, mais en ayant gardé les mêmes objectifs, permit...
morts n’est pas africaine, car en termes de guerres, génocides et barbares, c’est l’Europe qui est la championne.

Notes
5. Elika MBOOKOLO, op. cit., pp. 34, 36,37.


Michèle Sinapi

Une mémehistoire de l’eurocentrisme

La force du livre de M. Bernal est de

la mémehistoire de l’eurocentrisme

21
C'est à une question oubliee des specialistes de droit international public que s'attache Yadh Ben Achour dans cet ouvrage. Il est impossible de passer sous silence l'évaluationبنى par l'auteur de l'importance du droit international public dans le cadre de l'articulation entre le droit international public et le droit international privé.

La these generale de l'ouvrage est que les civilisations avec et sans l'interet des Etats, ouverts ou clos, et demeurent encore un facteur essentiel de l'impulsion des R.I et l'inspiration du droit internationals (p.1). Cette impulsion et cette inspiration ne sont pas univoques, elle ne tentent pas seulement au conflit. C'est que les civilisations sont inevitables (p.9) mais «les civilisations cultivent egalement le sens du respect, de la curiosite, et plus, de l'emervelement face a l'autre, el- les savent cohabiter en enrichir de leurs ex- periences, echanger les biens...leurs talents»(p.11). Mais au delà de ces theses gen- erales sur le statut et les relations entre les civilisations, la these qui anime l'ouvrage, la these de Yadh Ben Achour, est que «une civilisation, toute civilisation est qu'une voie de circulation pour toutes les autres et le morceau d'une autre...» (p.13 et p.312). Cette these est presente dans les trois chapitres de l'ouvrage qui traitent successivement de l'impact des civilisations sur les relations internationales, et de l'impact de l'Occident sur les civilisations et de l'expression en droit international des civilisations. Le premier chapitre traite successivement des changements et des conflits de civilisations et de leurs conflits. Il ne faut cependant pas y voir un clash des civilisations, une separation entre deux cultures, mais au contraire aussi bien que dire une voie de circulation pour toutes les autres et le morceau d'une autre civilisation. Il dit aussi que les civilisations sont cohabitees, et au meme titre des civilisations ou des civilisations, et des civilisations ou des civilisations, et des civilisations (p.26), et il est meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme meme 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Hegel et l’Afrique noire – Hegel était-il raciste ?

Amady Ali Dieng


Des historiens, des hommes de lettres, des hommes politiques, des sociologues et quelquefois, même des philosophes africains se sont dépêchés de traiter Hegel de raciste à la suite de leur seule lecture des Leçons de la philosophie de l’histoire qui est une œuvre posthume publiée sur la base des notes de ses étudiants. Par ailleurs beaucoup de ses auteurs ont ignoré l’ouvrage de Carl Ritter: L’Afrique (1300 pages) sur lequel s’est appuyé Hegel qui, introuvable à la Bibliothèque Nationale de France, n’est disponible qu’au l’Institut de géographie de Paris. Seul Pierre Franklin Tavarés a pu exploiter ce livre que Hegel a consulté pour avoir des informations sur l’Afrique à Berlin. C’est pourquoi il parle de la deuxième attitude de Hegel à l’égard de l’Afrique motivée par la lecture de ce grand géographe allemand qui s’appuie sur le système de Schelling ; le Tout.

Beaucoup d’autres chercheurs ont apporté des informations sur l’attitude de Hegel à l’égard de la Révolution de Haïti qu’il a soutenue dans des textes allemands qui ne sont pas encore traduits en français. C’est pourquoi, l’auteur de ce livre essaie de tenir compte des progrès effectués dans les recherches portant sur Hegel, d’élargir le débat sur « Les questions africaines de l’hégélianisme » et d’ouvrir quelques pistes de recherche qui peuvent intéresser au premier chef les chercheurs africains.
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