Aghi Bahi
La « Sorbonne » d'Abidjan : rêve de démocratie ou naissance d'un espace public ?

Résumé

Depuis quelques années, à Abidjan, se développent des forums plus ou moins spontanés dont le plus ancien est la « Sorbonne » du Plateau ainsi baptisée en référence à la célèbre université parisienne. Des jeunes citadins s'y regroupent pour parler de politique. Pour le sens commun, souvent repris par la presse locale, il s'agit de regroupements de personnes désœuvrées. Cet article s'interroge sur le sens de ce phénomène et émet l'hypothèse de la naissance de l'espace public dans le contexte nouveau du multipartisme. En s'appuyant sur des observations et des entretiens, l'article décrit cette situation typique et montre que le sens construit par les acteurs est celui de la démocratie « authentique » où les individus débattent librement des affaires de la cité et expriment leurs opinions. Le retour au multipartisme, mais surtout la nouvelle Constitution issue de la transition militaro-civile de l'an 2000 ont contribué à répandre l'idée de la libération de la parole chez ces jeunes hommes issus du milieu citadin populaire et a modifié leur rapport au politique. Les contingences de l'histoire immédiate de la Côte d'Ivoire ont versé la « Sorbonne » et les autres forums dans la « société civile » et en font l'expression patente de l'opinion publique.

Abstract

Over the last few years, more or less spontaneous popular forums are developing in Abidjan. The oldest one is "La Sorbonne" in the Plateau district. It is so called in reference to the famous Parisian university. Young citizens would gather there to discuss politics. This gathering is commonly understood to be of idle persons, even by the local press. This paper contemplates the meaning of this phenomenon within the framework of the birth of the public sphere in the new context of multipartyism. Drawing on observations and interviews, the paper dwells on what takes place, and argues that the sense constructed by the actors is 'authentic' democracy where the individuals can freely debate politics and express their opinions. The re-invigoration of multipartyism and particularly the new constitution issued from the civilian-military transition of the year 2000 contributed towards the spread of the idea of free speech among these young males coming from popular social backgrounds. The ongoing events of Côte d'Ivoire have thrown "La Sorbonne" and other popular forums into civil society and consider it as the obvious expression of public opinion.

Introduction

Depuis quelques temps, à Abidjan, se développent des forums de discussion que la presse n'a pas hésité à appeler des *agoras*. La plus ancienne et la plus connue d'entre ces agoras est la « Sorbonne » du Plateau[1], ainsi baptisée en référence à la célèbre université parisienne. Des gens sans importance y parlent de tout et en toute liberté, même si les débats sont de plus en plus tournés vers la politique. Pour le sens commun, souvent repris par la presse locale, il s'agit de regroupements de personnes désœuvrées. Ce phénomène, qui rappelle Speakers' Corner de Londres[2], constitue un changement indubitable de l'espace social ordinaire qu'est la rue et pose à nouveau le problème de la « politique

par le bas » voire du politique vu d'en bas et du jeu des acteurs dans le « mode populaire d'action politique » (Bayart, 1981 : 56). Que recherchent ces individus ? Que se passe-t-il à la « Sorbonne »? S'agit-il d'un épiphénomène ou cela augure-t-il au contraire de la naissance d'un espace public nouveau en Côte d'Ivoire ? Le travail que nous proposons est basé sur des observations et des entretiens et prête une attention particulière au plan du vécu politique des acteurs de la « Sorbonne ». Il s'agit d'abord de décrire et comprendre la situation typique que constitue la « Sorbonne ». Nous allons ensuite contextualiser (Mucchielli, 2000b : 109) cette conduite sociale afin tenter de dégager le sens qu'en donnent les acteurs et d'expliquer ce sens construit en rapport avec le niveau plus global de la société ivoirienne[3].

Ici, nous sommes à la « Sorbonne »…

Il est très difficile de dater avec précision la naissance de la Sorbonne du Plateau. Des regroupements de moindre importance auraient commencé au début des années 1980, avec *« un "fou" qui faisait rire la foule »* et que l'on surnommait *« Philo »* ou encore *« Le Philosophe »*[4]. En ces années qui connaissent un regain de dynamisme religieux[5] (Gadou, 2001 : 24), prêcheurs, prophètes et guérisseurs, viennent là rechercher des ouailles. Mais c'est véritablement autour de 1995, en plein multipartisme, que la politique aurait pris le dessus sur les autres activités de cet espace, et que le nom « Sorbonne » aurait commencé à circuler.

Cet univers complexe en apparence ouvert à tous tend à dérouter l'observateur. La « Sorbonne » est dans cet entre-deux qu'est la rue (Janin, 2001 : 178), un environnement bruyant, en raison de la circulation des automobiles, une sorte de carrefour très animé où les gens vont et viennent. Du lundi au samedi, dès onze heures et jusqu'à dix-huit heures environ, des gens se regroupent, parlent entre eux ou écoutent un orateur de leur choix. Il faut noter la régularité des emplacements qu'observent les personnes qui occupent la « Sorbonne », comme si chacun connaissait sa place et respectait celle de l'autre. Le fait est que ces personnes de la « Sorbonne » occupent un espace qu'elles se sont appropriées au moins mentalement et qui fait désormais partie de leurs habitudes quotidiennes (Bahi, 2003). La « Sorbonne » bat son plein entre midi et deux, au moment ou les gens descendent des bureaux et sortent des écoles pour se restaurer. Les problèmes de restauration se posent en effet avec acuité pour les travailleurs et les élèves. Déjà, la crise économique avait vu le développement des maquis dont F. Kouakou N'Guessan se demandait, à l'époque, s'ils étaient des lieux de conscientisation ou de restauration (Kouakou, 1982 : 127). Avec la dévaluation et l'augmentation de la pauvreté dans les villes, notamment à Abidjan (Bamba, 2001 : 65), les questions de restauration se posent avec encore plus de gravité.

Des cercles discussions se forment alors de manière plus ou moins spontanée, les gens échangent des informations sur l'actualité brûlante. Une fréquentation plus assidue et plus attentive des lieux nous fera comprendre que la réalité est très subtile. Un peu comme à Speakers' Corner, ces orateurs politiques parlent aux foules à partir de stands improvisés[6]. La table empruntée ou louée aux commerçants d'à côté sert d'estrade de fortune sur laquelle, juché comme un tribun, l'orateur s'égosille en délivrant ses messages aux accents messianiques sur l'actualité politique brûlante. Deux groupes d'orateurs se partagent cette spécialité et formeront deux regroupements distincts et qui rivalisent d'adresse pour attirer le public. De midi à quinze heures, période critique de la « Sorbonne », des orateurs vont se succéder au centre du cercle qui se forme dès leur apparition sur les lieux. Le nombre d'individus qui occupent quotidiennement l'espace oscille, selon nos approximations, entre 200 et 300 personnes et cette régularité en fait une foule conventionnelle.

Les orateurs attitrés, les « sorbonniens », sont des sortes d'érudits dans des domaines particuliers y compris les questions politiques, de réels « incollables » sur les sujets qu'ils abordent. Authentiques tribuns des rues, ils se documentent avec le plus grand sérieux allant même jusqu'à consulter des sites Internet, pour préparer et élaborer leurs « conférences ». Ils se présentent comme de puissants débatteurs, infatigables et intarissables sur les sujets qui les passionnent. Les surnoms qu'ils portent confortent cette construction identitaire d'intellectuels des rues (Bahi, 2001 : 159). Ils se sont donnés pour mission d'éclairer les autres en déjouant les pièges tendus dans la presse qu'ils jugent profondément partisane et d'enseigner certaines de ces choses aux auditeurs. Ils affichent des intentions claires : enseigner, éclairer le peuple. Convaincus ou conscients qu'ils produisent un travail intellectuel, critiques et vigilants, ils s'autorisent à parler au nom du peuple et « s'auto mandatent » en quelque sorte représentants de ce peuple : *« Nous sommes la parole du peuple », « Maintenant les ivoiriens voient clair »*, etc. Ils parlent au peuple et parlent au nom du peuple. Les « sorbonniens » vont ainsi jouer des rôles de médiateurs de l'information au même titre que les journaux d'information générale et d'opinion pour les auditeurs de la « Sorbonne ». Ils vont en plus proposer leur traitement de l'actualité et leurs analyses « savantes ».

La « Sorbonne » est un univers d'hommes dans lequel les femmes, extrêmement minoritaires, viennent rarement écouter les orateurs et participer aux débats. Celles qui fréquentent le site, exercent des petites activités du micro-commerce urbain. A l'instar de ce que P. Janin avait déjà remarqué, pour ces femmes, « la rue n'est pas un espace de revendications, mais le lieu où se concrétise la quête d'indépendance économique et où s'entretiennent les relations » (Janin, op cit : 181). Ces hommes, jeunes pour la plupart[7], issus du milieu citadin populaire (Atchoua, 2001 : 57-62), se déclaraient militants ou sympathisants du FPI[8] ou tout au moins se disaient « neutres ». Il ne s'agit pas forcément d'une corrélation aveugle entre ethnie et tendance politique en ce sens qu'étant donné l'espace dans lequel nous nous trouvions au moment des entretiens, le silence (ou la neutralité affichée) nous semble être la donnée la plus significative : dans ces espaces, apparemment acquis aux idées du parti au pouvoir, les autres observent une attitude de prudence de peur d'être ridiculisés par les « sorbonniens » et leurs fidèles « sorbonnards »[9]. C'est un endroit où, l'espace d'un moment, les différences sociales (mais non politiques) semblent être indéfinies.

Ils viennent s'informer, se divertir, faire des rencontres intéressantes, et même se former. Cet univers d'anonymat joue effectivement un rôle de masque pour ces auditeurs dans la mesure où leur identité réelle est dissimulée par la foule. La « religiosité » proche de la fascination avec laquelle ces jeunes écoutent l'orateur n'annule pas d'emblée leur vigilance critique. Ceux qui se disent « neutres », ou qui ne sont pas *« du même bord politique »* que la « Sorbonne » estiment ne rien apprendre de plus que ce qui se dit déjà dans les journaux, même s'ils reconnaissent néanmoins que ces « sorbonniens » font souvent des *« révélations »*. Certains d'entre eux précisent que cette écoute leur permet de se faire une idée de l'opinion générale concernant les formations politiques dont ils sont sympathisants et même de se situer sur l'actualité politique. Dans cette situation de foule conventionnelle, une catégorie nette tend à se dégager, qui correspond à la dominante des personnes interrogées sur les lieux : celles des fidèles de la « Sorbonne » encore appelés les « sorbonnards ». Ces fidèles sont les premiers arrivés à la « Sorbonne » et les derniers partis. Ils forment la première strate de l'attroupement autour de l'orateur. C'est aussi parmi eux que le recul critique vis-à-vis de ce que disent les « sorbonniens » est très faible et que la confiance en ces tribuns est développée.

« Sorbonniens » et « sorbonnards » forment le noyau réel de la « Sorbonne ». Il revêt une importance majeure dans la mesure où l'essentiel des normes en dépendent et déterminent le contexte normatif plus général de la « Sorbonne ». En effet, parce qu'il en constitue l'attraction spectaculaire, ce noyau

mobilise l'attention, attire le public et fait la renommée de l'endroit. Une certaine uniformité d'opinions et de comportements émane de cet épicentre, fonde ainsi largement son homogénéité et sa cohésion, et va finir par se donner comme l'esprit même de la « Sorbonne ». Ce noyau construit un « nous » en déconstruisant le champ politique.

La construction des identités, essentiellement prise en charge par les « sorbonniens » participe de la contexture symbolique de l'espace. On ne sera donc pas étonné d'être dans *« l'université à ciel ouvert »* et que les attroupements autour des orateurs politiques portent le nom *« d'amphithéâtres à ciel ouvert »* et que leur association soit qualifiée de *« faculté des sciences politiques »* (Bahi, 2003). Milieu d'interconnaissance, rendez-vous de jeunes « ivoiriens 100 pour 100 », favorables aux thèses nationalistes, réserve de main d'œuvre disponible pour des manifestations de rues[10], est une réaction à la violence multiforme y compris à la violence symbolique des médias. Il s'y opère une réinvention de liens de solidarité - notamment entre ces jeunes ivoiriens de « souche multi-séculaire » - face à l'individualisation croissante de la société notamment dans l'univers citadin qui engendre une distension des liens sociaux (Marie et alii, 1997 : 13).

Les normes culturelles de référence, elles-mêmes fluctuantes, semblent être celles de la rue, interface entre le privé et le public (Janin, 2001 : 178-179). Elles constituent le référentiel normatif souple et plus ou moins conscient qui régit les actions qui se déroulent dans l'espace « Sorbonne » y compris celles considérées comme « allant de soi ». Elles reposent pour une bonne part sur un certain sens de la fraternité qui va articuler spontanéité, camaraderie, amitié, partage et solidarité comme tente de le montrer F. Kouakou N'Guessan. Cette fraternité africaine, quoique ambiguë et particulière, est au centre de la société en même temps qu'elle est une quête d'identité collective (Kouakou, 1982a : p 46-49). La solidarité, valeur positive dans cet univers, se confond même avec le sens du partage c'est-à-dire au *« geste »* que l'on fera et construit un espace de sociabilité, dans lequel on peut venir écouter votre conversation et même s'en mêler sans y être invité. Les mots d'esprit sont positivement valorisés chez les « sorbonniens ». Autant que les proverbes, ils vont représenter la vivacité de l'intelligence[11]. Cet humour, très apprécié des « sorbonnards », est un moyen efficace de faire passer des pilules amères aux auditeurs, mais n'est pas un humour inoffensif et encore moins un humour de résignation[12] même s'il semble n'être qu'un effet de style.

A ces normes, il faut ajouter celles qui proviennent de la période actuelle de la démocratie nouvelle avec la liberté d'expression et les autres libertés. À la « Sorbonne » on ne se bat pas avec les muscles mais avec la parole. C'est à notre sens la norme essentielle : le débat d'idées. La bagarre physique est rejetée et transformée en bagarre des mots. Il faut être capable de *« porter la contradiction »* à celui qui parle avec des arguments solides. Cette posture essentielle est subsumée par la célèbre phrase des animateurs eux-mêmes : *« la force des arguments et non les arguments de la force »*. C'est un espace où les « qualités d'orateur » et même la logomachie sont vécues comme des valeurs positives. Celui qui ne se maîtrise pas et empoigne physiquement l'autre *« n'est pas un démocrate »*. La bagarre, valorisée négativement, est même proscrite des normes comportementales. Tout au long des échanges, quand cela s'avère nécessaire, les animateurs et vont re-préciser les normes primordiales concentrées dans la phrase : *« Ici, nous sommes à la Sorbonne »*, un espace de libertés, un espace où l'on prend des libertés. La nouvelle Constitution représente pour eux, à la fois les libertés gagnées par la volonté du peuple, et cette liberté d'expression et d'association qui fonde l'existence même de la « Sorbonne ». Viscéralement attachés aux valeurs de la démocratie, ils aiment clamer que *« vox populi, vox dei »* et se disent prêts à défendre becs et ongles cette voix du peuple dont ils pensent être de dignes représentants.

La « Sorbonne » : un rêve de démocratie vraie?

Le sens de la « Sorbonne » est collectivement construit par les acteurs au cours de leurs transactions à travers les contextes qui composent la situation décrite plus haut. On comprend alors que ce sens soit éminemment subjectif. Dans cette optique, le sens sera celui que les acteurs donnent à leurs actes dans la situation donnée.

Lorsqu'ils se remémorent les débuts de la « Sorbonne », les acteurs estiment qu'elle leur a servi et leur sert encore de moyen de défoulement et va même souvent servir d'exutoire pour les rancœurs accumulées contre la classe dirigeante ancienne. Sous le régime du parti unique ces « parleurs » sont peu inquiétés parce qu'à ce moment là, on les prend surtout pour de simples oisifs à tout le moins inoffensifs. Pendant la succession d'Houphouët-Boigny, le régime qui tentera de les museler représente à leurs yeux une période de répression. Les animateurs de la « Sorbonne » auraient été l'objet d'ergotages policiers et de fréquentes interpellations. La dernière descente de police eut lieu le 30 septembre 1999, *« jour de triste mémoire »*, où les gens de la « Sorbonne », ont été *« bastonnés, dispersés, pourchassés, arrêtés, emprisonnés et fichés »*. Mais cette répression, loin de les décourager, a plutôt renforcé leur motivation à s'exprimer. Les « anciens de la Sorbonne » vont désormais avoir en commun l'expérience de la brutalité policière. Les *« libres penseurs »* se muent progressivement en *« penseurs politiques »*.

De fait, c'est le rapport au politique qui a augmenté le prestige de la « Sorbonne » aux yeux de l'opinion. Les animateurs eux-mêmes estiment que cela a été favorisé par *« la libération de la parole »*. Grâce à quoi ils pouvaient, en principe, s'exprimer sans craintes et en toute liberté. Mais cela ne s'est pas fait sans problèmes : ils parlent souvent avec un certain orgueil et un peu d'exagération, de *« nombreuses arrestations »*[13], d'infiltrations diverses des agents des Renseignements Généraux, et de l'attention dont ils sont l'objet de la part des médias et des hommes politiques. La conquête de la parole libre a été l'objet d'une lutte entre le pouvoir et les acteurs de la « Sorbonne ». On comprend mieux pourquoi la « Sorbonne » a salué avec enthousiasme le putsch du 24 décembre 1999. La période de transition est d'abord vue comme une libération, un mal nécessaire à l'instauration d'une nouvelle démocratie et d'une société nouvelle[14]. La « Sorbonne » s'illustre dans de nombreuses marches de protestations et de soutien. Elle intéresse les gens et la presse se demande qui sont ces « savants du Plateau »?[15] Mais la « Sorbonne » subit le contre-coup de l'éclatement du Front Républicain[16] qui a semble-t-il parachevé son inversion dans la politique. La « Sorbonne » subit le contre-coup de cette rupture. Les maîtres de la « Sorbonne » disent d'ailleurs que pendant la transition, *« bien des hommes politiques ont essayé de les récupérer »*. La « Sorbonne » a même accueilli des meetings de candidats à l'élection présidentielle, et un peu plus tard à l'occasion des élections municipales. Mais ses prises de positions et ses actions concrètes, en font un fauteur de troubles pour une partie de l'opinion publique nationale[17]. En 2001, la « Sorbonne » devient une association (loi 1963). Elle est actuellement considérée, avec les autres agoras, comme faisant partie de la Société civile dans le bouillonnement qui la caractérise. Mais elle est tiraillée entre la nécessité d'être formelle pour être acceptée et reconnue par les acteurs politiques et l'impératif de l'informel pour conserver son auditoire et assurer sa survie.

À la « Sorbonne », c'est à propos de l'actualité nationale que les discussions sont animées. Il faut dire que la presse ivoirienne d'une manière générale, très engagée et très polémiste, ne prend pas suffisamment de précautions éthiques et ne fait pas toujours preuve de rigueur déontologique. Prompte à diffuser des informations partielles, elle présente ses opinions comme si c'était les nouvelles elle-mêmes, dans une propension à verser dans le sensationnalisme (Nyamnjoh, 2000 : 3). L'incomplétude de l'information ainsi diffusée, pousse les individus à se tourner vers les autres afin

de palier la vacance du sens du message et le flou qu'il laisse. À en croire les auditeurs, la « Sorbonne » du Plateau serait d'autant plus intéressante qu'elle a la réputation de tout critiquer, y compris le pouvoir. Et ces apports en informations sont jugés par certains -les enthousiastes- meilleurs que les journaux d'autant que la lecture de la presse tend à les laisser perplexes face à la situation du pays (Bahi, 2001 : 158-162). Le travail des « sorbonniens » supplée donc en un certain sens l'information politique. Ils traduisent en langage simple, imagé et théâtralisé, les informations sur la vie politique du pays. Ils livrent aux auditeurs des réflexions, des analyses sur cette situation et font des projections sur le futur. Cette expulsion des angoisses couplée aux projections faites dans l'analyse de la situation socio-politique nous mènent finalement ainsi à une fonction cathartique. La « Sorbonne » permettrait aussi d'évacuer des angoisses et cette « catharsis » serait alors couplée à une sorte de fonction que, faute d'une meilleure expression, nous baptisons fonction « antalgique ». Les « sorbonniens », en magnifiant les forces et potentialités du pays, et en prophétisant l'avenir radieux de la Côte d'Ivoire, donnent aux auditeurs un sentiment de sécurité[18]. Il reste que par ces discussions et ces échanges se crée « une prise de conscience collective qui dépasse les cadres étroits de l'ethnicité », à l'image de ce que remarquait F. N. Kouakou, pour le maquis (Kouakou, 1982b : 133), en dehors des sphères privée et privatisée que sont l'espace familial et l'espace professionnel. La « Sorbonne » en tant que milieu structurant, où le plus important est d'être citoyen, est un « foyer d'expression politique ». Les auditeurs les plus optimistes sont aussi les plus assidus et les plus nombreux à la « Sorbonne ». Ces derniers pensent qu'elle concourt à la démocratie en permettant à tout le monde de s'exprimer. C'est cela qui est globalement vécu comme des apports de la « Sorbonne ».

Dans le même temps, cette action remplit une sorte de fonction de contrôle des hommes politiques, en dénonçant les abus, les écarts, les déclarations démagogiques. Il est dès lors concevable que les discussions dans ces espaces expriment une forme de résistance au discours dominant de la presse, c'est-à-dire dans « les traces infiniment complexes du travail social des outils d'information » pour reprendre les termes d'A.-M. Laulan. Cette opposition, qui s'origine dans « les désirs, les conflits, les combats des individus et des groupes » (Laulan, 1993 : 995), conteste les opinions que formule la presse ainsi que sa médiation même du caractère spécieux des discours politiciens : *« ne vous laissez pas distraire! », « ce sont des menteurs! »*, etc. Les tribuns vont ainsi organiser une véritable résistance aux effets d'agenda des médias dans la mesure où ils analysent, interprètent et imposent véritablement leur point de vue sur les informations, c'est à dire aussi bien sur les rumeurs que sur celles contenues dans les médias nationaux et internationaux, tout en laissant aux auditeurs la possibilité de leur *« porter la contradiction »*. Cette résistance à l'information sur la chose de la cité telle que véhiculée par les médias marque en même temps la volonté de ces acteurs de s'approprier la chose politique ou d'y participer. Dans cet espace, où bien des personnes sont dans la marge de notre société et qui entendent comprendre ce qui se passe dans leur pays, une telle opposition leur donne en tous cas un sentiment de maîtrise de l'information politique.

Mais la médiation des « sorbonniens », en matière d'information n'est pas neutre puisque ces informateurs portent aussi des jugements. Les « sorbonniens » réinterprètent la presse qui presse est souvent au centre des débats en ce sens que c'est par elle que les gens sont « informés » de ce qui se passe dans le pays… une axiologie se dégageait très vite des propos avec les bons d'une part, le FPI et ses satellites et d'autre part, les autres partis avec comme pire ennemi de la démocratie, le RDR. En fait de médiation, la « Sorbonne » est aussi « rumorigène » que la presse. La mobilité des jeunes, dont certains sont souvent orateurs dans leurs propres quartiers, va consolider et propager des rumeurs de toutes sortes. La différence fondamentale est que la presse telle que vécue par les

personnes enquêtées, par la méfiance dont elle est l'objet, se présente comme une source supplémentaire d'interrogations et est donc *ipso facto* anxiogène. La « Sorbonne » par contre, qui bénéficie de la confiance de nombre de ses auditeurs, et qui baigne dans une atmosphère de convivialité et de simplicité qui n'est pas sans rappeler la description que F. Kouakou N'Guessan faisait des maquis abidjanais (Kouakou, 1982b : 127-134), va avoir tendance à jouer auprès des « sorbonnards » un rôle de tranquillisant.

Les « sorbonniens » et les « sorbonnards » veulent finalement créer un espace de *« la vraie démocratie »*. Ce sens construit dans les échanges entres acteurs dans les « Sorbonnes » est celui de l'espace public même si, au cours de nos enquêtes, aucune des personnes interrogées n'a utilisé ce concept. Au départ, il s'agit d'engager de libres discussions et d'échanger des points de vue, c'est-à-dire que l'action se fonde sur une acceptation de la différence et donc, en principe, de la mise en cause et de la relativisation de ses propres idées. Nous avons vu comment les différents acteurs construisent - et entretiennent cette construction - de la « Sorbonne » comme espace de convivialité, de tolérance. Cela engendre en même temps l'image d'un espace et d'une atmosphère propices au développement de la vie intellectuelle. Il s'agit d'une idéalisation de l'intellectualité des rues qui fait penser à un rêve d'espace de la vraie démocratie, voie suprême de la paix, qui, à sa manière, cherche la participation non conventionnelle des citoyens à la vie publique. C'est-à-dire qu'ils vont récupérer des thèmes centraux de la démocratie tels que la laïcité et la sacralité du pouvoir du peuple. La formule *« vox populi vox dei »* par exemple, qu'ils aiment répéter, conserve bien dans leur esprit toute sa signification. Elle montre qu'ils souscrivent entièrement au fait que la légitimité du pouvoir n'est pas à rechercher dans un être transcendant mais plutôt à trouver dans la volonté du peuple, et que cette volonté populaire est sacrée dans un régime démocratique[19], et la finalité du pouvoir qui est de servir le peuple. C'est peut-être là le lieu de toutes les attentes concrètes des acteurs de la « Sorbonne », et c'est là que réside le sens idéalisé qu'ils lui donnent. Ils s'attendent concrètement à ce que le pouvoir actuel réalise ses promesses électorales et il faut donc pour cela *« qu'on les laisse travailler »*… Ces espaces ne vont-ils pas plutôt tendre à cristalliser les opinions politiques en confortant les idées arrêtées des personnes qui se prêtent au jeu de la « Sorbonne »? Ce jeu à forte théâtralité n'échappe-t-il pas, à un moment ou à un autre, aux acteurs eux-mêmes?

La naissance d'un espace public?

La « Sorbonne » est donc bien un des endroits de la ville où se construit une opinion publique dans la discussion et la confrontation des points de vue même si, bien évidemment, toutes les opinions individuelles ne s'expriment pas. Elle nous apparaît comme un repère manifeste de la naissance de l'espace public que l'appellation « Sorbonne », en renvoyant à une métaphore universitaire tend à gauchir. Cette construction s'appuie sur un fait particulier à nos sociétés qui, tout au long du processus démocratique, ont révélé les campus universitaires comme les plus hauts lieux de contestation des pouvoirs :

> « L'autonomie relative du champ universitaire et la place centrale qu'il occupe dans le système social font de cet univers intellectuel une des plates-formes de résistances aux violences économiques par « le bas ». Les étudiants de leur côté, convaincus d'être des laissés pour compte pas comme les autres du gouvernement, se placent à l'avant-garde des luttes sociales » (Akindès, 1996 : 36-37).

Il faut certainement voir dans le développement de la « Sorbonne » un des avatars de la revanche de l'informel qui cette fois est politique. Par ailleurs, la récupération des universitaires par le champ politique a probablement créé un paradoxe : elle a doublé cette admiration initiale de l'université d'un sentiment de rejet et d'une volonté de faire ce que les intellectuels ivoiriens patentés ne peuvent pas ou plus faire, c'est à dire un débat démocratique réel. Cela expliquerait alors cette identification à la « Sorbonne » parisienne qui dans leur imaginaire représente l'espace des intellectuels restés authentiques. Dans ce monde d'érudits, fussent-ils de la rue, cet intérêt des acteurs de la « Sorbonne » pour la presse, outre ses défauts maintes fois relevés, se comprend aisément. La liberté de la presse est une des représentations fortes de la liberté d'expression. Elle a pour fonction sociale et pour but d'« éveiller la conscience des citoyens et de les prévenir contre les glissements possibles des détenteurs du pouvoir » (Akindès, op cit : p 165). Elle est ainsi donnée comme un gage de l'avancée démocratique attendue avec le multipartisme : « l'idéal démocratique valorise l'expression de l'homme ordinaire, et les manifestations de l'opinion peuvent supplanter la recherche de la vérité » (Bougnoux, 1998 : 97).

Mais instaurer la liberté d'opinion, la liberté de la presse, la publicité des décisions politiques ne suffisent pas à créer un espace public, comme le dit si bien D. Wolton, « l'espace public ne se décrète pas » (Wolton, 2000 : 222). Mais il semble possible sinon d'en suivre la genèse, du moins de l'historiciser. Cela est même impératif dans les sociétés en développement en plein processus de démocratisation. Nous rappelions plus haut, en nous appuyant sur les études de P. Janin, que la rue souffre d'une relative indétermination qui « renvoie à la confusion des genres et à l'assimilation abusive de la notion d'espace public non matérialisé, non construit, à celle d'espace vacant, disponible » (Janin, op cit : 179). Cette remarque nous amène à faire quelques précisions conceptuelles.

Au sens habermasien, l'espace public est cette sphère intermédiaire qui s'est constituée au moment des Lumières, entre l'Etat et la Société civile dans laquelle, par la discussion, se forme une opinion publique (Habermas, 1997 : 38-40). La « Sorbonne » ressemble à cette construction, dans des lieux de la ville accessibles à tous, d'une opinion publique par la discussion et la confrontation des idées dans l'argumentation. Il s'en différencie fondamentalement en ce sens qu'il regroupe des catégories défavorisées (et non bourgeoises) de la population abidjanaise. En ce sens les limitations que nous avons dégagées (sélection « naturelle », asymétrie) tout au long de la présentation et du fonctionnement de la « Sorbonne » tout en tentant de les contextualiser, n'en changent pas le projet en profondeur. Mais il faut reconnaître que l'espace public habermasien, quelque peu étriqué et idéalisé rend difficilement compte de la « Sorbonne ». Par ailleurs, la réalité même de la société ivoirienne doit nous obliger à éviter une identification entre la circulation de la presse (circulation des écrits) et les discussions dans les espaces tels que la « Sorbonne » (cercle de la raison) pour reprendre les termes de D. Bougnoux (Bougnoux, 1998 : 94). En outre, il nous faut encore relativiser encore l'effet de nouveauté que nous avons peut-être involontairement accentué en présentant la « Sorbonne ». Il existe probablement des sources plus lointaines de l'espace public en Côte d'Ivoire. J.-P. Dozon, indique que le phénomène prophétique, et notamment le prophète Harris, « ouvre un espace public où, à sa manière, (il) explicite la "vérité" de la situation coloniale en mettant littéralement en "cause" la puissance des Blancs et la faiblesse des Noirs » osant condamner ainsi, devant les foules, et avant l'heure la colonisation de l'Afrique par l'Europe (Dozon, 1995 : 60). Il y a une vingtaine d'années, F. Kouakou N'Guessan, qui n'utilisait pas le concept d'« espace public » se posait la question de savoir si le maquis abidjanais était un forum politique, entendant le concept au sens large de la chose de la cité. Pour lui, le maquis était déjà, non seulement politisé, mais en plus

militant dans la mesure où des groupes sociaux se retrouvaient pour y débattre des problèmes (familiaux, professionnels et nationaux) qui les concernent ou auxquels ils sont impliqués : « Ainsi ces forums populaires multipliés dans les communes de la capitale reprennent sans doute à leur manière la balle de la nouvelle démocratie ivoirienne avec la liberté de pensée et d'expression qu'elle inspire aux citoyens » (Kouakou, 1982b : 132). Le contexte cette observation sociologique des maquis abidjanais est celui de la libéralisation partielle du champ politique ivoirien.

L'espace public moderne est un espace symbolique, caractérisé par l'asymétrie, l'éclatement voire le morcellement, l'inégalité de participation selon les classes et les groupes sociaux, la tendance à une certaine interpénétration avec la vie professionnelle ainsi qu'avec la vie privée à tel point qu'il se demandait s'il ne fallait pas plutôt parler d'espaces publics [20] (Miège, 1989 : 166-167). Dans cet espace symbolique, les discours contradictoires des différents acteurs sociaux, religieux, économiques, culturels et politiques, composant une société sur un fonds de valeurs communes historiquement constituées, s'opposent et se répondent, explique D. Wolton. L'espace public, lien politique entre les citoyens anonymes, est au cœur du fonctionnement des sociétés démocratiques et symbolise la réalité d'une démocratie en action :

> « L'espace public suppose (…) l'existence d'individus plus ou moins autonomes, capables de se faire leur opinion, non « aliénés aux discours dominants », croyant aux idées et à l'argumentation, et non pas à l'affrontement physique. Cette idée de construction par l'intermédiaire des informations et des valeurs, puis de leurs discussions, suppose aussi que les individus soient relativement autonomes à l'égard des partis politiques pour se faire leur propre opinion. En un mot, avec le concept d'espace public, c'est la légitimité des mots qui s'impose contre celle des coups, des avants-gardes et des sujets de l'histoire » (Wolton, 2000 : 223).

Le pluralisme politique favorise la création de l'espace public. Mais dans un contexte où l'on se bat encore pour une libéralisation plus grande des médias[21], et où les discours contradictoires, s'ils ne sont pas « interdits », ne sont pas encore entrés dans l'ethos politique et social, il peut paraître surprenant de parler d'espace public. L'espace public moderne en Côte d'Ivoire, encore en formation, présente des caractères proches de celui que présentait J. Habermas (à la différence qu'il n'est pas bourgeois) et n'est pas encore aussi large que l'espace public moderne. Il est toujours à la recherche d'acteurs (plus nombreux), plus diversifiés, qui s'accorderaient sur des valeurs communes et reconnaîtraient leurs légitimités mutuelles. En effet, la Côte d'Ivoire devient progressivement une démocratie de masse et, depuis 1990, l'information, le marketing et la communication sont de plus en plus importants, avec un nombre plus accru d'acteurs intervenant publiquement et de sujets débattus. En l'absence de sondages, ce sont les manifestations de rues, les marches (de protestation ou de soutien) télévisées ou non, les déclarations médiatisées des divers acteurs politiques, sociaux, religieux, intellectuels (relatées par la presse écrite surtout) qui concurrencent le suffrage universel.

Conclusion

En un certain sens nous serions tentés d'affirmer que la « Sorbonne » et les autres agoras préfigurent l'émergence d'un espace public. Mais la remarque habermasienne nous semble faire office de loi : l'espace public doit être à égale distance du politique et de l'économique et ne doit pas être inféodé au pouvoir. Or le débat de la « Sorbonne » entre ceux qui veulent rester dans l'informel, et ceux qui veulent en faire une structure formelle reconnue par le Ministère de l'Intérieur est une tension interne

majeure. C'est dans cette brèche que des entrepreneurs politiques peuvent s'insinuer. Le risque de récupération politique existe. Il menace de voir s'y développer une sorte d'uniformisation de la pensée (peu de débats contradictoires), qui tendrait ainsi à invalider la position intermédiaire de la « Sorbonne », transformant ces « tribuns » en thuriféraires du pouvoir, évanouissant ce rêve d'espace public[22]. Quant à l'avenir même de la « Sorbonne » il est concevable que les Autorités, comme ce jadis fut le cas pour Speakers' Corner, soit amené à légiférer et leur octroyer un espace physique où ils pourront discuter de manière à stopper leurs tribulations afin d'assurer la pérennité de cette expression populaire, qui, somme toute est une preuve de liberté d'expression et de démocratie en action. Il est difficile de dire si la « Sorbonne » est provisoire ou durable mais nous sommes tentés de penser que ce type de manifestations, parce qu'elles sont liées aux contingences de la période actuelle, vont se « folkloriser » et feront partie du pittoresque une fois les transformations démocratiques effectuées et entrées dans les mœurs, une fois que l'espace public aura véritablement émergé.

Notes

1. Après quelques pérégrinations, la « Sorbonne » s'installe sur le site en réfection de l'immeuble des Soixante Logements, bâtiment du patrimoine de l'État qui a été cédé, tout ou partie, à l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour le Développement Industriel. D'autres regroupements de ce genre sont nés après le putsch de décembre 1999 dans des quartiers populaires d'Abidjan comme par effet d'entraînement (« Parlement », « Sénat », etc.) mais nous souhaitons, dans un premier temps nous concentrer sur la « Sorbonne » du Plateau, qui depuis 2002 est officiellement re-localisée au Jardin Public du Plateau.
2. Speakers' Corner, à l'angle nord-est de Hyde Park à Londres est, par tradition, un espace où les speeches publics peuvent être faits par n'importe qui ayant quelque chose à dire sur quelque sujet que ce soit. Cet espace fût érigé en centre populaire de discours publics en 1872.
3. Nous indiquons en italiques les termes et expressions des acteurs de la « Sorbonne ».
4. Propos recueillis auprès de Yoneba Gnakpa animateur du groupe des raëliens et Salam Djintigo « Maître de théologie ». Ils font partie des anciens de la « Sorbonne » et interviennent aussi sur des sujets d'actualité politique.
5. Gadou rappelle qu'en Côte d'Ivoire, le phénomène des prophètes et des guérisseurs, déjà vivace pendant la période coloniale, connaît un renouveau dans les années 1980 et une impressionnante naissance de prophètes sur toute l'étendue du territoire ivoirien à partir de 1986 après l'arrestation et l'emprisonnement du prophète Koudou Jeannot, illustrant ainsi la vitalité des innovations religieuses d'origine autochtones, chrétienne ou islamique, des mouvements de réveil issus des groupes dissidents du christianisme présents à la « Sorbonne ».
6. Les speakers parlent aux foules à partir de plates-formes improvisées faites de caisses en bois. Des speakers individuels ou représentant des organisations ou des causes particulières délivrent leurs discours les week-ends. La foule se rassemble souvent autour d'un speaker, et, en général, se sent libre de faire des commentaires sur le discours ou d'interrompre simplement celui-ci s'ils ne sont pas d'accord avec ce qu'il dit. Speakers' Corner est souvent vu comme un symbole de la liberté de parole. On peut consulter http://www.britain-info.org/
7. La « Sorbonne » regroupe surtout des hommes jeunes (entre 20 et 35 ans), la plupart célibataires (dont beaucoup ont au moins un enfant à charge). Leur niveau d'études est surtout secondaire même si l'on enregistre des diplômés de l'université et des grandes écoles. Ils sont très souvent sans emplois.

La majorité d'entre eux se disent chrétiens ou animistes. Habitant principalement les communes populaires d'Abidjan, ces jeunes hommes se répartissent surtout entre les groupes Krou et Akan.

8. Front Populaire Ivoirien, parti de Laurent Gbagbo, au pouvoir depuis le 26 octobre 2000.

9. Il ne fait pas bon être d'un autre parti et encore moins du Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR) parti d'Alassane Ouattara, bien qu'en une année d'observations, nous n'ayons jamais observé de rixes, tout au plus quelques chaudes empoignades. On peut dire qu'effectivement, la violence est surtout verbale même si le risque que cela ne dégénère en bagarre est réel…

10. La « Sorbonne » a participé à plusieurs marches de protestation ou de soutien depuis l'an 2000. Aujourd'hui encore, elle est très active dans le sursaut patriotique qui secoue la Côte d'Ivoire depuis les attentats du 19 septembre 2002 et a rejoint l'Alliance des Jeunes Patriotes dirigée par Charles Blé Goudé, ancien Secrétaire Général de la Fédération Estudiantine et Scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire. Il avait d'ailleurs succédé à Guillaume Soro Kibgafori actuel porte-parole de la rébellion armée qui contrôle la moitié-nord du pays.

11. Un animateur a par exemple créé une formule pour répondre aux accusations de xénophobie dont la Côte d'Ivoire est l'objet dans la presse et l'opinion internationales depuis quelques années et surtout depuis l'élaboration de la nouvelle Constitution : *« les ivoiriens ne sont pas contre les étrangers, ils sont contre les hommes étranges »*. La guerre actuelle a mis au grand jour cette maxime déjà fort répandue à la « Sorbonne » car la « Sorbonne » a rejoint l'Alliance des Jeunes Patriotes et a participé à des meetings et des marches de protestation contre les assaillants et de soutien aux forces loyalistes, largement couverts par les médias nationaux.

12. Il ne s'agit pas vraiment de dérision politique au sens de Comi Toulabor (Toulabor, 1981 ; 1991)

13. Bazoumana Dembélé, alias *« Le Recteur »* de la « Sorbonne » déclarait dans le quotidien *L'Opinion*, du 5 février 2001, qu'il a été « arrêté 233 fois au total et déféré 11 fois à la Maison d'Arrêt et de Correction d'Abidjan » !

14. Il semble que dès la fin de décembre 1999, comme par effet d'entraînement ou d'imitation, d'autres « Sorbonnes » naissent dans des quartiers populaires : le « Parlement » de Yopougon, la « Sorbonne » de Yopougon-Wakouboué, la « Sorbonne 2 » d'Attiécoubé, la « Sorbonne » d'Abobo, etc. auxquelles nous consacrerons d'autres études…

15. *Fraternité Matin*, 12-13 août 2000.

16. Alliance tactique contractée entre le Front Populaire Ivoirien de Laurent Gbagbo et le Rassemblement des Républicains d'Alassane Ouattara pour combattre - et battre si possible - le Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire.

17. Le journal *L'Agora* après la tentative de putsch des 7 et 8 janvier 2001 : s'indignait de la marche de ces « désœuvrés » et « marginaux », de ces « errements d'individus belliqueux et chauvins regroupés au sein d'un groupuscule obscur et nébuleux, pompeusement désigné comme la Sorbonne (…) C'est une honteuse escroquerie qui doit prendre fin ».

18. Par exemple, la puissance de frappe militaire, capable de dissuader toute velléité d'attaque ennemie, particulièrement efficace au cours de l'année 2001 du fait des trois tentatives avortées de coup d'État, mais qui, au moment de la guerre actuelle, allait s'avérer inexacte…

19. Il faut ici encore observer de la prudence par rapport à cette affirmation eu égard à la capacité même de récupération des idées en vogue des « sorbonniens ».

20. C'est nous qui soulignons.

21. Rappelons que la libéralisation totale des médias constitue une des revendications de la « rébellion armée » qui occupe la moitié-nord du pays.

22. Pour de C. Nadaud, « sorbonnien » trentenaire, le *« schisme »* est bien effectif : les premiers sont

devenus la « Sorbonne-action » avec pour principaux animateurs « Awadji le Gouverneur » et le « professeur Ben »; les seconds s'appellent « La Sorbonne » avec comme président Richard Dakouri « le Dozologue », le « Prophète Jérémie », « Mystic », très impliqués dans les tournées actuelles de la Coordination des Jeunes Patriotes.

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Bahi Aghi
Centre d'Études et de Recherche en Communication
Centre for Communication Research
Unité de Formation et de Recherche en Information Communication et Arts
Faculty of Information Communication and Arts
Université de Cocody
University of Cocody
BP V 34 Abidjan
Côte d'Ivoire
Tel. : (225) 22 44 30 31

Le fax et l'e-mail de l'UFR étant hors d'usage, je communique mon adresse électronique personnelle/ our fax and e-mail being out of order, I communicate my personal electronic address :
bahi_aghi@yahoo.fr

Beth Maina Ahlberg, Rose Mwangi, Gabriel Poggensee, Hermann Feldmeier, and Ingela Krantz
'Better infection than hunger'. A study of illness perceptions with special focus on urinary schistosomiasis in Northern Tanzania

Abstract

This paper is about how a community in Northern Tanzania experiences and reasons around urinary schistosomiasis and more specifically female genital schistosomiasis or schistosomiasis of the reproductive tract. As a disease, female genital schistosomiasis presents itself with a variety of symptoms which neither the affected woman nor the medical professionals usually recognise as schistosomiasis. The study therefore focused on symptom recognition, the question being whether women living in an endemic area can distinguish symptoms of urinary and genital schistosomiasis from those of other diseases presenting in similar ways. Data were generated using a combination of qualitative methods including observation, individual interviews and focus group discussions with diverse categories of people. All the research participants were aware of the link between water and infection. Because the disease is associated with farming, the main livelihood, there was a strong feeling among the research participants that treatment, whether in hospital or by traditional medicine could not effect permanent cure. Re-infection was considered inevitable and as schistosomiasis was said to be less poisonous than malaria, it was felt there was little choice between being infected and having food. Making sense of the symptoms was considered moreover difficult although women and men said they could tell whether blood in urine was due to urinary schistosomiasis or other conditions such as sexually transmitted diseases which present similar symptoms. The similarity of symptoms was said to be problematic also because of the sensitivity and stigma in sexually transmitted diseases. Urinary schistosomiasis is therefore a complex health problem and for any effective control there is clearly a need to grasp this complexity.

Introduction and conceptual background

This study, a part of an interdisciplinary research project assessing prevalence, morbidity and disease manifestation of female genital schistosomiasis (FGS), focused on illness perceptions, knowledge and beliefs about the disease, its perceived cause and the health care options available and used. It also focused on symptom recognition and specifically whether women living in an endemic area can distinguish symptoms of schistosomiasis from those of other diseases presenting in similar ways.

Female genital schistosomiasis can present itself with a variety of symptoms including painful and heavy menses, inter-menstrual and post-coital bleeding, discharge, lower abdominal pain and pain during sexual intercourse. However, none of these symptoms are specific for genital schistosimiasis and neither the affected woman nor the medical professionals usually recognise them as schistosomiasis. Furthermore, the consequences of FGS may be infertility, ectopic pregnancy and miscarriage (Feldmeier et al 1995). Thus, besides the troublesome symptoms and sequelae, the physical and mental well-being of the diseased woman may be seriously affected by stigmatisation due to infertility or FGS mistaken as sexually transmitted disease (STD). Women

may for these reasons be reluctant to seek medical care or participate in control programmes, which request urine or stool specimens to be examined.

Female genital schistosomiasis or disease in general and the associated symptoms are thus socially defined and this paper is informed by the conceptual framework that sees disease as a social construction and context bound. According to this conceptualisation, illness may be located in the body. However, it involves all the patterns of social life – the interlocking social roles, power and conflict, social statuses, networks of family and friends, bureaucracies and organisations, aspects of work and occupations, social control, ideas of moral worth, social norms, definitions of reality and the production of knowledge (Brown 1995). Moreover, as McEllroy and Jezewski (2000) argue, how people define and perceive symptoms, how they experience illness is inextricably intertwined with the self and others across time. This is to say that illness is not only a self-experience. It is a social and community experience with contextual factors such as gender, environmental, economic and political constraints impinging on health and illness as well as availability and provision of health services (Frohlich et al 2001, Hahn 1995, Lane and Cibula 2000, Lorber 1998). Illness may be experienced and presented differently by women and men, not to mention that they may be exposed to the risk of infection differently because of their gender roles, position and expectations (Cameron and Bernardes 1998, Lorber 1997). This is the human context of disease or the world of the 'infected' (Agar 1996, van der Geest 1995, Lorber 1997, Flick 1998). Given this, interventions - whether diagnosis and treatment, or prevention at individual or societal level - cannot depend just on the laboratory tests or knowledge of the single disease agent. Rather, it should depend also on interpreting meanings and subjective worlds of the affected people, of the local practices in which are embedded both risks and preventive measures, and indeed of variables or notions of what counts as a disease (Agar 1996). Similarly, this has consequences for knowledge creation. This is to say for example, that interdisciplinary collaboration is not a matter of choice. Rather, as van der Geest (1995) argues, the approaches of social science and bio-medicine, divergent as they may be, are required. Moreover the potential for collaboration lies in their divergence.

As a disease, FGS has a number of critical elements. Firstly, although schistosomiasis is endemic, FGS was only recently professionally acknowledged. Secondly, its manifestation and symptoms may, as already pointed out, be confused with the morally charged STDs, making interventions, whether diagnosis or treatment, challenging. Thirdly, it is intertwined with the basic form of livelihood - farming - in an area where there are few other alternatives and where therefore the traditional health education based on professional knowledge alone make little sense. This study was about understanding the social context of FGS, the assumption being that only when these social contexts are taken into account can interventions including policy make sense to those for whom it is meant (Hahn 1999).

The research process and methods

This study combined focus group discussions, individual interviews, and observation as data collection methods in part to capture general opinions and ideas about the various aspects of the disease, the individual experiences of the disease, and the contexts within which the disease occurs (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999, Kvale 1996). Data were collected from women, men, teachers and healers. We thus used method and research participant triangulation, not really to converge on one point. Rather it was to deepen our understanding by uncovering the layers of meaning, the

different perspectives of the problem, and the ways different stakeholders reason about the disease (Seal 1999, Oakley 2000).

The study was carried out in two villages, situated in the Masai Plains at the slopes of the Northern Pare Mountains in Mwanga District, Kilimanjaro Region. Since 1995, or prior to the current study, studies on prevalence, morbidity, sanitation status and knowledge about schistosomiasis had been carried out (Poggensee et al 1999, 2000).[1] In addition, interventions in the form of screening and treatment of school children and women, water and sanitation improvement and health education were undertaken. A village committee for water and sanitation improvement had also been formed.[2]

Acceptance or refusal to be tested and examined gynaecologically during the previous studies were used as criteria for recruiting women into this study. The men were also recruited using the same criteria i.e. whether their wives had accepted or refused to be tested and examined gynaecologically. Traditional healers and traditional birth attendants (TBAs), initially selected with the help of a staff member at the village health centre, were also interviewed and were then asked to identify other healers known to them, a form of snowball selection (Hornby and Symon 1994, Marshall and Rossman 1999).

Individual interviews were conducted with ten women who had been treated for urinary schistosomiasis, five traditional healers and four TBAs. Five focus group discussions with participants numbering from 4-12 were conducted. These included teachers in one of the two schools [3] in the area (4), health centre staff (8), men whose wives were examined and treated for FGS (11), men whose wives had not been examined (12) and women who had refused to be examined or treated (4). A total of 58 individuals were interviewed individually or in groups in 20 sessions. Individual interviews with TBAs, traditional healers and women were conducted at home while focus group discussions took place at the health centre. It was easy to reach the participants since people in the area live closely together in villages. Moreover, the field guide, a staff member of the village health centre turned out to be a real 'village encyclopaedia'. When people were not at home she could guide us to their farms as she knew where each household had their fields.[4]

During home and farm visits, observations were made regarding the latrine availability,[5] the state and use of the water pumps provided through the project and the situation in the rice fields.

Data analysis has been a continuous process and was, according to principles of qualitative research, started already during the fieldwork (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). At the end of each field day, the three field assistants, the first author (BMA) and the field guide had a discussion to reflect on the issues observed and those being generated unexpectedly. Where found necessary, such issues were included in subsequent interviews and observations.

Two such issues warrant some attention because they help clarify ideas about cosmology and the local belief systems, the socio-cultural and economic contexts relevant for FGS as well as the way women and men communicate, particularly when a disease condition is considered sensitive or shameful. The first is the term *kibishi,* referring generally to STDs. The interest in investigating *kibishi* arose because whenever the term was mentioned, it caused laughter or giggling, especially among the men. We thus included it in subsequent interviews to find out its meaning. Secondly, women had refused to be examined gynaecologically for fear not only of being tested for STDs including AIDS, or having their reproductive capacities terminated, but also because their husbands had prohibited them from being screened. The role of men in FGS screening and treatment within the project was therefore discussed in men's groups.

The audio-taped interviews and FGDs were transcribed by a person well versed in Swahili and

translated from Swahili to English by the second author (RM). The transcripts were read and re-read by BMA, at the same time listening to the original tapes. Text segments containing relevant meaning units were then identified in the transcripts. The segments and units identified were manually marked, coded and then sorted by comparing and collapsing them to form the four themes presented here.

The empirical data on perceptions and reasoning around urinary schistosomiasis

This section presents the views of women and men concerning urinary and female genital schistosomiasis, how they make sense of the symptoms, their beliefs about the disease, their health seeking behaviours, and their reasoning about infection in women and girls.

Views about infection in women

All the participants in individual interviews and focus group discussions indicated that women and men suffer but that women had different patterns of contact with infected water. As the plots under rice cultivation per family are small, men tend to perform other activities away from the water for the survival of the family. More importantly, however, were descriptions of the time in the day when women and men performed farming activities likely to bring them into contact with infected water. Women's household chores including preparing breakfast for the husband and the rest of the family, sending the children to school and doing other necessary tasks in the home, which were said to delay women in getting to the farm. They arrive late morning when according to the research participants, the risk of infection is highest. A male focus group participant said:

> Because women perform many other household chores, they arrive at the farms from around ten o'clock, the time when according to the professionals the cercariae (infective larvae) start moving.

Another participant in the same group implied that women did not plan or use their time properly. As a result they get to the farm when it is most dangerous:

> …I must be in the shamba (farm) at nine o'clock. My wife goes round and round. She gets to the shamba at 12 o'clock, the time when all the germs are awake.

Knowledge of causation and prevention challenges

The cause of schistosomiasis was common knowledge among those interviewed. The link with water was mentioned, and after probing, the cycle of infection, the snail, the urine, the latrines and water contact were all mentioned. In some cases however a proper connection was not made. A participant in a focus group discussion, for example, said:

> I live in a place where there are pit latrines. But some people help themselves (defecate or urinate) on the floor of the latrine. Then if somebody goes to the latrine without shoes and may be the one who had helped himself on the floor had the disease, then one can be infected.

There was the feeling that since schistosomiasis was so much intertwined with farming, the main source of livelihood in the area, there was little people could do to avoid infection and re-infection unless the water was treated:

> ….it is true we have been treated, but given the way of life in this village where we live, we are farmers you know and we depend and work in water. Our survival depends on water. Now you can give me medicines and I take them as instructed. It is true I start feeling well. But then, because my livelihood comes from that water, I have to use that same water. At home I use boiled water just as the doctors have said 'boil the water, filter the water, drink that water'. But even so, slowly, slowly, I start having the symptoms of schistosomiasis. I pray to you professionals to help us because even if we are given medicine, I don't know what we shall do to avoid schistosomiasis.

Men in the same group described a neighbouring village where pieces of land under rice cultivation were larger. But, unlike the study villages where rice, maize and beans are produced twice a year, production in the neighbouring village was said to be once a year. Although the farms are larger, the people in that village were said to suffer from famines. In the opinion of the men in the focus group discussion, the production twice per year increases their exposure to the infected water. In spite of this, they stressed it is better to be infected than suffer starvation. One participant said amid agreement from other group participants:

> …*wacha niugue lakini nishibe* (let me be infected but have enough to eat).

In spite of the knowledge about infection cycle, those interviewed considered preventive measures that would interfere with food production not feasible. Neither was construction of latrines in the fields seen as a feasible solution because of the soggy nature of the soil:

> …the piece of land is soaked with water. So you ask yourself, 'how can I dig a hole? How can I build a latrine when it is water all over?' What do you think? Can't you (professionals) find other ways for this problem than digging latrines…?

Similar sentiments had been echoed earlier during health education sessions in the previous studies. During one session a participant made the following comment concerning the difficulties in building and using latrines:

> Of course people should be ashamed and everybody should use a latrine at home, but in the farm there is water everywhere. Shall we dig latrine in the water? If we have to go to Mulaki (about 5 kilometers away) every time we feel like helping ourselves, then we won't have any work done. Mulaki is the only place fit to dig a hole.

Health seeking behaviour

All those interviewed had a great deal of knowledge about the disease, indicating furthermore that the disease had been there long before the project. One traditional healer said:

… the disease is very common in our village. It seems this is the place it originated. Doctors come and give us services to help us but the disease is never eradicated… because of water.

Schistosomiasis was compared to malaria in terms of occurrence. It was however stressed that the two diseases differ in the way they present themselves, malaria being very poisonous, attacking suddenly and killing fast. One healer said:

Malaria and schistosomiasis are the same. But malaria comes suddenly and strongly and you can die. If not well treated, it goes to the brain, spinal chord and finally you die…for schistosomiasis, you may be treated two, five, six times and you get better. But malaria is very poisonous.

There were mixed responses regarding treatment. However, it became apparent that schistosomiasis is not one of those diseases for which the traditional healer is the first line of care. This is not to say that traditional medicine is not used. In the discussions about treatment options, herbs were said to exist, but that they are not widely used. Women in a group discussion said:

We can say that herbs exist even today because when you go to the market or town, you find those healers of schistosomiasis…but because you do not even trust them, you never know whether it's true because it's just business.

Another female group participant added:

My father was a traditional healer and he showed me a herb which he said was treatment for schistosomiasis, but I have never used it….So even before modern treatment came, there was cure for schistosomiasis….Yes there was medicine even in those days.

Although such medicines were said to exist, schistosomiasis was viewed as a disease that would always be around as long as the farming and the dam water remained untreated. A traditional healer said in an interview:

We use traditional medicine, but this is not as effective as treating a dam. If the schistosomiasis worms are killed then it could be much better. Even if we are treated with local medicine or with western medicine, but still the source of water is not treated… schistosomiasis will never be eradicated.

Traditional medicine was described as useful in relieving pain rather than effecting a cure. While hospital medicine was said to be effective, it was also described as less accessible for most people due to poverty or because the dispensary has no medicines. The people interviewed were also aware that even after treatment, re-infection is likely as long as they continue working in the same infected water.
They furthermore explained that the evil spirits, said by a traditional healer to be the cause of the disease, were responsible for the well or bore-hole being dirty. Most open wells and bore-holes are filled with dirty water when it rains. The protected wells including the pumps installed through the

project were said to be safe.[6]

There are however disease conditions for which traditional medicine was said to be more effective. *Kibishi,* the general term for STDs mentioned earlier, was described as a condition for which traditional medicine is effective. The type of treatment given depends nevertheless on what is believed to be the cause. If the symptoms present as pain when urinating, it is believed to be caused by too much heat which may result from working long hours in the hot sun. For this condition, the treatment described involved making the patient urinate until a dark worm passes out. Men in focus group discussions and traditional healers interviewed were especially conversant with this condition and its treatment.[7] The second type was said to be gonorrhoea where the patient seemed to have pus in urine. According to one healer, treatment depends on the symptoms presented:

> I treat according to the way he or she presents the condition to me… pus in urine, then I know it is gonorrhoea… pain when urinating, then I know it is due to the long stay in the sun… Even for that condition I have treatment.

Cancers are also believed to be more responsive to traditional medicine. It was said that people with cancer should avoid operations, a treatment option believed to make the cancer spread all over the body. According to the health centre staff, some women had refused the project screening and treatment for fear of being diagnosed as having cancer.[8]

Kilawalawa or infection of genitals in children was another widely discussed condition. The symptoms were said to be a rash around the genital area causing scratching for which clitoridectomy was believed to be the appropriate treatment. Interestingly, hospital treatment was said to be the care option sought for clitoridectomy. One traditional healer had this to say when asked about *kilawalawa*:

> It was traditionally treated but as people are now getting knowledge of going to the hospital, then they do take their children to the hospital for treatment…Kilawalawa is something that is inside…it is within the body.

A TBA reasoned about *Kilawalawa* in the following way during an interview:

> When she falls sick, and you circumcise, you will not have made a mistake. This is taken to hospital and I have not seen anyone do it at home. When the child falls sick, she is taken to hospital and when she is examined she is found with infection.[9]

Making sense of urinary schistosomiasis symptoms

Given the importance of symptom recognition in disease management, our question was whether women, especially in this highly endemic area, could identify schistosomiasis symptoms. This was described as difficult and seemed easier for men than it was for women. The men, including traditional healers, all who were men, said that if blood trickled after urinating, this was schistosomiasis. Women also indicated that the consistency and flow of the blood and sensation from schistosomiasis and menstruation are different:

The schistosomiasis blood is usually in drops and whenever you pass them out, there is burning sensation unlike in menstruation where the blood is thick and when it flows out it does not burn.

A major reason for the difficulty in distinguishing the symptoms of schistosomiasis from those of STDs was however said to be the stigma surrounding the latter. During a focus group discussion women described the secrecy and implication for disease diagnosis in the following way:

There are other diseases like syphilis and gonorrhoea, but such diseases are never mentioned. So when a person goes for treatment, she will never say where she is suffering from.

The silence and lack of communication between spouses was said to constitute another problem and made it difficult to identify symptoms openly, as indicated by a woman group participant:

It's very difficult to tell because when your partner discovers that he has the disease, he goes for treatment and thereafter turns against you and accuses you of being unfaithful.

Many women were said to have refused to undergo the gynaecological screening according to the project protocol because of the stigma and the fear of being tested for STDs, especially AIDS. Others were said to have refused the tests and treatment for fear of having their reproductive capacities terminated. There were rumours that uteruses were being removed. While the fear of being tested for STDs or having reproductive capacities terminated were mentioned as reasons for not accepting the screening and treatment offered by the project, another and interesting reason was mentioned. In the focus group with women who had refused to be treated although their tests were showing signs of schistosomiasis infection, one woman said she refused because she did not have any symptoms, nor did she feel unwell. She said she had just been told she had the disease, although she herself did not experience it. This reaction is similar to what was said by a man in a focus group discussion:

…I remember having schistosomiasis when I was a little child of school age. I had, I had so much pain! I needed to hold on to some support when urinating. One thing that surprises me these days is that recently we were screened and found to have the disease. Now my dear professionals, I want you to help me here. How is that in those days, I experienced such pain and these days I don't even know that I have the disease, though I am told and I know that I have it….It seems that the schistosomiasis of these days is a different type, or is it still the very old one?

Discussion and conclusions

This paper is based on qualitative data and a limited sample of research participants, a common approach in qualitative research. As such we cannot claim to represent the broader picture of people's perceptions to urinary schistosomiasis and the health care behaviours. Qualitative methods are nonetheless suited for a problem such as the current one, where little is known, not to mention the sensitivity and stigma mentioned above. Moreover, qualitative methods are flexible

and as is evidently clear from this research, they enhance reflection, while method and research participant triangulation helped generate different aspects or dimensions of the research problem. In spite of this, we faced some problems and although they were not unique to this study, discussing them here is appropriate.

In spite of the flexibility of qualitative methods, capacities for such research may be limited also due to professional training. In this research, we worked with public health nurses whose main training and practice is health education. During fieldwork a great deal of effort was made to restrain the public health nurses who conducted the focus group discussions from diverting the discussion sessions into health education lectures. One way we dealt with the problem was to continuously stress that people in the village had knowledge equal or more important than professional knowledge. We did so even at the risk of contradicting a group that had presented itself as a team concerned with and knowledgeable about health. In addition, our emphasis on local knowledge could have been construed as a refusal to offer them what they expected and are used to getting from educated health professionals.[10] These expectations were explicitly expressed by the research participants in this study in ways similar to those reported by Yelland and Gifford (1995).

Schistosomiasis is a disease that is preventable and treatable. However, the context within which control would have to take place in the area studied is complex. Being a disease associated with farming, or what Hughes and Hunter (1970) once called a disease of development, the introduction of irrigation schemes may be carried out without much consideration for the human costs, which makes prevention all the more of a challenge. Contact with water is central in farming, and in domestic chores such as washing clothes and fetching drinking water, while children swim in the schistosomiasis-infested river. In addition, the small plots of land where rice is grown are perceived to be unsuitable and too far from land suitable for latrine construction. Only two thirds of the households were observed to have latrines (Poggensee 2000). The right medicines too are frequently unavailable, the treatment of water is difficult, in a situation where the snail or the intermediate host has a favourable habitat in the irrigation canals. The risk of infection and re-infection high is thus high.

The way schistosomiasis was described and compared to malaria, the way people reasoned around their actions and the care they seek suggest that schistosomiasis is not categorised under the 'illnesses of man' or those diseases believed to be caused by evil eye or witchcraft (Feierman 1985, Appiah-Kubi 1981, Onuaha 1981). The attempt by one healer to associate schistosomiasis with *majini* (evil spirits) did not stand the test. This is not to say that culturally rooted ideas about the disease were not observed. The belief that pain when urinating is caused by the heat of the sun can be said to be part of the cultural ideas about disease causation, a rationality that seem to reflect the conditions under which women and men work in the fields. However, while culture constitutes the means by which people and groups evaluate and make sense of the world, we view it in its dynamic form where actors therein shape and reshape their ways of seeing as they interact with each other fusing existing ideas, discourses and practices. While the characteristics of FGS, its endemic nature, slow progression and link to livelihood may have been used to make sense of the disease, symptom presentation is problematic, not only because they are not specific, but more significantly because they can be confused with STDs which are highly stigmatised. A number of questions could be asked. Is this a cultural definition or is it an interpretation of disease in contexts where cultural boundaries are increasingly blurred? Is it a disease recently introduced with developments in irrigation for rice production from which few can escape due to poverty?[11] Is it a

combination of these and the developments in biomedicine and public health and its introduction in the area? The biomedical discovery of the causal link between disease agents, behaviour or lifestyle and ill-health has transformed disease from an ever-present danger into a risk related to lifestyle and therefore an individual's choice. The responsibility for disease prevention and health promotion is ultimately shifted to the individual. It is then assumed that increased knowledge about the causal links would enable individuals make rational decisions to avoid the risks. Public health education is based on this assumption (Caplan 2000, Tierney 1999, Flick 1998, Bunton et al 1995) and health educators are trained to get the message of individual responsibility in disease causation and prevention.

There seems however to be a paradox: while individual responsibility is emphasised, health education rarely takes account of the dynamics in the social life of the people which is what matters in their actions and interpretation of incoming information. On the contrary the current form of health education leaves the people highly aware of the transmission routes as well as the preventive actions they can take, a knowledge that leaves them more dependent on the professionals, but makes less sense to their lives. This is a point that the participants in this study seemed to be making, a phenomenon common in other interventions such as AIDS control (Poppen and Reisen 1997).

Control of urinary and female genital schistosomiasis is complex due to a number of its characteriatics and the context within which it occurs. Because of the similarity with STD symptoms, schistosomiasis has entered the realms of shame and stigma, complicating not only symptom recognition, but also actions taken for prevention as well as seeking care. Moreover, apart from being shameful, symptoms such as blood in urine may have different meanings for boys and for girls. In studies in Nigeria, Amazigou (1994) observed that for the boys it is viewed as a sign of adulthood. For the girls, lower abdominal pain, bleeding after sexual intercourse, which can be caused by FGS, may be regarded as symptoms of STDs. Such STD-seeming symptoms can may lead girls not to seek treatment - as was evidently clear from the women in this study who refused to be screened. In the long run, this could lead to complications in their reproductive system, translating into infertility and more social stigma.

Although the flow and consistency of blood was said to help distinguish FGS from other symptoms in women and men, the local belief that pain when urinating is caused by the heat of the sun may delay diagnosis and treatment. This is a rational explanation in an area where women and men work long hours in the fields under the hot sun. Furthermore, since the disease is highly prevalent, not as fatal as malaria, but associated with the basic livelihood of the people, infection and re-infection must be expected. Consequently, people in this area seem to have resigned themselves to the fact that schistosomiasis will always be with them and neither traditional nor hospital medicine is currently considered effective.

Additionally, the quality of care in public health facilities seems also to affect what care is sought and the faith people have in particular care options.[12] Such is the case with cancer and the observed belief that it should not be taken to hospital and that an operation should be avoided to prevent it spreading over the entire body. While partly explaining the ideas held about the diseased body, the fear of operation may just be an expression of the experiences of the people of the public health facilities. A cancer that requires operation is perhaps already spread over the entire body and cancer patients may not survive the operation largely due to the poor state of quality of care. This could be the basis for such a belief. Nevertheless, the belief has implications for urinary schistosomiasis, now known to affect the female reproductive tract and may present itself as

cervical cancer or may even be causative to cancer (Feldmeier 1995).

Our study has added to the increasing evidence of the importance of gender roles and inequalities in explaining the pattern of disease among women and men (WHO 1998, Annandale and Hunt 2000, Lorber 1997). The possibility that the different farming and household roles could expose women and men to different rates of infection suggests not only the need for further research but that health education should avoid lecturing communities about how schistosomiasis is caused without linking this to the different gender roles.

In conclusion, there is clearly need for contextual understanding. In turn this would require reorientation in health promotion and preventive work to enable those in charge to question assumptions, knowledge and perspectives (Cant and Sharma 1999, Hertz 1997). More often than not, these are projected on to the communities even when the aim may to give voice to community members (Cooke and Kothari 2001). Moreover, given that the high risk of exposure is not just sheer contact with infected water, but may also be a matter of gender dynamics in this area, interventions would need to be gender-sensitive.

Notes

1. According to a household survey carried out by the research team, the two villages had 2 471 and 1 283 inhabitants respectively with a third of the households having no latrines. Two springs provide water for a traditional irrigation scheme that enables the people to grow rice in small plots of land as a cash crop and to irrigate maize fields. In both villages about half of the households own plots of land in the irrigated fields. However, significantly more members of the households in one village work in the rice fields as both owners and hired hands. People from the other village tend to hire seasonal workers to cultivate their fields. A health centre serves the two villages and there are two primary but no secondary schools.

2. By the time of this study the committee had not accomplished much. The male participants in the two focus group discussions indicate having little knowledge about the committee and neither had they any idea of any meeting having taken place.

3. Both schools had received a water pump and latrines had been improved through the project. By the time we arrived in one school late afternoon, the pupils were scrubbing the floors of the latrines. The nurse field assistants and the health centre guide made a note to the teachers that this was not the appropriate time for scrubbing. They also noted that the scrubbing brushes were short and the pupils were stepping on the dirty water as they did not wear shoes.

4. This is not to say that there were no problems or biases related to using a village health centre staff as a guide As the public heath representativeat the centre, she often drifted into health education about water and latrine use. Being an insider, she also acted in a way an outsider might consider confrontational with the respondents, possibly jeopardising an interview situation. The

problem was minimised partly by not letting the field guide conduct interviews and partly through reflection at the end of each day. During the reflection meetings, it was stressed that this was not an occasion for health education, but for inquiry.

5. The villagers' use of the latrines could not be ascertained as such a task would have required more elaborately organised observations.

6. This dispelled the fears among the nurses/field assistants that the people were against the project water scheme.

7. As one traditional healer described the treatment, he demonstrated with his finger the length of the worm which usually passed out.

8. Similarly a child with convulsion (*degedege*) or malaria should not be given an injection. It was said this may kill the child.

9. This is a condition where a great deal of eradication campaigns have been going on nationally and internationally. That people reason in this way may be a reaction to these campaigns.

10. The first author (BMA), who was present in all the group discussions and individual interviews, was introduced as a very learned professor. This could be problematic because of increasing social distance. It was obvious in this case that there were expectations that the professor should offer more than just interviews. The social distance arising from such an introduction could not be gauged during the interview but was hopefully minimised by adding that the professor was only a professor of books, and not a professor of social life in the same way as the people in the village were. It was stressed that for the professor and indeed the research team to offer any useful information and education, they had to first be educated by the people

11. Some research participants indicated they had stopped rice farming to avoid infection while data from the two villages showed different patterns of infection with more prevalence in the village more involved in rice farming for their families or as labourers for others (Poggensee 2000).

12. A number of examples of such fusion were noted in this study. Female circumcision has for example, been turned into a disease that justifies the operation taking place in health facilities, a process which may have started with the early Christian missionary activities which advocated among others that the operation be done in the clinics to avoid infections (Ahlberg et al 2000).

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Beth Maina Ahlberg
Skaraborg Institute for Research and Development
Skövde
Sweden

Rose Mwangi
Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College, Moshi, Tanzania

Gabriel Poggensee
Institute of Tropical Medicine and Medical Faculty
Charite, Humboldt University of Berlin
Germany

Hermann Feldmeier H
Institute of social medicine
Centre for Humanities and Social Sciences
Freier University, Berlin
Germany

Ingela Krantz
Skaraborg Institute for Research and Development
Skövde
Sweden

Correspondence:
Beth Maina Ahlberg
Stationsgatan 12
541 30 Skövde, Sweden
Tel 46-500-47 84 06, Fax 46-500-47 83 92
e-mail: beth@skaraborg-institute.se

Augustus K. Kapungwe
Traditional Cultural Practices of Imparting Sex Education and the Fight against HIV/AIDS: The Case of Initiation Ceremonies for Girls in Zambia

Abstract

The Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) have become a major health problem in Zambia. Because of the threat HIV/AIDS poses to the nation, the government of Zambia embarked on a public health campaign aimed at combating the scourge. However, so far this campaign has predominantly been conducted through modern channels of information communication. The overall objective of this study was to explore the role one particular traditional channel of sex information communication, the initiation ceremony of girls, could play in disseminating information to combat HIV/AIDS. Data were collected from five residential areas using systematic random sampling. Overall, the study concludes that although there is no evidence to directly link initiation ceremonies with HIV/AIDS, indirectly today's initiation ceremonies enhance the spread of HIV/AIDS. But it is encouraging to point out that, given the demonstrated willingness of the majority of initiators to learn more about HIV/AIDS, the identified inadequacies in initiation ceremonies can be removed so that this channel is used effectively in the fight against the disease.

Introduction

The Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) have become a major health problem in Zambia. In 1994 alone, it is estimated that 700,000 adults (i.e. those aged between 15 and 49 years) were infected with the virus (WHO and UN Population Division as quoted by UNAIDS/country support (1996). According to the same source, the cumulative total of reported AIDS cases as of 31 December 1995 was 32,491. In 1993 alone, it is estimated that between 40,000 and 50,000 Zambians died of AIDS-related causes and this number was expected to double by 1997 (Francine van de Borne, 1996).
Overall, the most conservative estimate of HIV adult prevalence rate (per 100 population aged 15-49 years) is not less than 17 percent (WHO, UN, 1996). Of course this figure varies according to different categories of people. In urban areas, the prevalence is estimated at 27 percent while the corresponding figure for rural areas is estimated at 10 percent (Francine van den Borne et al,1996). Among health attenders at urban ante-natal clinics, as well as among urban blood donors, 20-25 percent are HIV positive. The corresponding percentage among attenders at urban Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) clinics is 55 percent. 30 percent of all new admissions at urban hospitals in Zambia are HIV positive (Mushingeh et al, 1991). The study at Monze hospital in Southern province (Buve and Foster, 1994) indicates that about 55 of new admissions were HIV positive. Research in Zambia has also shown that women in the early reproductive ages are more likely to contract HIV/AIDS than their male counterparts. According to Kiremire and Nkandu-Luo (1996), women aged between 15 and 24 years are 4 times more likely to contract HIV/AIDS than their male counterparts. It is important to bear in mind that these figures do not, in any way portray the real situation in Zambia considering the fact that, for various reasons,

AIDS cases in Sub-Saharan Africa are reportedly under reported by as much as 10 percent (UNAIDS).

Realising the threat HIV/AIDS poses to the health of the people and to the future development of the nation, in December 1985, the government of Zambia, through various governmental, quasi-governmental, and non-governmental agencies and organisations embarked on a public health campaign aimed. The campaign is conducted through many avenues that include, among others, the mass media (i.e., radio, television, print media), drama, educational sketches, feature articles, pamphlets, sponsored seminars/conferences and research on various aspects of HIV/AIDS.

Statement of the Problem

However, it is quite clear from even a casual perusal of the anti-HIV/AIDS activities and programmes currently in place that, so far, these have predominantly been confined to modern channels of communication. Although something may have been achieved through this approach, a lot more could be realised if traditional channels of transmitting information were identified and utilised to augment those currently in use. One such channel or avenue is the traditional initiation ceremony which could be effectively used in the dissemination of information about HIV/AIDS. This study is an attempt to examine ways through which the initiation ceremony could be used to combat the spread of the disease in Zambia.

Although there are different kinds of initiation ceremonies, the most common one is the puberty rite or puberty ritual which is performed for girls. Almost invariably, this rite marks a girl's attainment of sexual maturity and is considered a necessary prelude to marriage. Older women from within or outside the community are hired to conduct the ceremony. These women command so much respect and admiration in the communities in which they live that their potential role in the fight against HIV/AIDS cannot and should not be overlooked as is currently the case.

Objectives of the Study

As its main objectives the study investigates:
1. The prevalence, structure and content of initiation ceremonies in Lusaka.
2. Awareness of the existence and seriousness of HIV/AIDS in this country as well as knowledge of its transmission and prevention.
3. Views on the use of condoms as preventive measures against the spread of HIV/AIDS.
4. The extent to which the knowledge disseminated in the ceremony promotes or prevents the transmission of HIV/AIDS in the community.
5. The willingness of women initators to learn about HIV/AIDS.
6. The ways of using the puberty ritual as a channel for disseminating information about HIV/AIDS at the grassroots level.

A Brief Literature Overview

The puberty rite, which is the focus of this study, is found in every corner of Zambia and is conducted by nearly every ethnic group in the country. Its continued presence in the rural areas and its penetration into urban areas is a clear testimony to its tenacity. According to a recent

study (Lemba, Chishimba and Wotela, 1996) in six urban districts (i.e.Lusaka, Livingstone, Ndola, Kalulushi and Monze) the percentage of women who reported having undergone the initiation ceremony either at puberty or just before marriage was 87 and 78, respectively. The study further reports that a considerable proportion of young people, particularly those under 20 years of age, expressed a desire for initiation. A small study (Kalunde, 1992) conducted among a sample of female University of Zambia students aged between 19 and 28 years revealed that 62 percent approved of the ceremony and more than 88 percent said they would adhere to the teachings given during the initiation ceremony.

The role of initiation ceremonies as channels of sex education is well documented in the anthropological literature. For example, Spring (1976), reports that among the Luvale of North Western province, during the ceremony (called Wali in the local language) the young woman is personally introduced for the first time in her life to a number of issues relating to sexual conduct which include women's therapeutic techniques for sexual enchantment, reproduction and ailments. In Eastern province (Read 1956, Skjonsberg, 1989) it is also during the initiation ceremony that girls are given instructions not only on how to enjoy sexual encounters and sexual intercourse but also on how to raise the family.

With the exception of the Tonga of Southern province where there was no formal instruction, the initiation ceremony was therefore an integral part of a girl's growing up among most ethnic groups of Zambia. Studies among the Bemba speaking people of Northern and Luapula provinces (Richards, 1932) as well as among the Ila (Jaspan, 1953 as cited by L.Mukuka and R. Tembo, 1996) all emphasise not only the near universality of the practice but also the predominance of sex education in the syllabus of the initiation ceremony. In other words, matters related to sexual relationships or matters concerning sex practices were of paramount importance. In the study cited above (i.e. Lemba et. al, 1996) it was found that 84 percent of women who were initiated at puberty received sex education during initiation. The corresponding proportion among those who were initiated just before marriage was more than 90 percent. In another study involving secondary school going adolescent girls, 46 percent reported having learned about sex through the traditional initiation ceremony or puberty rite (Pillai et al., 1993). This is not surprising in view of the fact that, traditionally, most Zambian parents shun discussing sex matters with their children. As Palka (1992) reports, almost 50 percent of the sample interviewed admitted that they found it very difficult to discuss sexual matters with their mothers and 91.1 percent said the same about their fathers.

The major implication of the above and other findings is that to many girls in Zambia, the only socially and culturally approved source of information about sex matters are the women who conduct the inititiation ceremony. It is therefore surprising that, to date, no serious attempt has been made to investigate how this traditional channel of communicating sex information can be used to inhibit the spread of HIV/AIDS in Zambia. A study such as this one seems therefore not only imperative but also long overdue.

Study Areas, Sample Selection and Data Analysis

Five residential areas in Lusaka were randomly selected for the study. These are Garden and Kaunda Square from high density areas, Libala and Emmasdale from medium density areas, and Kabulonga from low density areas. The choice of Lusaka was rationalised on the ground that its population represents a mix of different Zambian ethnic groups thereby ensuring the

representativeness of the findings.

The selection of the sample was done through systematic random sampling. Every eligible woman in every fifth household was targeted foran interview. Data collection was conducted using a standardised questionnaire containing both open and close ended questions. The questionnaire included, among others, questions on socio-economic and demographic characteristics (e.g. age, area of upbringing, ethnicity, area of residence, marital status, level of education) of respondents. To supplement the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire, qualitative data were also collected and involved respondents who were not part of the original sample. Apart from the two primary sources of data mentioned above, secondary sources were also consulted in order to collect more information on the subject under study. This involved reading any available historical and contemporary written material on initiation ceremonies in Zambia. Because of the nature of the topic under investigation, only females were recruited as interviewers for this study. These women underwent training in questionnaire administration and interpretation of the items in the questionnaire.

Data entry and analysis involved the use of SPSS/PC+ software. Pparticular attention was given to the examination of how various background characteristics of respondents (age, ethnicity, level of education, area of upbringing, area of residence etc) affect various issues that the study intended to investigate. Simple frequencies and cross-tabulations are used in the presentation of results.

Findings

Characteristics of Respondents

The sample total of 313 respondents consisted of 130 (41.5%) initiators who included 6 former initiators and 183 (58.5%) former initiates who were not current initiators. Out of the total number of initiators, 16 (12.3%) were from Kaunda Square, 40 (30.8%) from Garden Compound, 17 (13%.1) from Emmasdale, 32 (24.6%) from Libala while 25 (19.2%) came from Kabulonga. The ages of respondents ranged from below 15 years (1.9%), 15-20 years (6.3%), 20-24 years (10.1%), 25-29 (15.4%), 30-34 (11.9%), 35-39 (16.7%),40-44 (14.8%) and over 45 years (23%). In other words, approximately 54.5 percent of the respondents were 35 years or above. Almost 70 percent of the initiators were above the age of 35 years.

The single largest ethnic group were Nyanja speakers who made up 37.1 percent followed by Bemba speakers (27.8%). The Lozi made up 13.6 percent, Tonga 8.2 percent, Kaonde 3.5 percent and Lunda 1.6 while Luvale made up 0.6 and other 7.2 percent.[1]

With regard to religious affiliation, 62.3 percent indicated high religious commitment by reporting that they attended church at least once a week, 32.1 percent reported going to church only sometimes while 5.6 percent were non-church goers. Regarding denomination, 36.4 percent stated they were Catholics, 20.9 percent Protestants and less than one percent (0.9%) Muslims. The ones harboring other unspecified religions constituted 33.3 percent. The self-reported non-believers constituted 8.4 percent of the respondents.

The majority (64.3%) of the respondents indicated being married, 11.8 percent each for single and widowed, 7.6 percent divorced, 2.5% separated while 1.3 percent were engaged. A very insignificant proportion i.e. 0.6 percent were cohabiting.

Based on self-reports, the sample consisted of a highly literate group as 71.9 percent could easily

read a newspaper or magazine and only 11.9 percent could not read while 15.9 percent could read with some difficulty. This high level of literacy is also reflected in the level of education attained. Over 69 percent had attained secondary level of education or above and only about 6 percent reported having never been to school. This high level of education could partially be explained by the fact that the majority (63.9%) of the respondents were born in urban areas and a significant proportion of them (83.8%) spent most of their lives in urban areas where access to the educational system is better than in rural areas.

Awareness, Knowledge and Perceptions regarding HIV/AIDS

This section examines, inter alia, respondents' perceptions, knowledge and awareness regarding HIV/AIDS. Specifically, the section focuses, first, on respondents' awareness of the existence and seriousness of HIV/AIDS in Zambia in general and in their respective communities in particular, and, second, knowledge of HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention.
In order to determine awareness of the existence and seriousness of HIV/AIDS, respondents where asked both direct and indirect questions. Directly, respondents were asked whether or not they had heard of a disease called HIV/AIDS. Secondly, initiators were asked whether or not they teach about HIV/AIDS when conducting ceremonies.
Of the valid cases that were accepted for analysis, 296 or 92.2 percent indicated having heard of HIV/AIDS and only about 7.8 percent had not. As to the second question, about 80 percent of the respondents answered in the affirmative. It should be pointed out here, and this will become clearer later in our discussion, that although HIV/AIDS is reportedly discussed during initiation ceremonies the focus is not necessarily on prevention but rather on its mere existence.
Interestingly, as many as 53 percent of the respondents thought that HIV/AIDS was not a new disease in Zambia and 9.1 percent stated that the disease was curable. The high level of awareness regarding the existence of HIV/AIDS is consistent with responses obtained from two indirect questions which required respondents to indicate, first, the number of persons known who had HIV/AIDS and second, the number of persons known who had died of AIDS. One the first item, some 18 percent of the sample said they knew no-one who had the disease, but 53 percent stated they knew of five or more persons with HIV/AIDS. The remainder of the sample knew at least one and some up to four people who had the disease. With regard to the second question, the very large total of nearly 75 percent of the sample said they knew of more than five peoplke who had died from the disease, and only 8 percent knew of none.
From these figures it is quite clear that awareness of the existence of HIV/AIDS is extremely high since more than 68.2 percent and 85.6 percent know at least three persons who have or have died of HIV/AIDS, respectively. Put differently, 81.4 percent of the respondents know at least one person who was afflicted with HIV/AIDS while almost 92 percent of the same sample know at least one person who had died of the disease. The majority of respondents thought that HIV/AIDS was very serious at the national level.But it is interesting and a little paradoxical to note that 30 percent of those interviewed either did not know the seriousness of the disease or think it is not at all serious in their respective communities. The proportions among initiators and former initiators are 22.3 percent and 35.6 percent, respectively. In spite of the above it is gratifying to note that as many as 97.7 percent among initiators and 96.3 percent among former initiates expressed willingness to attend workshops on HIV/AIDS if these were organised in their communities.

Epidemiological studies throughout the world have shown only four modes of HIV transmission:
i. Sexually, through intercourse or through contact with infected blood, semen,or cervical and vaginal fluids. This is the most frequent mode of transmission and HIV can be transmitted from any infected person to his or her sexual partner (male to female, male to male, and, albeit less likely, female to female).
ii. During transfusion of blood or blood products obtained from HIV infected donor blood.
iii. Using injecting or skin-piercing equipment contaminated with HIV.
iv. From a mother infected with HIV to her child during pregnancy, labor or following birth as a result of breast-feeding.
Specific sexual behaviors also expose people to the risk of HIV infection. These include sexual intercourse with a person who has had multiple sex partners or with a person who exchanges sex for money or drugs, notably, prostitutes. It is also important to recognise the fact that certain traditional Zambian practices may enhance the spread of HIV/AIDS. Such practices include: dry sex, widow inheritance and widow cleansing through sexual intercourse.
Currently, no scientific evidence exists to show that the following constitute modes or avenues of HIV transmission: coughing or sneezing, handshakes, insect (e.g. mosquito) bites, work or school contacts, touching or hugging, using toilets, kissing, sharing clothes, sharing eating or drinking utensils (cups, glasses, plates etc.), water or food.
In view of the fact that initiators are traditional teachers of sex education, it is imperative that they possess adequate and correct knowledge of how the HIV virus is transmitted and how it is not. Additionally, initiators should also be aware of the risk inherent in certain traditional Zambian practices in as far as HIV transmission is concerned. This is vitally important if the initiation ceremony has to be used as a channel for transmitting information about HIV/AIDS. The following data show the distribution of our respondents' views on the causes of transmission:

Table 1: Respondents' Perception of the Role of Various Factors in Transmission of HIV/AIDS

MODE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Sex	220	68.8
Many partners	301	93.8
Prostitutes	298	92.8
Not using condoms	270	84.1
Homosexuality	214	66.7
Blood transfusion	273	85.0
Sharing clothes	26	8.1
Eating utensils	18	5.6
Air	28	8.7

Injections	236	73.5
Kissing	58	18.1
Mosquito bites	62	19.3
Witchcraft	28	8.7
Mother to child	296	92.8
Other modes	13	4.0

Notwithstanding the fact that the major avenues of HIV/AIDS transmission (i.e. multiple partners, prostitutes, blood transfusion, mother to child) were known by an encouragingly significant proportion of the sample, it is amazing that there was still a sizeable proportion of residents in the study communities who believed mosquitoes (19.3%), kissing (18.1%), sharing clothes (8.1%), sharing eating utensils (5.6%) and air (8.7%) could also represent risk factors. Close to 8 percent of the respondents also believed that HIV/AIDS could be caused by witchcraft.

Perceptions regarding the role of certain traditional practices in HIV/AIDS transmission are presented in Table 2:

Table 2: Respondents' Opinion on the role of Widow Inheritance, Widow Cleansing and Dry Sex in HIV/AIDS Transmission

OPINION	WIDOW INHERITANCE	WIDOW CLEANSING	DRY SEX
FOR	234(72.9)	20(6.2)	177(55.1)
AGAINST	73(22.7)	290(90.3)	104(32.4)
NO OPINION	14(4.4)	11(3.4)	40(12.4)
TOTAL	321(100.0)	321(100.0)	302(100.0)

It is apparent from these data that whereas widow cleansing is correctly perceived by more than 90 percent of the respondents as a potential risk factor in the transmission of HIV/AIDS, widow inheritance and dry sex are not so recognised. Only 22.7 percent (28.5% among initiators and 18.8% among former initiates) were of the opinion that widow inheritance should be discouraged because of its potential to transmit HIV/AIDS. As regards dry sex, only slightly over 55 percent (54.6% among initiators and 55.5% among former initiates) agreed that this practice can enhance the spread of HIV/AIDS.

These findings underscore the need to mount and intensify public awareness campaigns to educate the public, particularly, traditional sex educators on the actual and potential role of these traditional practices in the spread of HIV/AIDS in Zambia.

Perceptions regarding Prevention

Although it has scientifically been demonstrated that, if properly used, the use of condoms provides the second best preventive measure against HIV/AIDS transmission, quite a substantial segment of the sample do not seem to have much confidence in its effectiveness. More than 64 percent perceived condoms as either not being of much reliability or of no reliability at all. Among current initiators the proportion is 67.7 percent. On the basis of this finding, it is perhaps not surprising that as many as 53 percent of the respondents disapproved of the idea of parents encouraging their children to use condoms and more than 25 percent of them felt that it was not necessary for a wife to insist on her husband using condoms even when she knew that he has been having extra-marital affairs. Further more, this may also explain why only 48.1 percent (43% among initiators) of the respondents admitted having ever used a condom during sexual intercourse to avoid getting or transmitting sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. An examination of the relationship between perception of condom reliability and level of education suggests not only that education plays an important role in people's perceptions regarding condom reliability in HIV/AIDS prevention but also that there is a threshhold beyond which the influence of education is almost non existent. This is clearly illustrated by the fact that whereas among the respondents with no education 84.2 percent perceived condoms to be of little or no reliability at all, the proportions among those with primary education, secondary education and secondary education and above are 69.8 percent, 61.5 percent and 61 percent, respectively. In other words, while the difference between no education and primary education is as much as 14.5 percentage points, that between primary and secondary level of education is only 7 percentage points. The difference between secondary and higher education is almost non-existent i.e. less than one percentage point.

Among the various ethnic groups captured in this study, the Nyanja seem to have the lowest confidence in the reliability of condoms followed by the Tonga, Bemba, 'Other' and the Lozi, in that order. Whereas 74.8 percent of the Nyanja respondents perceived condoms as either not having much reliability or no reliability at all the corresponding proportions among the Tonga, Bemba, and Lozi are 69.2 percent, 66.8 percent and 51.2 percent, respectively. Among other ethnic groups the percentage is 65.8 percent.

With regard to religious affiliation, 50 percent of the Muslims perceived condoms as being of much reliability. The lowest confidence was observed among the Catholics among whom only 29.9 percent perceived condoms as being very reliable. The corresponding percentages among the Protestants and others are 37.3 and 38.6, respectively. Partly due to the above demonstrated lack of confidence in the reliability of condoms, the majority of the respondents (60.5) either disapproved (53.3%) or were ambivalent (7.2%) about the idea of parents encouraging their children to use condoms as a preventive measure against HIV/AIDS. Generally, opposition to parental encouragement of condom use by children seems to be more pronounced among the non-educated and declines with level of education. Whereas among those with no education the percentage of respondents who were opposed to or ambivalent about the idea is 88.9 percent, the corresponding figures among those with primary education, secondary and higher are 73.8 percent, 57 percent and 49 percent, respectively. Except among the Muslims among who only 33.3 percent either disapproved of or were ambivalent about young people using condoms, no appreciable difference exists between the Catholics (61.1%), Protestants (68.7%) and others (67.1%).

On the question of ethnicity, the percentage of respondents opposed to the idea of young people using condoms was highest (70.9) among other ethnic groups other than among the Nyanja (66.4%), Tonga (65.3), or Bemba (56.3%). The Lozi had the lowest percentage of respondents opposed to or ambivalent about the idea of young people using condoms.

It must be pointed out here that although the majority of respondents cited perceived the unreliability of condoms and the fear of promoting immorality to justify their resitance to the use of condoms, the underlying reason is mainly the traditional African perception of how sex should be performed and what its functions are. As will be amplified later, in traditional Zambian society, sex was primarily for reproduction which meant that it had to be penetrative coitus involving the discharge of sperms into a woman. The implication of this is that any physical barrier was considered to be unacceptable and immoral. It is this perception, and not the perceived reliability of condoms or fear to promote immorality which, in our opinion, is responsible for the overwelming resistance to condom use among the study population.

Prevalence, Structure and Content of Inititiation Ceremonies

A Historical Perspective

Before tackling the present, it is imperative to remind ourselves, albeit briefly, of the past by examining how initiation ceremonies were conducted in the past among various ethnic groups. Among the Lozi people of western province, initiation of a girl started with her first menstrual period. The girl was secluded and, through words and dances, married women instructed her on how to behave during conjugal embraces of her husband. She was also instructed on how to preserve her husband's affection. After seclusion, the girl was given in marriage to her husband in-waiting because very few girls reached the age of puberty without being already betrothed for marriage (Strike D. 1961, Turner 1952).

Like among the Lozi, initiation of a girl among the Bemba started with her first menstruation. The Bemba initiation however was in three phases which lasted for between 6 and 12 months (Maxwell K.B, 1983). Upon having her first period, which was regarded as a sign of readiness for initiation, elderly women instructed her on issues pertaining to womanhood, marriage and sexuality, respect for elders and her husband.

Among the Lumbu of Nanzela, girls were initiated in groups and this was done before puberty since it was believed that the rite was necessary before menstruation could take place, meaning that the girl could never see her first menses (Jaspan, 1953). Also among the Ndembo of North-Western province, the initiation of a girl was done before the onset of menses. It was when a girl's breasts began to ripen that her parents thought of passing her through the initiation ceremony or *Nkanga*. The girl was betrothed very early at about 7 or 8 years old but the girl got married only after passing through *Nkanga* (Turner V.W., 1981).

Among the Lunda-Lovale of North-Western province, the young girl was taught how to lie with her husband, in order to give him the greatest satisfaction. Intra/vaginal medicines were also taught all aimed at pleasing the husband sexually (White, 1988, Spring, 1976). The Tongas of Southern province also initiated their daughters at puberty, but they did not teach much on sexual matters believing that the girl could learn by observation (Turner, 1953).

Among the Nsenga of Eastern province, the initiation of the girl started from the beginning of enlarging of her breasts. She anointed herself with oil extracted from burned seeds mixed with

powder made from burnt roots. The girl began her instructions from her grandmother who was usually a widow. When she experienced her first period (menses) she reported it to the old woman, who later secluded her. She spent about three months in the house during which period she was instructed on how to live with and please her husband, including sexual matters, and how to behave towards elders. The girl was allowed to marry at any time thereafter (Smith,1962).

Inititiation Ceremonies Today

The prevalence of initiation ceremonies is reflected not only in the number of current initiators who were found in the five study areas, but also by the number of respondents who were initiated in urban areas, the number of respondents who knew one or more initiators in their communities, reported number of girls initiated within one year prior to the study as well as by the length of time current initiators have been conducting initiation ceremonies. On all the indicators mentioned above, there is no doubt that the initiation ceremony is extremely prevalent, particularly in Lusaka. As already mentioned, 41.2 percent of the respondents in this study indicated that they were current initiators while 58.8 percent were former initiates and the majority (61.3%) of these were initiated in urban areas. As regards the number of initiators known, only 24 percent indicated that they knew of no initiator in their community while the rest knew at least one initiator (16.8%), two (11.5), three (12.8%), four (9%) and five (2.8%). The proportion of respondents who knew more than five initiators is 23.1 percent while the percentage of initiators who had initiated more than 3 girls within one year prior to the study is 54.4 percent.
On the criterion of length of time a respondent has been an initiator, valid cases indicate that 56.9 percent have been conducting initiation ceremonies for less than five years while 43.1 percent reported having been carrying on the practice for more than five years. Of the current initiators, 9.5 percent last conducted a ceremony less than a week before the study while 18.4 percent, 11.6 percent did so less than a week, a month, respectively, before the study. Overall, close to 82 percent of the respondents had conducted at least one initiation ceremony in less than a year prior to the study.
A comparison of the past and present reveals both continuities and discontinuities in the structure or organisation of initiation ceremonies. As discussed earlier, in traditional Zambian society, a girl was initiated immediately signs of first menstruation were noticed. After the initiation the girl was considered an adult and was,almost invariably, married into a relationship most often arranged by parents before the initiation. One feature which distinguishes past and present initiation ceremonies is that the period between initiation and marriage is longer now than before and this is implied by the data in Table 3 which show the number and percentage of respondents by the stage of initiation.

Table 3: Stage of Initiation by Ethnic Group of Respondent

STAGE	ETHNIC GROUP OF RESPONDENT					TOTAL
	BEMBA	NYANJA	TONGA	LOZI	OTHERS	

PUB.	36 (40.9)	45 (37.8)	10 (38.5)	22 (51.2)	15 (36.6)	128 (40.4)
MARR.	20 (22.7)	20 (16.8)	11 (42.3)	5 (11.6)	8 (19.5)	64 (20.2)
PUB + MARR	32 (36.4)	54 (45.4)	5 (19.2)	16 (37.2)	18 (43.9)	125 (39.4)
COLUM TOTAL	88 (27.8)	119 (37.5)	26 (8.2)	43 (13.6)	41 (12.9)	317 100

Pub.=Puberty, Marr.=Marriage, Pub.+ Marr.= Both at puberty and marriage

It is apparent that, except among the Tonga, the rest of the ethnic groups represented in the study conduct the initiation ceremony either at puberty or both at puberty and at marriage. These figures are in conformity with those reported in the *Zambia Family Planning Services Project* (Lemba et.al 1996). In that particular baseline study, it was reported that, overall, 87 percent of women in the sample underwent an initiation ceremony at puberty, marriage or both.In view of the fact that sex is a major theme during initiation ceremonies, the implication of the data presented above is that approximately 80 percent (40.4 percent + 39.4 percent) of the girls in Zambia are introduced to sex very early in life. Overall, approximately 43 percent of the respondents were initiated when they were below the age of 15 years. Whereas among the Bemba the majority (44.3%) were initiated between the age of 12 and 15 years, among the rest of the ethnic groups the majority were initiated between the age of 15 and 18 years suggesting therefore that the Bemba initiate their girls earlier than other ethnic groups in Zambia.

In 7.4 percent of cases the initiation ceremony lasted for less than a day, 37.6 percent lasted for more than a day but less than a week, 24.2 percent lasted for more than a week but less than a month while 25.5 percent lasted for more than one month. The duration of the ceremony was considered adequate by 83.1 percent of the initiators as compared to 4.7 percent and 12.2 percent who considered it too long or too short, respectively.A large proportion (46%) of the ceremonies were conducted by a member of the extended family while 34 percent were conducted by a member of the immediate family. Only in 20.1 percent of the cases was the ceremony done by a non family member. While it is true (as was the case in the past) that a large proportion of respondents in this study were initiated by a member or members of their immediate family or member or members of the extended family, there seems to be a general trend whereby other people outside the family are increasingly being accepted as initiators. In this study, 60.4 percent of the respondents found it acceptable for a person from a different tribe to initiate a girl from another tribe as long as such a person was married, experienced, mature, respectable, secretive, faithful, has or has had children of her own and she herself has been initiated. Notwithstanding the foregoing, family members are still more acceptable than non-family members. Of the total sample, 91.3, 67.6, and 83.2 percent considered the grandmother, aunt, and cousin, respectively, as being more acceptable as initiators. Only 22.1 percent and 45.8 percent thought that mothers and sisters, respectively, were acceptable. The relatively low acceptability of mothers as initiators suggests that sex is still one subject which a lot of mothers are not willing or comfortable to discuss with their daughters.

In general, duration of the initiation ceremony varies by ethnicity. For example, the shortest duration was recorded among the Tonga (50%) and among the Bemba (40.9%) whose ceremonies reportedly lasted for less than one week while the longest (more than one week but less than one month) was recorded among other ethnic groups (43.9%). This clearly demonstrates that the duration of initiation ceremonies today is shorter than in the past.

As already mentioned, in the past, a girl being initiated was taught various issues which included personal hygiene especially during menstruation; respect for elders focussing on things like speaking in a low tone, kneeling when dealing with elders; covering the head; respect for her husband by being faithful, obedient and submissive to him, how to look after him and her in-laws. Most of the education however concentrated on the actual techniques of sexual intercourse and socially approved attitudes towards them. This was appropriate and necessary since the girl was usually initiated before she knew anything about sex, and marriage in most tribes took place immediately after the initiation ceremony (Jaspan,1953).

In the present study, two types of questions were asked to determine the content of initiation ceremonies today. One question which was open-ended required respondents to list the things that were emphasised during their initiation. The responses to this question were later grouped and coded and the following categories emerged: personal hygiene, taking care of the family, sexual satisfaction of the husband, respect and, sticking to one partner and, finally, avoiding sex before and outside marriage. The importance attached to each one of these during initiation ceremonies is implied in the proportions of respondents who mentioned them as topics which were emphasised at the time they were initiated. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Number and Percentage of Respondents by the Topic Emphasised during their Initiation

TOPIC	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
HYGIENE	124	43.5
CARING FOR	72	25.1
SEX	78	27.3
RESPECT	99	34.6
ONE PARTNER	24	8.4
NO SEX OUTSIDE MARRIAGE	58	20.3

The foregoing should, however, not be interpreted to mean that actual techniques of sexual intercourse are no longer an important theme during initiation ceremonies as implied in historical literature on the practice. On the contrary, through informal discussions, it was made clear that teaching of sexual techniques is still predominant in these ceremonies except that this is expected and usually taken for granted by initiates.

One would expect that, with the colossal impact of HIV/AIDS in Zambia and the high level of awareness of its existence, the use of condoms would feature prominently in initiation ceremonies. Responses from both former initiates and initiators indicate that, surprisingly, this is not the case. As indicated earlier on, no single former initiate mentioned condom use as one of the areas emphasised during initiation. Additionally, out of the current initiators who responded to the question, only 6.5 percent reported discussing condom use during initiation. Further, informal and in-depth discussions revealed that, whenever condom use is discussed during initiation ceremonies, the emphasis is on its limitations or unreliability rather than on its preventive properties.

Apart from condom use, another subject that might be expected to receive a lot of emphasis when a girl is being initiated is the need or importance of staying with one partner and avoiding sex before and outside marriage. Even a casual scrutiny of responses to this question suggests that not much emphasis is placed on these issues. Barring the effects of small sample sizes in some cases, it is evident from data already presented that among all ethnic groups, personal hygiene receives more emphasis than sticking to one partner or avoiding sex before and outside marriage.

Finally, the conspicuous absence of widow inheritance and dry sex from the topics emphasised during initiation ceremonies suggests that there is still a lot of ground work to be done if the initiation ceremony, which is one of the very few surviving Zambian traditional cultural practices, has to be used as a channel for combating or arresting the spread of HIV/AIDS in this country.

Summary and Conclusion

This study set out to examine, among other things, prevalence, structure and content of initiation ceremonies; awareness of the existence and seriousness of HIV/AIDS and knowledge of its transmission and prevention among those involved in initiation ceremonies; initiation ceremony participants' views on the use of condoms as preventive measures against the spread of HIV/AIDS and the extent to which the knowledge disseminated in the ceremony promotes or prevents the transmission of HIV/AIDS. In addition, the study investigated willingness of initiation ceremony participants to learn about HIV/AIDS.

Among the important findings of this study are the following: initiation ceremonies are quite prevalent in Lusaka; the contents of initiation ceremonies are inadequate insofar as the fight against HIV/AIDS is concerned although the level of awareness of its (HIV/AIDS) existence and its major causes is extremely high. The study has also demonstrated not only that there was much opposition among initiators and former initiates to the idea of promoting the use of condoms as prevention against HIV/AIDS but also that there existed a tremendous willingness among initiators to learn more about HIV/AIDS.

Two points are noteworthy in as far as the overall objective of this study is concerned. Firstly, in view of the fact that the average age at first marriage in Zambia is estimated at 18.5 years (ZDHS, 1992) there is a rather lengthy period of time between initiation and marriage. Secondly, and as a result of the above, a large proportion of today's Zambian female adolescents is afforded a greater opportunity and a longer period to engage in pre-marital sexual activities (most of which are fleeting and transitory in nature) which greatly increases the risk of exposure to HIV/AIDS. Modern school-based education which keeps girls longer in an unmarried state and the decline in age at menarche could be responsible for the widening gap between initiation and marriage.

On the basis of the foregoing, it is concluded therefore that, indirectly, today's initiation

ceremonies enhance the spread of HIV/AIDS in that whereas, on one hand girls are introduced to sex and how to enjoy it at an early age, on the other hand no appreciable serious attempt is made to equip them with the necessary tools to protect themselves against contracting HIV/AID and other sexually transmitted diseases. However, the willingness expressed by most respondents to learn more about HIV/AIDS suggests that if seriously looked into, the initiation ceremony could be turned into a very effective traditional channel for disseminating information to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in this country.

Notes

1. In the presentation that follows, the Luvale, Lunda and Kaonde are grouped together under the category 'Others'because of the small sample sizes from each of these ethnic groups.

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Augustus K. Kapungwe
SDS Department
University of Zambia

P.O. Box 32379
Lusaka
Zambia
Phone/Fax:260-1-290320 (W); 260-1-292038 (H)

Jeremiah Chikovore, Lennarth Nystrom, Gunilla Lindmark, and Beth Maina Ahlberg
Denial and violence:Paradoxes in men's perspectives to premarital sex and pregnancy in Rural Zimbabwe

Abstract

This paper describes the perspectives of men on premarital sex and pregnancy in rural Zimbabwe. It is based on data collected using three qualitative methods including focus group discussions and individual interviews among men and women, and self-generated questions and statements among school youth. The paper illuminates the paradoxes of denial and violence implicit in the way men speak: as relatives on the one hand and as and as partners on the other regarding pregnancy in girls.The men say they react violently to premarital pregnancy, but neither do they tolerate sexual activity, or allow contraceptive information or service for unmarried daughters and sisters, even though their accounts paradoxically suggest that sexual abuse of young girls is rampant. Despite denying them preventive service and information, men speaking as partners expect girls to have knowledge about sexuality, the menstrual cycle and pregnancy. They blame their girlfriends for getting pregnant, despite indications from the accounts of the girls that it is male partners who pressure the girls into unprotected sexual activity. In such circumstances, the girls say the pregnancy may translate into unsafe, induced abortion. These are complexities at the micro-level that need to be understood for any meaningful programme to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

Introduction

This paper describes perspectives of men and their involvement in adolescent girls' sexual and reproductive health (SRH). It specifically focuses on men's reasoning around premarital pregnancy, particularly the paradoxes men describe to be their response to pregnancy and contraceptive use by girls before marriage. The paradoxes of denial and violence are conceptualised in the context of rapid social change including modernisation processes which have dismantled and transformed institutions that previously regulated adolescent sexuality, marriage and gender relations (Population Reference Bureau (PRB) 2000a, Ahlberg 1994), and introduced new actors and new ways of seeing and dealing with adolescent sexuality.

Background to adolescent sexual and reproductive health

Adolescent SRH has become a major issue in national and international discourses in recent years, mainly due to its gloomy scenario with high rates of early pregnancy, unsafe abortion and related complications, school dropout, and STIs including AIDS (PRB 2000b). Part of the explanation for this scenario are the rapid changes that have occurred over the past century in many countries in the African region including Zimbabwe. Urbanisation and migration have altered family structures and gender relations in families, changing the social and economic contexts within which young people live. In most countries in Africa, the transformations were set in motion by the establishment of colonial rule which among other things changed households' livelihood which

was then largely dependent on land, and altered the settlement patterns and life in the countryside (International Political Economic Network (IPENET) 2002) as it forced men to provide labour at settler controlled mines and farms (Van Onselen 1976).

Pre-colonial African societies in Zimbabwe were organised around the land, a collectively owned property. A portion of land was used until its fertility declined, whereupon a new piece was cleared and the older one was left to revitalise. Women tilled the land and looked after children. Men's duties mainly involved preparing new fields and providing meat for the family, although it cannot be claimed that men were breadwinner in this context (IPENET 2002). Married women enjoyed support from kin, and elders watched and regulated relations between young husbands and wives, ensuring protection against domestic violence and abuse (IPENET 2002).

The colonial administration demarcated special areas for Africans, forcing them to cease rotational farming. Deliberate measures to generate a supply of labour for farms and mines forced the men to migrate, separating them from wives and children, and in the process creating a new sexuality in form of prostitution (Bassett & Mhloyi 1991). Meanwhile, the workload for women increased as they had to also do tasks originally done by men. The increasing pressure on land meant that rural households became poorer, and this caused some women to migrate to the cities, mines, and farms to join their husbands, giving rise to a new type of family which was individualistic, and within which the man now played the role of breadwinner (IPENET 2002). Unlike in the communal areas, compound accommodation was crowded with little privacy and entire families often sharing single quarters (Van Onselen 1976).

In the villages, men represented the family in public sphere, and there were specific requirements for moving up the ladder into becoming a man, such as marrying and setting up a household (Epprecht 1998). In contrast, in the new working environment on the farms and mines, a man could remain a 'boy' in spite of his age, marital status, or number of children. Moreover, several men found themselves staying longer in 'boyhood' because they eked a living on meagre earnings and could not meet the cost of the increasingly monetised bride wealth. The loss of authority and status for men in the new working and social environment coincided with the new definition of breadwinner which was increasingly difficult to fulfil. A potential outcome of this scenario is that men become violent even with family members as one way to attempt to assert authority within the family (Reproductive Health Outlook 2002, Gwagwa 1998).

For the adolescents, the situation of increasing poverty, limited accommodation, and changing family structures meant that their sexual and reproductive health circumstances were also transformed. Traditional structures of socialisation and the management of childhood and transition into adulthood were affected. The traditional multi-generational extended family, within which adolescents grew and social values were inculcated, has been increasingly replaced by nuclear or single-parent families, and in some cases, families with a complete absence of parents (Rivers & Aggleton 2002). Socialisation institutions, for instance the initiation rituals, have disappeared in some instances (Fuglesang 1997), or have lost meanings or assumed new forms (Ahlberg 1994). Grandparents who used to play a major role in socialisation and imparting of knowledge on sexual matters have also been separated from the youth by schooling and labour migration. Formal education, along with peers have thus assumed prominence as sources of information for young people (Liljestrom *et al.* 1994).

But the potential for schools to offer life skills education is limited, in part due to opposition from parents, school authorities, politicians, and religious groups (UNAIDS 1999a, Ahlberg 1994). It is argued that giving information and service to adolescents would legitimise premarital or casual

sex (UNAIDS 1997) although increasing evidence indicates this may not be the case (Rivers & Aggleton 2002). In Zimbabwe for example, the implementation of a school programme for AIDS prevention was opposed by teachers and religious groups (UNICEF 1996). Some teachers felt that the issues included in the AIDS education were too advanced for primary school pupils while authorities in some mission schools viewed the project as going against their moral values. In a recent study in Zimbabwe, only 50 percent of men and 37 percent of women agreed that young people of 12-14 years could be taught about condom use in the attempt to prevent HIV infection (Central Statistical Office and Macro International Inc. 2000). In Kenya, school authorities objected to a feedback discussion with pupils from whom the questions had been generated, the argument being that the questions were too explicit on sexual matters (Ahlberg *et al*. 2001). Where life skills education is provided, its content usually revolves around basic biology while topics on sexuality are avoided. Most teachers moreover lack basic counselling skills and are not adequately trained to teach life skills education (Population Council 2001a).

Within the modernisation processes, the increasing significance of cash in social and economic life has transformed practices such as *lobola*. *Lobola*, a transaction between families at the marriage of a daughter took the form of a transfer of animals such as cattle and goats, gifts (Batezat & Mwalo 1989), and in some cases, labour (Gelfand 1971, Liljestrom *et al*. 1994). *Lobola* remains important in contemporary Zimbabwean and other societies in countries in Southern Africa. However, it is now a monetary form of exchange (Geographical Magazine 2001), and has increasingly become a compensation to parents for raising and educating a daughter. The more educated the daughter the higher the *lobola*, where payment may sometimes be in form of mobile phones (*Sunday News* 2001). It is common also for parents to demand huge payments before the burial of a daughter in a case where *lobola* has not been fully paid (Women's Action Group 1996).

The prohibitive silence, the view that a girl should remain chaste until marriage and the related demand for family honour, paradoxically exist side-by-side with a great deal of unprotected sexual activity, and the sexual exploitation and abuse of young girls both within their families and with what is commonly known as the 'sugar daddy' phenomenon (UNAIDS 1999b, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). The latter is a relationship where elderly men entice young poor girls into sexual activity in exchange for money or gifts. In a school-based study in Zimbabwe, Leach *et al*. (2000) found that 92 percent of the girls had been proposed to by an adult man. Young girls are sexually exploited by elderly men also in the belief that they are free from AIDS (Population Council 2001b, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001), and can cleanse the men of the infection (UNAIDS 1999b, UNICEF 2000). The sexual abuse and exploitation occur even in school settings where girls are forced into sexual relationships with teachers on the promise of benefits such as high grades (Koster-Oyekan 1998, UNAIDS 1997). When girls are abused within or outside the family by young or elderly men, parents may be unable to protect them for fear of losing *lobola* or in an effort to save the family name.

Most studies on adolescent SRH have chiefly employed quantitative approaches (for instance Gage & Meekers 1994, Campbell & Mbizvo 1994, Okpani & Okpani 2000, Siziya *et al*. 1998, Kasule *et al*. 1997, Rwenge 2000). These quantitative studies need however to be complemented with other research approaches more appropriate for addressing complexities in sexual matters and for generating experiences and meanings (Rich & Ginsburg 1999) associated with sex and SRH.

Given also that adolescent sexuality is socially constructed in interaction with different actors, it is

pertinent that groups with different perspectives are included in the mapping to identify determinants of and to seek solutions to adolescent SRH. Men's perspectives thus need to be understood as part of the social world of the young people. This paper presents some perspectives of men to adolescent SRH.

The research process and methods

This paper is based on data collected within a study initiated to explore the views of men to abortion (Chikovore *et al*. 2002). The study site was Chiredzi, a rural district in south eastern Zimbabwe bordering Mozambique and South Africa. It was chosen because it is among the districts with the highest maternal mortality in Zimbabwe (Government of Zimbabwe 1997). The administrative ward where the study took place is situated 60 kilometres northeast of the district headquarters, and was chosen for its accessibility through a highway linking the district headquarters with another border town (Mutare) and the capital city Harare. Data were collected in 1998-2000 after getting ethical clearance from the Medical Research Council of Zimbabwe and the Research Ethics Committee of the Medical Faculty, Uppsala University in Sweden. Permission was also sought from the local authorities before the start of fieldwork.

Due to the complex nature of the topic, and the fact that little is known about men and their perspectives, the study used qualitative methods and an exploratory or emergent design. The study began with focus group discussions (FGDs) with men. We viewed FGDs as appropriate for an initial exploration of general beliefs and practices around induced abortion. Thirty-five men, selected to vary by age and marital status, participated. We found that in the FGDs, men surprisingly did not view abortion as a health problem for women as we had expected. Rather they saw it as an indication of illicit sexual activity by married women. The men were moreover anxious about their wives' sexuality, particularly when away from home (see Chikovore *et al*. 2002). Initially, the men had also denied that abortion occurred within marriage. Instead, they said it was common among young unmarried girls. However, as they interacted in the group, it became clear the men were just embarrassed to discuss abortion within marriage.

On the basis of the accounts by men in the FGDs, four ever-married women were interviewed in order to gain their perspectives and experiences of sexuality, contraceptive use, and abortion. In addition, 29 men were interviewed in order to gain insights on their personal experiences around issues emerging in focus groups, including abortion among adolescent girls. Participants in FGDs and interviews were identified with help from a male family planning motivator and a female village health worker. All interviews and FGDs were conducted by the first author and were tape-recorded.

Men in FGDs and individual interviews spoke about abortion among adolescent girls as partners and as relatives/guardians. But for them, whether sexual partner or guardian, the men described violence as one of their responses to a pregnant girl. These accounts necessitated inclusion of adolescent girls in part to obtain their own perspectives and experiences of premarital pregnancy and abortion.

We used the self-generated question method among school youth. Five hundred and fifty-six pupils from two primary schools grades 5-7 (aged 10-18) and one secondary school forms 1-4 (aged 13-25) took part in the study. The self-generated question method involved asking pupils to write anonymously but include their age and sex, questions about adolescence, growing up, or any other issues, or those questions they could not ask their teachers, parents or other adults for fear

or shame. Pupils were encouraged to use the language that they felt most comfortable in. The method was chosen for its potential to facilitate self-expression among the adolescents on this otherwise taboo subject. The method had been used in Kenya after realising the difficulties young people faced in expressing themselves in focus group discussions on matters of sexuality. The method enabled school youth in Kenya to raise more issues of an intimate nature, otherwise suppressed due to normative constraints (Ahlberg *et al.* 2001).

In the current study, the questions were also explicit and illuminated concerns of adolescents in ways not thought about by the researchers. For instance, the youth described their experiences and expectations in heterosexual relations, citing the contextual pressures for sexual activity, and abuse by adults including teachers. The accounts by the school youth also indicated that they lack knowledge about sexual and reproductive matters, and cherish a number of myths about sex. Girls moreover indicated the anxieties they feel about pregnancy and the response of their partners and relatives. These fears often force them to contemplate, and actually secure, abortion. The free writing thus enabled the youth to highlight diverse issues in ways that helped better understand their life situation and context.

There were however some problems in using this method in a school setting. Due to the lack of a large hall, the pupils could not sit together in one room. And despite our insistence that pupils write down their questions privately, there was in some instances a great deal of whispering and giggling. Moreover, the presence of class teachers in the rooms could hinder pupils from being explicit in their questions for fear of being discovered. Nonetheless, they raised issues in ways that illuminated more sharply their paradoxical experiences.

Data analysis

As is common in exploratory research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, Rich & Ginsburg 1999), data analysis was ongoing as data was collected. This permitted the identification of emerging issues and allowed us to follow them during the research process.

The audio taped FGDs and interviews were transcribed and translated from Shona into English. The first and last authors read and re-read the transcripts separately and then discussed coding segments bearing meaning, and then grouping codes into categories and themes. Conceptual linkages were made between categories to form the themes presented here. Questions and statements generated from school youth were also transcribed and translated, keeping the translation as close to the text as possible. Those written in English were retained in their original form except for minor editing in part to keep the original way of expression. The questions were coded and categories were formed around the codes. Ten categories, including AIDS, sexually transmitted disease, abortion, pregnancy, maturation, marriage, contraceptive use, sexuality, reproduction, and education were generated from the data. Since the primary reason for including the youth was in response to the accounts of men, only those categories shedding further light into men's accounts are presented in this paper, for instance abortion, pregnancy, sexuality, and contraceptive use, violence, and forced marriage.

Findings

In this section we present three themes derived from the data. The first theme concerns the circumstances and sexual relationships in which according to men, premarital sex takes place,

pregnancy occurs and abortion is a likely outcome. The second is about responses described by men speaking as partners and as relatives concerning premarital sex and pregnancy. Lastly, the perspectives of girls including their fears and experiences are presented. The girls illuminated their paradoxical life situation, particularly how they are trapped in the violence from their male relatives, and denial or rejection by male partners. Being so trapped, the girls contemplate and are actually forced to abort, although as their accounts suggest, they have little knowledge about abortion or where to get help. Quotes from interviews, focus group discussions as well as the self-generated questions and statements from the school youth are used to illustrate various aspects of the themes.

Sexual relations and circumstances leading to premarital pregnancy and abortion

Men as guardians and as sexual partners described the girl as a calculating agent, her main goal being how to get a marriage partner. Marriage was viewed by men as a major factor influencing the behaviour of the girls. According to the men interviewed, girls use various strategies to reach their goals. Girls for example, commonly enter into sexual relations with several men simultaneously. A middle-aged man said in an interview:
> ...you ask the girl why she has many boyfriends and she will say, 'I fear that if I have only one, he may fail to marry me'.

The accounts of the men also suggest that even though girls are calculating agents, having many sexual partners may be problematic and the girl may opt for an abortion once pregnant but is not sure of the man responsible. A middle-aged man made this point:
> …when she gets pregnant, the girl then does not know which man is responsible…
> because, you know, these days the girls have many boyfriends…

According to the men, girls may also abort when pregnancy results from sexual relations with elderly men. In their questions and statements, the schoolgirls seemed to acknowledge the sexual exploitation of young girls by elderly men, which leads to pregnancy, abortion, and school dropout:
> I think these problems are caused by love of money. We go out with old men and get pregnant. The girl then decides to take pills and die or kill the child in the stomach (12 yr.). I think we girls are cheap. When they have sex with us they use their money. Eventually you get pregnant and for you to go to school you are now too embarrassed. That is what causes girls to remove pregnancy (14 yr.) Why is it that a small girl is made pregnant by a *zidhara* (old man)? (14 yr.).

The men added that the girls often seduce men whom they consider to be materially well off enough to offer a secure marriage. A girl may however be impregnated by a man she would not want to marry. In such a case, the girl may simply point at another man, often a man she feels is capable of comfortably looking after her. A young man referred to his own sister to illustrate this behaviour that he viewed to be typical of most girls:
> … my sister was 15… She had too many boyfriends… but wanted to marry a specific one… when she got pregnant he was away... She then ran to his place… But he noticed she was already pregnant, forcing her to confess that she wanted to live with him because

it would be more comfortable…

The perception that girls lie about the responsibility for a pregnancy seemed to cause a great deal of anxiety among male partners. A participant speaking as a partner in a FGD with unmarried men said:

> … with some girls, you actually see that she is involved with many men… When she gets pregnant, she cannot tell who is responsible. You may think you are the one responsible, but then sometimes you really can tell that you are not the only one … She may just pick at you because she looks and says, 'Look at his family. Would it not be nice to marry into his family?'…

Questions and statements suggest that schoolboys are similarly concerned about being falsely picked as responsible for a pregnancy:

> When your girl has another boyfriend with whom she has sex and she gets pregnant, and then says you are responsible when you never had sex with her, what do you do? (15 yr.) Who said sex guarantees marriage? (14 yr.) When a girl lies to police that you made her pregnant, what do you do? (15 yr.) How can I prove that this is truly my pregnancy; how really can I calculate the days? (15 yr.) Why is it that when you are seen with a girl they say you are the one who made her pregnant when in fact she had sex with many other men? (16 yr.)

The accounts by boys however also suggest that the boys are curious about sexual activity, but are poorly informed about conception:

> What can you do to acquire things to give to a girl so that she gets pregnant? (12 yr.) Does pregnancy catch after sex with a boy? So why do other girls sleep with boys and not get pregnant? (15 yr.) I do not know what should be done with girls who do not get pregnant after they have had sex (17 yr.) When a penis gets in, how far does it go for a woman to get pregnant? (18 yr.)

Having sexual intercourse during their most fertile period was described by men as another strategy girls use deliberately to trap the man they want for marriage. During a FGD with unmarried men, two participants expressed these sentiments:

> …when a girl wants to marry you, she encourages you to have sex with her knowing that she will get pregnant… (*group laughter*)… And then shortly after - she says to herself first: 'Yes! I have had sex so I am pregnant' - so she tells you that she is pregnant, even before you can see it yourself. She is already excited that her plan has worked…

The other participant in the same group added:

> …Indeed she lies about her monthly cycle… you then think that if you have sex with her she will not get pregnant. Yet she deliberately lied to you. Then she gets pregnant…

Questions and statements from the girls seem however to contradict the claims by men that girls are calculating, and that they deliberately use sexual intercourse as a strategy to secure marriage partner. Rather, the questions and statements indicate that they have little knowledge about conception and contraception:

If you have sex with a boy, do you get pregnant right there? (11 yr.) How many times of sex does it take to get pregnant? (13 yr.) At what age can a boy make a girl pregnant? (13 yr.) If a boy fondles my breasts, do I get pregnant? (14 yr.) If you have sex for one day, do you get pregnant? (16 yr.)

The girls appear to have little knowledge about the monthly period, what it is, or how the safe period works:

If I know that tomorrow is the first day of my monthly cycle, can I sleep with a man? (11 yr.) What happens to me when I am about to menstruate? (12 yr.) When I bleed, what does it mean because sometimes I am caught unawares? (12 yr.) When I release blood from the front, do I have a disease? (13 yr.) When one releases blood from her (private) parts, does it mean she has AIDS or it means something else? (13 yr.) When you start having menses what happens to you? (13 yr.) Is it painful to menstruate? Why? (13 yr.) What causes menstruation and how can it be prevented? (13 yr.) So do men also release that blood? It surprises me because it comes out when I do not expect it. I am surprised by that (menstruation) because I have not yet had sex (14 yr.) When girls have menses, is it a result of sexual intercourse? (15 yr.) Since I started menstruating, I have had many diseases. I do not know what causes that. I wonder what causes the disease of period pains, and how it can be treated? (16 yr.) Why do boys not menstruate? (19 yr.)

The accounts of girls furthermore indicate that it is not them trapping their sexual partners into marriage. Rather, it is the male partners who pressure them into unprotected sexual intercourse even at times when the girls are unwilling. The pressure from the men may involve rape and violence, even when the girls consider that they are in a love relationship. The girls fear to report the rape due to threats from male sexual partners or ignorance of where to report the incident.

When boys have a girl, they demand her breasts to fondle (11 yr.) Why is it when a boy is accepted by a girl he rushes into saying he wants sex? (12 yr.) What can a girl do if she is forced to have sex by her boyfriend? (15 yr.) If you have a boyfriend with whom you have sex all the time, though you really may not wish to have sex with him all the time, and you get pregnant, is it okay to remove? (16 yr.) Some boys even force you to have sex with them when you do not want. You fear reporting him to police as he may kill you or beat you (17 yr.) What if a girl does not like having sex, but the boy wants and forces her even when these two are well in love? (17 yr.) My problem is that since I started going out with my boy he does not want to use protection. I am now worried that I may get pregnant and he will not accept, and this may cause me to remove the pregnancy (17 yr.)

Contrary to the views of men that girls become pregnant deliberately for marriage, the girls worry a great deal about getting pregnant before marriage particularly because this forces them to terminate schooling. They may even want to prevent pregnancy, but have little knowledge how to do so, nor have they access to contraceptive services:

When a girl without a husband gets pregnant, what is done to her? (12 yr.) How can one avoid getting pregnant? (13 yr.) If we want do *zvemumba* (what married people do) and we have no condoms, can I get pregnant? (13 yr.) If I do not want to get pregnant what do I do? If I want to use pills like other women to prevent pregnancy, I am not allowed. They say they are for women with husbands, so what do I do? (14 yr.) Others do not

complete education because they are ashamed to come to school while pregnant. (12 yr.) What can I do if I am pregnant but want to continue with my schooling? (16 yr.) At our school some girls have dropped out because they are pregnant. If you get pregnant while in school, whom do you tell? (17 yr.)

The following section describes the manner in which men, speaking as relatives and as partners, say they respond to premarital pregnancy. The men admit being violent in the case of both premarital pregnancy and contraceptive use by unmarried daughters, sisters, as well as girlfriends.

Responses of male guardians to premarital pregnancy and contraceptive use

For the male guardians, *lobola* was said to be a major concern especially because pregnancy before marriage diminishes the value of the bride. An elderly man described it in the following way:

> …She has destroyed my chances of enjoying *lobola*… I supported her when she grew up. When she got ill, I used to run around with her… And then she does the impossible! …

Male guardians said they react angrily and abuse the pregnant girl physically and psychologically. The girl is simply referred to as *hure* (prostitute). An elderly man said during an interview:

> … You will know that your daughter is now a *hure*, getting pregnant without a husband…*Hure*! You already know this one has become a *hure*…. We shout at her…. 'Look, you have become a *hure*, isn't it? …You do not have a husband, so you are a *hure*! ... We shout at her…'You are a *hure*!'…We really are mad…

In the event that the man responsible or the one identified by the girl to be responsible for the pregnancy rejects or does not want to marry the girl, seduction damages are paid to the girl's parents, as the following quote from an interview with an elderly man indicates:

> … when a boy and a girl have sex, and pregnancy results…. her parents will expect that which is due to them. They say, 'Your son *damaged* my daughter, so what do you think we should do?' If I see that my son really has *damaged* another person's daughter, I should go to the girl's parents and pay so that our relations in the community are not disturbed…

When a pregnancy occurs before marriage, the girl is therefore forced to disclose the man responsible for the pregnancy. The men elaborated on how they force a girl to confess. They beat her and force her to move to the man, who is by now referred to as *murume wake* (her husband). A young married man said in an interview:

> We ask her whose pregnancy it is. If she refuses to say, we beat her and tell her to go to *murume wake*… There is no other way… You beat her so she moves to the home of the man who made her pregnant… That is where she should stay…

The girl's mother is also blamed for the pregnancy. According to the men interviewed in this study, fear of being blamed and violence from the husband forces the mother to assist her daughter to secure abortion, or move to *murume wake*. A middle-aged man said during another interview:

… the girl's mother tells her to go to *murume wake*… preferably before her father knows about it… because once he knows about the pregnancy, he for sure beats… he beats the mother...

This point was corroborated by the married women interviewed in this study who said they are indeed blamed and exposed to violence. According to one woman:

… the men ask, 'So, where were you when your daughter got pregnant?'… You see, everything bad is blamed on the mother. Even if it is a son, the mother is said to be responsible for his behaviour…

To the male guardians, neither is contraceptive use by an unmarried girl acceptable because it implies she is sexually active. According to the young men in a FGD, even though contraceptive use may help the girl avoid pregnancy, it may also interfere with her marriage, thus making the girl an economic burden to her family:

… when she uses contraceptives, she is capable of preventing pregnancy… this can also prevent her from getting married… then she remains at home… so it will be difficult for you to keep on supporting a person (*group laughter*) who does not benefit you. As a father one hopes that his daughter will get married. Is it not so? And then she begins using pills…

A middle-aged participant stressed in an interview that contraceptive use is not tolerated. Instead, initiation rituals are used to teach girls what it means to be an adult woman:

… people here do not favour prevention methods. That is not accepted at all. They think that by encouraging contraceptive use they also encourage a girl to become *hure*. Instead, we teach *komba* (initiation) in this community … We teach our daughter that she is now grown up, and what we expect of her, but not that she should now obtain condoms.

Those girls who attempt to use condoms or pills seem to be exposed to even heavier punishment and violence as illustrated in a FGD with married men:

You get hold of her and beat her up… so much so that she won't touch those pills… before marriage. Why should she use them? … Without a husband! …

Another participant in the same group added:

I would ask what she is doing with pills when she is not yet married. I, her brother, must use them because I am married. What would she know about pills when she is a mere schoolgirl and thus a virgin?

An unmarried young man described during another FGD how he would react on discovering his sister using contraceptives. He said amid agreement in the group:

… I would take them and throw them away or into a pit latrine…

Responses described by male partners

The men interviewed also described the way men as partners respond to premarital pregnancy. If the girl moves or is forced to move to his home, he may simply migrate to avoid marriage:

… if I do not want to marry, but a girl has run to my home, I leave and go away. Then I stay away for 3-5 years. My parents get tired of looking after a person, one who does not offer them any benefits. She will eventually realise it is no use waiting for me. Then she will return to her home.

Migration to other rural and urban areas within Zimbabwe, but also to South Africa was commonly mentioned as a strategy used by young men to escape being forced to marry. Examples of men who 'ran away' were given during individual interviews. Even the accounts of schoolboys in the self-generated questions and statements indicate that they are aware of migration as an option and strategy for young men to escape forced marriage:

If I *nyenga* (have sex with) a girl and she later gets pregnant, what do I do? I become so bothered that in the end I go to Joni (Johannesburg) and they say 'the man disappeared' (16 yr.). Why is it when a boy marries, he goes away to some far away place where he suffers? (17 yr.). We boys leave school after making someone pregnant and go to South Africa. (18 yr.)

The accounts above indicate how girls are trapped between interests of their male relatives and partners, how they are exposed to violence at family level, and rejection by the male partners. In the following section, the girls describe their views of pregnancy before marriage and their experiences of violence, denial from men, and silence about sexual matters.

Girls' descriptions of being trapped

From the self-generated questions and statements, girls express concern over the risk of violence from male relatives and rejection by male partners. The girls say they are unsure how to deal with the situation, particularly how to approach their partners with the news of pregnancy. Their questions illuminate the nature of their concern, being assaulted and chased from home, and being rejected by partners:

What does it mean for a person to deny after making a girl pregnant? (12 yr.) Why is it when a boy marries, he runs away from his wife? (12 yr.) Why do people enjoy making someone pregnant, and when they are told they start denying? (12 yr.) If a girl has a boyfriend and has been made pregnant, what does she say to him? (13 yr.) If you get pregnant at 13, what do you do? Parents chase you from home, what causes all that? (13 yr.) Why do parents chase their children away when they are pregnant? (age missing) If I get pregnant and he denies, what is the meaning of this? If you are a girl and you get pregnant, you stop going to school because of this love for men, then you are rejected by the man and you suffer (13 yr.). When they fall in love, it is very new and nice. The boy tells the girl, 'let me accompany you fetching firewood', when the aim is to make her pregnant in the bushes. But when the girl is pregnant, the boy starts to deny. But why does the boy deny the pregnancy? (15 yr.) When I get pregnant, will my parents chase me from their home? (15 yr.) My parents chase me away because I am pregnant, and my boyfriend and his parents also chase me, so what do I do? (16 yr.) If a boy makes me pregnant and denies, and all my relatives are chasing me from home, what do I do? (16 yr.)

The questions and statements by girls moreover indicate that abortion may be sought as a way to

avoid parental violence in the event of premarital pregnancy. However, the girls also express a lack of knowledge or possibilities of how to do it:

> If I get pregnant and my parents don't know and I want it removed, what do I do? (16 yr.) What are the methods of abortion when my parents say they want to kill me? (15 yr.) If my father says he will kill me what can I do? It's better for me to abort (16 yr.).

Discussion and conclusion

This paper has presented the perspectives of men on adolescent girls' SRH. Referring also to girls' own experiences and fears, the paper has illuminated the paradoxes of violence, denial, and silence in the ways men say they view and respond to pregnancy and sexuality before marriage. In such a context, young girls are trapped between violence from male relatives and rejection by male partners, causing the girls to contemplate and even secure abortion.

One consequence of the historical transformations discussed earlier was the silencing of adolescent sexuality. Different stakeholders including the Church, the school authorities, the political leadership, and parents, increasingly have had difficulties reaching a common ground. This has resulted in different and at times contradictory messages being provided to youth (Card 1999). The silence, denial and complexity around adolescent sexuality present challenges also to research, and were one reason for using qualitative methods in this study. Because of their flexibility and possibility to allow reflection, qualitative methods give voice to the participants and this allows them to set their own priorities. The FGDs, for example, right from the beginning allowed issues to emerge in unexpected ways. The men initially denied that abortion occurs in marriage, saying that it is a problem among young unmarried girls. However, the ensuing dynamics and group processes in their interaction allowed men to shift this view and to indicate that their initial response was to avoid embarrassment for what could be construed as failure to control women sexuality. Contrary to our understanding that abortion is a serious health problem for women and families (WHO 1997), for the men in this study abortion was a sign of illicit sexual activity on the part of a wife. The men viewed abortion in marriage as less of a health problem than an issue of sexuality (Chikovore *et al.* 2002).

The accounts of men about abortion being a problem of adolescent girls induced the study to explore further into the perspectives of men to adolescent girls and to premarital sex, pregnancy and abortion. The self-generated question method was chosen for its appropriateness in promoting free expression among the adolescents. While qualitative methods are flexible and allow reflection on the part of the participants and researchers as discussed above, they are nonetheless not without shortcomings. The researchers, for example, commonly depend on gatekeepers in entering their study communities (Barbour & Kitzinger 1999). In our case, family planning workers who already had established a certain relationship with the local community were used as the guides. Potentially, this could negatively affect the way we were viewed by the research participants. We however have little reason to believe this was the case. The guides did not participate in the interviews. Moreover, the active discussions, the contradictions, and the shifting of positions by men particularly in FGD may be further evidence against such negative effect. Another issue of concern was the giggling and whispering during the question generation exercise. We cannot say how much this affected the data, but the breadth of issues raised, including questions of intimate character and personal experiences suggests the effect may have been minimal. Whispering and giggling seemed to be the result of excitement for being asked to

write on a taboo subject within the restrictive school environment. The excitement may therefore have helped the school youth to express their concerns more candidly. The youth may also have hoped to get immediate answers to their questions, although they had been informed that the exercise would be of use in a general way in the future policies by the government and other agencies concerned with the welfare of the young people.

A criticism often levelled against qualitative inquiry is that it relies on small samples and hence cannot be generalised in the statistical sense (Oka & Shaw 1999). However, qualitative research as case description can be generalised to contexts similar to the area studied. This however requires that the analytical framework, including study context and research process, is presented in what Guba and Lincoln (1989) call an audit trail with thick description so others may recognise the findings in other contexts.

The paradoxes described in this paper highlight the dilemmas that families and communities face in dealing with adolescence and adolescent SRH. Through the historical process traditional structures have been destroyed or transformed, new actors and perspectives have been introduced and families have become poorer and more individualistic. The men are under pressure to provide for their families in contexts where they are increasingly without employment. As households get poorer, the importance of money for the welfare of the members of households has also increased. Van Onselen (1976) describes the impact of labour mobilisation practices in the early part of the last century. The significance of money increased and individuals in the families became valued to the extent that they contributed to the cash income of the family. Meanwhile, the poverty at the family level has also meant that young girls are sexually exploited in exchange for money and gifts by rich men within contexts where schooling has delayed marriage and extended the period of adolescence. Girls are thus living longer outside marriage where they are forced into sexual activity which is paradoxically not tolerated, not to mention the denial for access to preventive information and service (Central Statistical Office & Macro International Inc. 2000).

One of the results is that youth are gravely misinformed about SRH issues. This phenomenon of silence and denial is not restricted to Zimbabwe. In Ghana, only 18 percent of youth surveyed could correctly indicate when in a monthly cycle pregnancy is likely to occur (Glover *et al.*, 1997). Adolescents in a study in Zambia indicated that they had no reliable sources of information about sex. They even obtained some information from observing the sexual activities in animals such as dogs (Fetters *et al.* 1998). Youth also rely on incomplete information from peers, the media, and their own experiences which often involve mistakes (Fetters *et al.* 1998, Fuglesang 1997, Kebede 2001, Liljestrom *et al.* 1994, Quattara *et al.* 1998, PANOS 1999). Increasingly, adolescents are also turning to popular magazine 'agony aunts' for advice as they feel nobody else attends to their concerns (Finlay *et al.* 1998).

Without information and services while at the same time being sexually exploited by adult men or pressured into sex by boys, young girls are exposed to premarital pregnancy and related violence. In the fear of violence young girls decide to abort, commonly inducing abortion crudely with harmful consequences (WHO 1997). The family violence in abortion decisions by unmarried girls has been reported in other areas. Rogo *et al.* (1999) found in Kenya that one of the most common reasons for abortion cited in interviews with unmarried girls was fear of negative reactions from parents and communities. In a study in Tanzania, Katapa (1998) reports also that pregnant girls are chased from home, in some cases along with the mother. We however argue that while the family is central in abortion decision, it is only one among complexly intertwined factors leading to premarital pregnancy and abortion. These need to be unpacked and mapped in order to come

up with inclusive and comprehensive solutions to abortion among unmarried adolescents.
In conclusion, adolescent SRH is complex and paradoxical. Given this complexity, interventions must be informed by an understanding of the contexts within which adolescent girls live, including processes, dynamics, and reasoning at the micro family and community levels. Social contexts often ignored in service provision and policy for adolescents, should be considered. A reliance on biomedical premises and assumptions which has dominated the history and practice of sexual and reproductive health programmes needs to be seriously reconsidered. One way is include men who until recently have been ignored in studies and programmes aimed to improve the SRH of girls. This is to say that the negative experiences of girls is a gender issue that cannot be grasped without a critical analysis of the gender dynamics at the micro-family and relational levels.

Acknowledgements

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Jeremiah Chikovore
Department of Psychiatry (UZ-BCHS), & Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of Zimbabwe; Department of Epidemiology, Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine, Umea University, Sweden; International Maternal and Child Health, Department

of Women's and Children's Health, Uppsala University, Sweden
Lennarth Nystrom
Epidemiology, Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine, Umea University, Sweden
Gunilla Lindmark
International Maternal and Child Health, Department of Women's and Children's Health,
Uppsala University, Sweden
Beth Maina Ahlberg
Department of Sociology, Uppsala University, Sweden; Skaraborg Institute for Research and
Development, Skovde, Sweden.

ADDRESSES
Scales of suffering, Orders of Emancipation: Critical Issues in Democratic Development in Africa

Tade Akin Aina
The Ford Foundation
Office for Eastern Africa
Nairobi, Kenya

A revised version of an Address to the Conference on 'Knowledge, Freedom and Development', in celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, Sweden, September 1-3, 2002.

Introduction

May I begin this address by first and foremost congratulating The Nordic African Institute on its assumption of the important age of 40 years? As in the life cycle of humans, the age of forty is an important milestone in the biography of institutions and countries, and although it is only a short period from the point of view of larger historical time, it is an appropriate and convenient point to stop and take stock of what have been one's achievements, contributions and of course, weaknesses in life.

It is my understanding that as an institution the Nordic African Institute has been very fortunate to have been part of the terrain that has tried to offer scholarship and knowledge production on Africa in this part of the world, not only in the service of Nordic interests, but also in the genuine pursuit of knowledge and truth that recognises the importance of the subject of knowledge as also both a producer and consumer. In this regard, your attempts at understanding and interpreting Africa, for whatever reasons, have not been from the point of view of Africa as the 'perpetual other', but also from the point of view of a methodological empathy that has accepted Africans as legitimate producers of knowledge and as respectable and valid interpreters of Africa. You have indeed been one of the earliest genuine pace setters of this trend before it became one of the politically correct traits of parts of the liberal Western academy. This is one reason why I am sure I share this platform not only to celebrate with you, but also to share my reflections on certain aspects of development that has been engaging my attention.

I would like to see this time as an opportunity for genuine sharing about concerns that can be said to be central to the whole theme of this conference, that is, 'Knowledge, Freedom and Development'. My topic is: 'Scales of suffering, Orders of Emancipation: critical issues in democratic development in Africa'.

In recognition of the condition of existence of not only Africans, but billions of other teeming humanity, I want to explore with you in this paper, the issue of 'suffering', as a trait and quality of the outcome of recognisable human agendas and social projects. I know that this is a very difficult terrain outside of theology and psychology (disciplines that have monopolised the discourses on suffering and redemption both in their secular and spiritual manifestations), but I believe that another dimension of the failure of our analyses and our practices of development is that we have never seriously attempted to incorporate what can be called the distribution of distress, misery and suffering into our considerations. We have examined poverty, exploitation and domination either

as objective or/and in certain cases unacceptable dimensions of social and political existence. We have however, often not linked these to the concrete burdens and experiences of actually existing human beings. It is possible that by operating with abstractions and sanitised analytical categories, we have protected ourselves as social scientists from the often messy and untidy dynamics and occurrences that often define ordinary peoples' engagements with the political and economic initiatives and agendas that both global and national elites and institutions create. We have therefore ignored important elements that make up major aspects of concrete human experiences. As these experiences continue to influence not only our politics, but also our sociology, it is important that they begin to have a more prominent place in our analyses. Thus, when we talk about issues such as poverty and inequality, social stability and upheavals, about various actions, events and human efforts directed at creating lives and livelihoods, ensuring individual and collective well being, and improving the human condition, we can not effectively do this without seeing how they embody the qualities of 'suffering and distress', either in structures or processes and how these are unevenly and unequally distributed.

This is an elementary lesson that the great literary works of Africa by writers such as Achebe, Soyinka, Sembene Ousmane, Negib Mahfouz, Nadine Gordimer and Ngugi wa Thiongo have taught us and which as I shall point out later, has not been absent in the consideration of some of our important social scientists and development theorists. I hope that by examining some important social projects and agendas, such as 'development' and 'democracy', that have been key elements of some of the major transitions in recent African history, from the perspective of the scales and distribution of suffering, and in relation to their manifestly declared goals, their failures and disappointments, we might be able to ask the question: whatever happened to 'development and social transformation' in Africa?

A Story as Entry-point

I want to begin to address these issues by telling a little true story that forcefully conveys to me some of the questions that we are struggling with. Some time ago, I had the opportunity to visit a development project in one of our African countries. This was a land rights/human rights project in a small village on the outskirts of one of the largest cities in Africa. It was an attempt to provide legal aid and human rights advocacy to farming communities that were being made landless and disinherited by banks and state corporations for their indebtedness. In actual fact, their experience was as a result of having been encouraged, about 10 to 15 years earlier(in the mid-eighties), to borrow money to improve and modernise their enterprises. They had been approached to borrow to buy tractors, farming implements, improved seeds and all the other elements of modern agricultural production that were seen as parts of and necessary for 'development.

The farmers ranged from small holders to those with sizeable medium holdings. Their assets included land, tools, crops and livestock. Less than five years into their credit situation that was initially defined in medium to long terms, changes began to occur in the national and global economy. A key occurrence was the new regime of economic deregulation, particularly that of the interest rates and other related forms of liberalisation that removed subsidies on farming inputs such as fertilizers, imported seedlings, veterinary materials, equipment and related items. Suddenly farmers who have been paying their loans back gradually over the years, found out that their indebtedness had trebled or quadrupled.

Many of the farmers had paid more than the initial principal they borrowed. But they found that they were still heavily indebted. They were being taken to court, sometimes detained without trial at police stations, and were having their properties seized and auctioned without proper notice and due process. Their vulnerability and ignorance were being exploited in the most brutal manner by an unholy alliance of the State Credit Corporation, the Agricultural and commercial banks and the law enforcement agencies.

These farmers found some support and defence in the presence of an organisation of urban-based human rights lawyers who specialised in land rights and pursued the protection of their rights and properties. The stories were sordid enough and included evidence of 'red tapism', rigid rules and laws, some corruption and plenty of ignorance. But there was the question of the other combination of factors that seemed to make both the lawyers and the farmers helpless, and that was the fact that there were certain forces beyond them were at play here. These were forces that defined new interest rates for their loans, new currency exchange norms for what they imported and new prices for their products. These were forces very far from this little village deprived not only of services and infrastructure, but also of understanding and more significantly, justice. Here, we are dealing with a nation state, the Agricultural Credit Banks, the commodity boards that have suddenly being shut down or disempowered, the police and judiciary, some commercial banks, and a vague and shadowy international system that has changed the rules of the game mid-way by pressurising the government to liberalise and remove what were in effect social protection covers for these villagers.

An added point is that according to the farmers' testimonies, corroborated by some officials and local scholars, the farmers were encouraged to borrow when their country had not only a lower interest rate for agricultural credit, but also a stronger national currency that has now being subjected to a wave of massive and multiple devaluations.

Sad, but you might ask what is special about this situation.Is this not the state of the world and many African countries today? Indeed, this is why I have refused to name the country, because it could be any of our African countries. The story itself as it is, poses enough questions about the lures and meaning of development, the importance of knowledge and information about risks and of course, the uneven and unequal vulnerability of different actors in our economies and societies. They are questions that have been posed by scholars ranging from those with global reputations such as the Nobel laureates Joseph Stiglitz and Armatya Sen, to fresh graduate students grappling with the so-called first principles of conventional development theory (Sen, 1981,1992,1999). But beyond all the questions above, I was struck by other facts. At the meeting I am referring to, women and young people were almost completely absent, and when they present they came as supporting actors, to do things such as bring in chairs and tea.. It became clear here that we were dealing with potential multiple struggles and structures of domination and exploitation (Mustapha, 1996). We were operating in a society and economy where women were severely disadvantaged, and where structures and social behaviour reinforced the disadvantages. Rural women in particular in this context experienced multiple jeopardies. They were not able to own productive land directly, as a result of cultural and religious obstacles, they were often 'infantilised', denied of a wide array of rights while saddled with obligations and responsibilities and were expected to be mute or invisible players.

Around us the village was the conventional picture of rural poverty. It had poor sanitation with open sewers, human and animal waste, and garbage everywhere. There were no services such as regular supply of running water and electricity. It was clear to me that what we had here were

layers of neglect, grievances, deprivation, exploitation and domination. I asked why women were not at the meeting, and was told that they were not only busy, but that in this case, we were dealing with issues that concerned mainly adult men. I wanted to know about women's property rights, and women's access to land and other resources. My questions were deflected. I was becoming a source of irritation here. We were talking about human rights, about the bigger problems linked to the livelihoods of the community and of course the presence of the almost unshakeable authoritarian ruler and his henchmen. Yes, there was this great struggle for democratic transition and this big issue of peace in the region. There was also this supposedly big struggle with Western hegemony and its domination of both the national and global economies and the introduction of all these terrible conditionalities with aid and loans.

And here I was, asking about insignificant secondary matters, about the smaller issues. The concern was with the greater 'sufferings' of the whole nation, the people, the masses, and the region. It was with the significant emancipatory priorities, and not the 'lesser' problems of women and youth, particularly peasant ones for that matter. I tried to make the link between the injustice of the indebtedness of the farmers, the question of regional peace, and the position of the village women, but it was obvious that I was being disruptive and overstepping my role as a visitor. My concern with the 'politics of the lesser issues' and the 'secondary' emancipatory projects was neither understood nor appreciated.

Though my guides were sympathetic, I was the one who displayed a lack of understanding and maybe cultural sensitivity. But in my understanding, we have here a challenge and questioning not only of our conceptions and definitions of development and struggles for rights and social justice, but also of our practices and the way we understand them. I have always seen development as liberation from want, undue suffering and distress, and as an issue of priorities about how societies and peoples make choices, create spaces and places for the attainment of collective and individual well-being, and provide the opportunities for these within a context of justice and equity. In my scale of values, I have never thought we could weigh one set of injustices above or below others or continue with some while we pursue the end of others. It seems to me that the struggles with the 'greater' injustices will never be won if we are not sensitive to or struggle against the 'lesser' injustices. And who does the weighting anyway?

And perhaps, this is the endless dilemma of our 20th Century emancipatory projects. I mean the tension between our concentration on the great structural liberations and moments meant to produce massive changes and resolve the perennial troubling issues of our times, and the concern with improving and changing the more concrete conditions of the ordinary persons and the relationships in which they are embedded in identifiable groups, communities and institutions. It is a key dilemma of development as a social project.

But the question is, can this be 'development in practice', the expression of what we see on a daily basis in people's lives? Can we approach development without confronting the inherent inequalities and inequities that are located in the organisation of ordinary human existence? Can we transform and transcend development, as we know it, without confronting the hierarchies and scales of sufferings and distress, and the inequality in the orders of emancipation?

The story of this little village tied it up for me. All the ingredients were there, presented in a short moment of confrontation and interaction. There was the power of a relatively powerless state - powerless in relation to the outside international system and unable or unwilling to protect its own vulnerable people, but a state that sees itself as powerful and ready to unleash its force of repression on those who question its power and legitimacy from within. There was the inequality

between state corporations, international donors, the banks, their officials and the farmers. There was the knowledge divide tied around and manipulated by vested interests and the inequality between members of the community, particularly between men and women, brown and 'browner', old and young. Of course, there were the real differences on what really mattered and how these were decided.

This story is the story of most of Africa with different variations in detail. It is a story that reminds us that after almost forty years of political independence, and many more with experimenting with different forms and notions of 'development', we still have to grapple with the first principles. We have to get back to the basics of the notion and practices of development as they relate to the lives of ordinary peoples, to its constitution, the nature of its wide array of players, to the distribution of power and knowledge, and of course, that of suffering and misery.

These are the considerations that I will like us to engage with as we think about whatever we understand as Africa's development, and more so, of Africa's entry into a new age in the social transitions of contemporary human history. This is an age, which for the want of a better word has been described by numerous authors as the 'age of globalisation' (a notion which in itself is ideological, as well as descriptive of a series of processes and phenomena). These considerations are important because Africa's entry in to this age has been driven by several forces, some of which have rejected the usefulness of the discussions of issues and questions such as inequality and inequity. The emphasis has been on poverty blamed on and ascribed to its victims; and wealth, well-being and social directions and entitlements of society and peoples as determined by an impersonal but efficient market. But as revealed by evidence of goings on in global capitalism, its think-thanks and corporate board rooms, we all know that this 'almighty market' is neither impersonal nor that efficient in certain areas (Stiglitz, 2002). In my view, it is time to bring inequality back on the agenda. This is because more than a sanitised and superficial project of dealing with poverty reduction, the problem of inequality can take us back to the roots of poverty. It can lead us to a meaningful way of addressing the unblocking of the channels that constrain the energies and creativity of large numbers of Africans currently compelled to function below their optimal capacities.

Indeed, this moment is appropriate for reflection and stock taking on what history and transitions in Africa have been all about, in the past fifty to sixty years. A period that is insignificant when compared to the time frame represented by the pyramids of Egypt or the rock art of Namibia and the Niger Republic. Yet it is a time frame in which many Africans in a life time and in one country, have lived through colonisation, seen independence, experienced military coups, fought at least one civil war and have elected both a parliamentary style Prime Minister and an Executive President.

Talking about development, this same time frame has seen Africans subjected to externally-driven strategies ranging from import substitution industrialisation with 'unlimited supplies of labour', through those of 'redistribution with growth', the 'basic needs approach' and 'integrated rural development', to that of export-led growth. More recently, the ordinary African has had to deal with two to three decades of structural adjustment programs (which gave the era its name of that of crisis and adjustment), and is now learning the ropes of 'poverty reduction strategy programmes', (PRSPS). Africans today continue to struggle with what all of these are about, as there has been no significant upward turn in their well being in the last two decades (IFAD, 2001). This is why it should not surprise anybody if people are asking the question: whose development is it and for what? It is to this that we now turn.

Whose development is it?

This question is indeed a valid question for many Africans. For them, the development approaches and strategies mentioned above mean nothing. They neither understand them nor see them significantly transform their lives. Indeed, the beneficiaries of these 'developments' are increasingly becoming numerical minorities in African societies, when the trend should have been for greater expansion and inclusion. In order to understand why this amount of distance exists between the peoples and one of the key processes and phenomenon meant to define their lives, let us examine the historical context of the idea and process of development for most of what constitutes sub-Saharan Africa today.

Of course, this has to be put in the context of what I call key social transitions in the contemporary history of Africa. By this, I refer to key historical moments of social change of systemic importance. These are moments of change that involved the modification or/and transformation of institutions, social values and social action in directions that constitute a break or shift from previous ways of organising society, culture, economy and the polity. Such moments may be the result of internal evolution or may have been induced by external forces such as conquests, new technologies, or some major trading contacts and related upheavals. They are often the products of interaction between internal and external forces and often give rise to qualitatively different patterns and dynamics of society and economy, demography and geography. Let us examine how what we have come to know as development is related to this.

In spite of several decades of use, the notion of development as applied to the process of transforming the economy and society remains contested (Escobar, 1995, Leys, 1997). We need not delay ourselves with the details of the linkages between the various paradigms and the way they understand the substance of development; the point is that this variety in the application of the notion is one of the key contributions of the field itself (Leys, 1997). We also need not detain ourselves asking how the notion has evolved to take on more holistic and humanistic forms that have incorporated elements of social and environmental justice, equity, participation, democracy and rights (Leys, 1997, Sen, 1999, Mkandawire, 1998). The conventional history of the notion has been that of the growth and transcendence of its more 'economistic' and sectoral origins to an increasingly inclusive, holistic and emancipatory notion with several qualifiers such as 'human development', 'social development', and 'sustainable development'.

It is however a history that has been queried in terms of its origins, the gap between the 'ideal' and the 'practice', the 'diagnostic' and the 'prescriptive', and the agendas that the different perceptions and conceptions of the notion embody. There are thinkers today who believe we should drop the idea of development and they are on both the right and the left of the ideological spectrum (Escobar, 1995:15). In fact, the core thinking of the neo-liberal and structural adjustment orthodoxy had abandoned 'development' as a goal and focused more on 'adjustment' and 'growth'. And of course, there are those who feel we should reclaim and re-appropriate the notion of development as both a guide to our efforts and as an explanation and description of processes around us (Aina, 1993). This seems to me to be the key issue: that for many, the history and origins of the notion, the process, and its practices are too compromised. But are they unsalvageable? Should we just drop the discourse and look for another way, another mode of understanding and construct, for the collective struggles of peoples to better themselves materially while at the same improving their total well being? This is because the notion and process suffer from a kind of ontological entrapment, development is what many peoples and countries want to

be, are struggling to be, and are yet not! It remains an elusive object of desire. It also has an ideological component.

Also, what is the relationship between the more emancipatory and liberatory aspects of the notion and the actually existing conditions and situations of millions of ordinary Africans? What practical lessons can we learn about the gaps in the ways people live and how the structures and processes they daily experience are theorised? Are our discussions of development that are emancipatory and transformational in a positive sense mere fictions and products of our imagination of a better world? Or are there out there significant if small changes that are making differences in and to people's lives? I want to argue that there are possibilities for concrete changes in the lives of ordinary peoples and that development as emancipatory and transformational is neither fiction nor the figment of our imagination. I am sure that it is now clear that I am on the side of those who want us to re-appropriate and reclaim the notion and practices of development. This is because there are actually existing examples of lives and livelihoods that have been and are being transformed all over the world (Escobar, 1995; Sen, 1999, 35-53), just as there are examples of many lives and livelihoods experiencing degradation and increase in suffering and misery. It seems to me that the issue is about examining possibilities without submitting to monolithic forms and expressions of outcomes. We need to be clear that that development is about the possibilities, and unintended and sometimes unpredictable outcomes of the intentional search and construction of human beings, and their societies and communities for their material and other well-being. I want to add that there are no guarantees that positive outcomes will always be attained, which is why the factor of intentionality is very important. It is also why as a notion and process it is valid that it retains the objective of improving human well-being that transcends the merely economic. In that sense, development is not an ideal, but a gigantic and perpetual human work-in-progress that communities, societies and some states undertake.

The progressive humanistic and emancipatory nature of development is clearly stated by Armatya Sen (1999:3), who declares that:

> Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as well as intolerance or over-activity of repressive states.

This is why it is important to interrogate whose agenda it carries at any given time and to weigh its scales of suffering and their distribution. When we talk about agendas, we now have enough evidence about the loss or lack of innocence of the 'development process', particularly as it has so far been applied to Africa. This is especially so when we think of the ideology of 'developmentalism'. Historians of Africa have clearly made the linkages between the transition from colonial rule and Africa's adoption of developmentalism.

According to Zeleza (1997:200), '…developmentalism was born during the Great Depression and bred into a hegemonic discourse in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The seeds were sown with the 1929 British Colonial and Welfare Act. They turned into sturdy developmentalist weeds under the Colonial development and Welfare Act of 1945. It was in colonial Africa that most of these seeds and weeds were nurtured. It was there that the term *development* lost its naturalistic innocence and acquired the conceited meaning of economic growth modeled on the West'.

Escobar (1995:26-27) has also confirmed that:

> The slow preparation for the launching of development was perhaps most clear in Africa,

where a number of recent studies suggest…there was an important connection between the decline of the colonial order and the rise of development. In the interwar period, the ground was prepared for the institution of development as a strategy to remake the colonial world and restructure the relations between colonies and metropoles. As Cooper (1991) has pointed out, the British Act of the 1940s - the first great materialization of the development idea - was a response to challenges to imperial power in the 1930s and must thus be seen as an attempt to invigorate the empire. This was particularly clear in the settler states in southern Africa, where preoccupations with questions of labor and food supplies led to strategies for the modernization of segments of the African population…(Escobar, 1995:26-27).

Zeleza (1997), in a closer examination of 'Colonial Developmentalism', advises us to go a little bit further than Escobar's points above and to see the complexity and multi-sided nature of colonial developmentalism, especially, the fact that the subjects of colonial territories were not mere passive subjects on which the colonial rulers acted without receiving a response, and who in many cases initiated the actions.
For Zeleza (1997:225):

The Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1929, was one of the many instruments the British state developed to deal with simultaneously, the crisis of legitimacy in the colonial empire and of capitalist rationality at home. It was part of the response to growing anti-colonial resistance in the empire and anti-capitalist revolt in the metropole. It represented, therefore, a defensive, conservative discourse, one that recast the role of the state and framed development as a managed process.

The literature on African experience with colonisation has pointed out that the colonial mission had the dominant objective of transferring resources to the colonial powers from the colonies through direct exploitation, unequal exchange and other economic mechanisms (Zeleza, 1993). Therefore, if a key agenda of early developmentalism in Africa was renegotiating colonial relations and domination with the former subject territories, then it was clear that the development process pursued was not African peoples' development. Of course, there were agents and intermediaries who benefited but the process was not about transforming structures and relationships for the purpose of improving the well being of most ordinary Africans. That was why it was a narrow sectionalist and limited project that neither fundamentally changed structures and relations, nor improved the well being of large numbers of Africans beyond a limited privileged few (Zeleza, 1997: 236-237). The question is what happened with independence.
The foundations of the economies and societies of large parts of Africa were being laid at the moments of the nationalist struggles of the 1940s and 1950s and colonial developmentalism contributed to the process of restructuring productive structures and relations that accommodated new African players as intermediaries and agents, thereby creating and/or reinforcing new forms of social and economic inequality.
 The emerging dominant African social actors here were the nationalists. They were the key players in mobilising the different alliances and coalitions of social groups against colonial rule. They were also the key beneficiaries of the transition from formal colonial rule as they negotiated its modalities and timing with the colonial rulers. This is not to say that the process of transition was an easy transfer of power without struggles and violence in many cases. The transitions

embodied in the independence struggles were in fact heroic and decisive moments in Africa's history (to be replicated in different places at different times over three decades), both in terms of constructing broad platforms with clear goals and the uniting of different groups towards fighting and contributing to the goals of the struggles. But these transitions, given the complexity of the forces mentioned above, contained significant compromises in the ways they were effected.

Several scholars have criticised the nationalists for the kind of economies, societies and polities that were created in post-independence Africa. The nationalists have been accused of poor leadership; of ignoring diversity and pluralism; of lacking clear-cut nationalist agendas and of suffering from a tremendous lack of capacity to transform the colonial formations they inherited. Their biggest failure was said to be with regards to the development agenda.

Claude Ake (1996: 1), believed that the '… problem is not so much that development has failed as that it was never on the agenda in the first place'. This position is not shared by some other analysts who recognised that key elements that constituted the nationalist project included national independence, nation building and of course, national development, both as means and as goals of transforming the lives of their peoples for the better.

The educated elites in most cases in Africa led the nationalist movements that initiated the transitions to nationhood and attempted national development. In recent years, African scholars have returned to an assessment of the contributions of these actors. The predominant reactions have been those of condemnation and criticism for the lost opportunities for meaningful development and nation building. They have also been attacked for the political styles and cultures that they nourished (particularly their decline into authoritarianism and monolithic politics), and for failing to transform both the colonial economy and its other institutions.

For Ake (1996:4), the nationalist movement that they formed was a 'coalition of disparate groups and elements' that in spite of its unity against colonial oppression could not hold together because of the tensions and conflicts that the platform contained. These tensions and conflict, the structural configurations of the inherited political economies, the manipulation and misuse of ethnic, racial and religious differences, and the strain towards personal enrichment and interests, effectively obstructed the attainment of any loftier goals of social transformation and beneficial development.

Ake's (1996: 40) judgment was that: 'At the beginning of the independence period, African leaders, with few exceptions, were so absorbed in the struggles for power and survival and so politically isolated by their betrayal of the nationalist revolution that they could not launch a national development project but instead opted for dependent development, letting their metropolitan patrons determine the agenda and find resources to implement it'.

But Thandika Mkandawire has asked us to reconsider our concentration on their failures and appreciate some of their achievements. 'He believes that after independence, African leaders made significant progress in development by investing in education for all, by improving healthcare facilities and infrastructure, and by making a serious drive towards import-substitution. Given this kind of endeavor, he believes that they can not be accused of having sought high office only for personal gain'(Anyang' Nyong'o, 2002: 15).

Without holding brief for the failures of the nationalists, we need to take Mkandawire's points very seriously. We cannot fully understand the strategies and agenda of the nationalists without reminding ourselves of the extensive nature of the exclusion, discrimination and very limited capacities and services of the colonial society and state. Also, we need to remind ourselves that not all those who took over power from the colonial rulers after independence can be termed

'nationalists' in the real sense of that word. Either by inclination, politics or even self-definition, there were African leaders who were not nationalists. Some would be more appropriately described as 'accommodationists', while others were no more than ethnic, racial and religious chauvinists. The nationalists on the other hand, in most cases, were struggling with a corrective and building phase, and in the pursuit of their projects had to resort to legitimising, accumulative and incorporationist strategies. But the unfortunate element of most of their agendas is that they contained the same fundamental problem of confronting the different scales of suffering found in society and imposed hierarchies of emancipation that deliberately put several groups and communities at a disadvantage based on their social positions and identities.

As a collection of 'disparate' actors, I read more than one agenda into the projects of the nationalists, this along with the existent agenda of the different factions of the colonial rule made this period of transition, one of multiple and contradictory social projects. There were of course dominant agendas and projects carried out and effected by more or less dominant groups. Under the period of colonial rule, we can identify the colonialist agenda of colonial modernity and the nationalists' counter agenda of national liberation and political independence.

In the process and period of transition to post-independence, there were also several agendas. There were the dominant nationalist agenda of liberation/independence, nation building and that of development, depending on how it was perceived. And we need to recognise the complexity and differences in the definition and perception of the notion and process of development. This made the agenda of national development a broad, diffuse one which expressed itself in most African countries either as the pursuit of capitalist development as it was in Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire, or the pursuit of different variants and hybrids of socialism as was experimented with in Guinea, Tanzania, Angola and Mozambique. However, there was a unifying element in the pursuit of national development across the board, irrespective of ideologies. This was the importance given to statist strategies, that is, the tremendous significance given to the state for social provisioning, the delivery of services and in many cases, economic management. This was what Mkandawire (1998) has analysed as a variant of 'the developmental state' (Mkandawire, 1998). One more important point that should be stressed about agendas during this period, is that given the different and 'disparate' nature of the social forces involved, there were other minor agendas that were very important to different groups in the different countries. There were, for instance, irredentist and secessionist forces operating during this period. Thus, one cannot effectively adduce the same agenda to the projects of Patrice Lumumba and Moise Tshombe in the period of transition from the Belgian Congo to the independent Congo (Kinshasa). In this case, what the latter represented contradicted what Lumumba stood for.

This brings us to another key project that was an important feature of 20th Century Africa and which found some correspondence to greater or less degree with other key projects. This is what can be called the democratisation agenda or the democratic project. This project is in substance an emancipatory project that through social values, the creation and growth of relevant charters and institutions, and the use of laws and other practices, seeks to promote the significance of the conditions of equality, justice, representation, participation and due process in the ways individuals and groups interact not only with each other, but also with institutions of government and the state. Of course, there are differences on what constitutes the democratic project and how these should be prioritised, but even in its most formal rudimentary state it is a potential foundation of larger emancipatory projects.

Aspects of this project can be found in all the political and at times, economic struggles of

Africans.[1] Other aspects were also embedded in the nationalist struggles at the beginning, and were carried by individuals and groups that were part of the independence movement. The democratisation project has however either been subverted and undermined by various forces and players in 20th Century Africa or never allowed to grow and develop so as to expand the full possibilities of many African societies and polities. Those who have subverted the project range from nationalists who either were never democrats or were unable to accommodate diversity and pluralism, to military rulers and power drunk potentates, as well as agents of international institutions and donor organisations whose policies will never survive democratic discussions or encounters.

But the democratisation project is still very much on the agenda today, and it has in recent times been adopted as a 'global agenda', not only by the international civil society movement but also by agents of the international financial institutions, who have appropriated it, sanitised it and re-baptised it under the notion of 'good governance'. This has become a technocratic notion and instrument tagged on to the new international regime of credit and aid, and aimed mainly at constructing some universals of 'accountable and transparent rule and management', without the requisite attention to contexts (Anyang'Nyong, o, 2002:80-83). Because it embodies continuous growth and expansion of learning, the project today accommodates a wider range of emancipatory and social justice issues. In fact even more than before it provides a platform for the realisation of human development as it includes significant elements of social, economic and cultural rights as well as political and civil rights. This is why the idea of democratic development as means and ends of meaningful and relevant social transformation in Africa is an imperative (Sen, 1999: 35-56).

Before concluding the discussion in this section, let us examine whose development it is in the era of globalisation. As can be seen from the literature, the last two decades of the 20th century in Africa can be termed an era of crisis and adjustment (Aina, 1993, Mkandawire and Soludo, 1999). The era of crisis started around the early 1970s beginning with the world oil crisis and the decline in the prices of key African commodities (Mkandawire and Soludo, 1999:21-22). This was the point at which the new global economic restructuring was said to have commenced (Hosbawm, 1999; Castells, 1998). The period between the beginning of the crisis and the end of the Cold War was a grim social and political era for Africa. For as most African countries were adjusting, several African regimes, supported and encouraged by the Cold War powers, became more repressive and undemocratic. The emphasis in this period was on the economic reforms and adjustment. These however did not produce any significant recovery or growth except for a few isolated cases. Failed and mis-applied economic reforms and declining resources aggravated the process of erosion of state capacities, and the degradation and decay of public institutions, utilities and social services (Mkandawire and Soludo, 1999). All of these expanded the scope of suffering and misery experienced by ordinary peoples in most of these countries, with the greatest amount of pain unmitigated by access to justice being the lot of the poor and marginalised.

With the breakdown of state capacities and the erosion of much that is left of post-independence legitimacy, accountability and participation, political violence became a major mode of political expression. This was in the form of riots, wars, rebellions, insurrections, banditry and the unleashing of state-sponsored terror on political opponents. While a lot of the violent expression occurred in the urban areas, much more took place in the rural setting, aggravating ecological and other natural disasters and resulting in famines and related calamities that not only diverted attention from developmental activities, but also provided the much needed copy for negative and

pejorative media attention on the African condition.

During this period, there was not much development, either in the form of meaningful economic growth or the other emancipatory qualities mentioned above. So intense and pervasive was the last decade of crisis and adjustment, that it has been called 'Africa's lost decade' (Aina, 1993). According to Mkandawire and Soludo (1999:93), the economist, Griffin had identified three paths of adjustment, each emphasising a different set of fundamentals, namely adjustment by recovery, adjustment by contraction and finally, adjustment by an investment-driven development process. They pointed out that the emphasis in Africa was on the former two, adjustment by contraction and by recovery.

We now know that the adjustment strategies were not designed by Africans and did not heed the calls of Africans for modification, and also that they had relatively few African beneficiaries. One can state that if in earlier periods, there were combinations of agendas and thus what constituted development could be claimed by some African interests, the period of crisis and adjustment was closer to the period of naked colonial rule, as very few Africans could or would claim ownership of the strategies or agendas of that era. This was why the Bretton Woods Institutions' search for relevant and legitimate internal African constituencies for adjustment proved elusive for a long time.

As I have pointed out elsewhere (Aina, 1997), the adjustment and crisis era ushered in Africa's encounter with contemporary globalisation. Fortunately, this encounter is ongoing, and is being negotiated in the context of a growing and broadening array of available knowledge, the reconfiguration of social and political forces in Africa, and the availability of technologies that not only contribute to domination and global divide, but can also play a role in mobilising emancipatory forces and disseminating useful knowledge. The significance of knowledge in this new era, its availability and its capacity for instant dissemination have all created new conditions that have implications for democratic struggles. We cannot only very quickly identify trends in the production and distribution of suffering and distress as part of social projects; we can make them available for analysis and action. Let us examine the substance and pattern of this distribution.

The Distribution of Suffering and Distress

If there were illusions about the costs of development and transitions, it is perhaps the African nationalist leaders who harbored them in the boundless optimism and courage that the prospects of national independence carried. Outsiders, including the authors of United Nations documents as far back as 1951 knew there had to be pain and suffering:

> There is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without painful adjustment. Ancient philosophies have to be scrapped; old social institutions have to disintegrate; bonds of caste, creed and race have to burst; and large numbers of persons who can not keep up with progress have to have their expectations of a comfortable life frustrated. Very few communities are willing to pay the full price of economic progress. (United Nations, 1951; cited in Escobar, 1995:3).

On the other hand, a nationalist like the Nigerian Obafemi Awolowo (1960:314) in his discussion of Nigeria's development was more concerned about the promises of abundance and prosperity. Awolowo stated that: 'Our human and natural resources are great potentialities which, if properly organized will bring prosperity and orderly progress to our nation as well as to humanity'. The

problem with both positions is that they generalised too much. Neither of them pointed out that both the pain and suffering, and the prosperity and bounty, that they talked about were never evenly distributed and that different groups received different and uneven shares of these in the development process. The same observation applies to the neo-liberal theorists of adjustment economics, who recognised and accepted that structural adjustments in Africa in the seventies, eighties and nineties, should and must be painful, but argued that this pain must be borne by the over-subsidised non-disaggregated urban sectors (Mkandawire and Soludo, 1999).

More significantly beyond the formal and official conventional data on development, there are indicators that tell us about incomes, productivity, sales of produce and extent of inputs and export sales, and others that benchmark misery and suffering that occur in the every day lives of many ordinary Africans. These include experiences such as the extent of rural and urban indebtedness, infant and female mortality rates, degradation of infrastructures, the extent of waste and destruction of products and produce through disease, poor storage facilities and the vagaries of nature such as drought and floods. There are still many others embedded in human relationships based on structures of inequality and oppression, and the conditions of injustice, wars and other forms of violence. These include wanton killings, mutilations and amputations, forced marriages, abductions, conscriptions and rapes. All of these continue to testify to the weight that ordinary poor Africans bear on the scales of suffering.

As we proceed with our discussions of the distribution of suffering and distress, let us remind ourselves of the fact that work around this area as it relates to the human condition and development is not completely new. We can cite for example the important contribution of Frantz Fanon in his book The Wretched of the Earth. Armatya Sen's story of Kader Mia, the young Muslim daily labourer who was killed by extremists because he went looking for work in the wrong neighborhood, is also an illustration of how the expression of personal suffering and distress can give rise to critical and far reaching scientific projects. Sen (1999:8) states:

> The experience was devastating for me. It made me reflect, later on, on the terrible burden of narrowly defined identities, including those firmly based on communities and groups…But more immediately, it also pointed to the remarkable fact that economic unfreedom, in the form of extreme poverty, can make a person a helpless prey in the violation of other kinds of freedom. Kader Mia need not have gone to a hostile area in search of a little income in those terrible times had his family been able to survive without it.

Coming closer home, Mamdani's book (2001) on the larger social and political implications and lessons of the Rwanda genocide is an attempt to confront pain, suffering and distress not only in relation to the seemingly more abstract categories of justice and identity, but also in relation to the concrete expression of experiences of citizenship, nativism and colonialism. Of course, Mkandawire's recent paper (2001) on ' The Terrible Toll of Post-Colonial "Rebel Movements" in Africa', was more than an explanation of the violence against peasantry in Africa. It contained both a lamentation and profound anguish at the waste, devastation and distractions that these movements have unleashed mainly on African rural societies.

Given Africa's recent history, we could provide an endless list of materials that are devoted to the narratives of suffering and distress among ordinary peoples. But what is important is the lesson for our analyses and interventions, particularly as they relate to development. This is, that poverty provides a fertile terrain for the flowering of suffering and distress, and that the poor, often denied

power and privilege, and ravaged by disease and want, bear the brunt of its harvests. Without getting into the disputes about who the poor are, I am referring in this discussion to '…those peoples who combine low average incomes and assets, with considerable instability of incomes and employment along with insecurity of tenure to land and shelter and … are extensively deprived of, or barred from access to basic services and infrastructures' (Aina, 1997:57). Africa remains one of the poorest regions of the world. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Report on Assessment of Rural Poverty, Western and Central Africa, 2001, page 14:

> SSA is one of the poorest regions in the world and poverty seems to be increasing, at least when measured by the poverty line of USD 1 per day and during the period for which incidence data are available (1987-98). By 1998, all developing regions together accounted for about 1.2 billion poor persons, amounting to 23.4% of the total population in these areas. Since 1990, both the absolute number of poor and their proportion of the total population seem to have declined. In SSA, on the contrary, the total number of poor has risen from 217 million to 302 million persons, and by 1998, the poverty incidence had reached 48.1% of the total population. SSA has the highest poverty incidence among all developing regions. While the incidence of poverty has declined since 1990 in all developing regions taken together, primarily due to progress in Asia, in SSA its incidence has continued to increase. The number of poor in all developing regions decreased during 1987-98 by 0.5% per year, in spite of a total population growth of about 1.5%. In sub-Saharan Africa, a reverse trend can be seen: poverty increased faster (by3.3% per year) than the population (3.1%).

I have quoted the above passage extensively so as to bring out clearly the extent of the developmental challenges we face in Africa with regards to poverty. Africa's poor are of course to be found in rural areas where they make up 75 percent of the poor in West and Central Africa (IFAD, 2001:v) and 73 percent in Eastern and Southern Africa (IFAD, 2002:9). Among the poor, we find hierarchies of vulnerability and domination, among groups such as women, the aged, children, and deprived and marginalised ethnic, racial and occupational minorities, on whom the scales of suffering and misery weigh more heavily. Amidst the disasters, problems and turbulence that have been the lot of Africa's rural areas, namely wars, HIV/AIDS, famines, banditry and raids, floods and droughts, these more vulnerable groups have been at the bottom of the heap, always the first to be hardest hit and the last to receive sustained relief. They lose out and are invisible in the statistical aggregates and their stories are scarcely told. Yet, for any development process to be meaningful, relevant and valid, and to be truly emancipatory, it must address the plight and the conditions of these Africans, who constitute the continent's majority.

Democratic Development: Towards an Emancipatory Agenda

So far in this paper I have discussed how development in Africa is the outcome of an interaction between structures and choices that agents make in relation to their vested interests, the position of others and themselves, and how priorities are defined, perceived and pursued. I have pointed out the importance of the dominant agendas of significant actors at different periods. These agendas and social projects have often left out or reduced the importance of the concerns and agendas of those who are either less powerful or insufficiently organised and mobilised to be

where decisions are made. This has been the story of development around the continent for the greater part of the last forty years. It has been 'development' alienated from the interests and needs of the majority of Africans.

However from around 1992 to 1994, the continent has entered another phase of democratic struggles and transitions. This phase has very many elements including the 'empty shell' multi-party electoral politics that has not fundamentally changed the way most Africans are governed. We must however, not demean the many small victories of this emerging era. For instance, there is the opportunity to reclaim greater space for human rights and freedom of expression, which we see gradually emerging all over the continent. We must not deny the emergence of the opportunity to challenge impunity and question political infallibility. Neither must we demean the ever-expanding space for the expression of pluralism and diversity even in the contexts of constructing and reconstructing states. Above all, we must not demean the gradual return of emancipatory discourses, no longer indelibly implanted along unchangeable ideological divides defined by the Cold War, but defined rather by struggles with principles of emancipation that derive from our experiences of confronting monolithic and authoritarian politics and different forms of domination, fighting lack of transparency and official corruption and demand-making for development policies that are relevant and begin with our internal problems and our consensus on how they are to be solved.

It is in this regard that the notion of democratic development becomes central. I link democracy with development because in this age and era, they cannot be disconnected if we are to reclaim a development process that serves the ordinary African. Development without democracy has all the potential of being reduced to a process determined by the agendas of powerful groups, both internal and external, with the resources to buy, cajole, ignore and marginalise other less powerful actors. Democracy is perhaps the only safeguard and source of defence through the building or enacting of legal/institutional frameworks that define the rights and obligations of all actors (both individual and collective) based on mutually agreed and accepted principles.

Democracy in this sense goes beyond purely seasonal electoral contests to determine pseudo-representation. It is the building and reclamation of the rule of just law and political cultures of dialogue, debates and negotiations between different groups, individuals and institutions. It is about the reconciliation and resolution of different and divergent interests and conflicts based not on naked force and population size but rather on the fundamentals of why groups have come together. In Africa today, this new democracy of nations struggling with development and other priorities require the renewal of national social contracts and charters. It requires a new participatory constitutionalism beyond those manufactured at independence (Adejumobi, 1998; Ihonvbere, 2000; Oloka-Onyango, 2001).

Democratic development must be a process through which Africa must feed, clothe, house and educate Africans in reasonably good health. African societies must reclaim their wealth-generation and sustaining capacity. They must promote plenty and ensure and organise access and opportunities for all their peoples. They must put in place the basis for the renewal and transformation of institutions, productive systems and technologies. Africans must find incentives within Africa to mobilise and encourage the necessary changes such as new and transformational leadership, the reclamation of a culture of public service and stewardship, the promotion of tolerance for difference and the putting in place incentives and rewards for merit and service. The goals must include the advancement of the individual and collective well being as a minimum element of the new social contract. This is more than growing the per capita income. It includes

the material and other elements of human development in terms of access to basic needs, peace, security, good health and the knowledge and capacities to function in the emerging new world. All of these will however not be given to Africans. They will require organisation, mobilisation and regional and international solidarity in the pursuit of democratic change. It will require bringing back political struggles.

Notes

1. See the discussions of the different dimensions of the democratisation agendas and projects in Africa in the collection of essays, *Democratisation Processes in Africa: Problems and Prospects,* Eshetu Chole and Jibrin Ibrahim, editors, Dakar, CODESRIA Books, 1995.

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Third Worldism

Andrew Nash
Monthly Review Press
122 West 27th Street
New York, NY 1000

Third Worldism and Internationalism

The theory and practice of socialist internationalism has gone through several transmutations since it was given its basic form by Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx and Engels's innovation was to link what had until then been primarily a normative idea to a distinctive analysis of the ways in which common class interests came to be shared across national boundaries and to a new strategic perspective for revolutionary struggle. This change was signaled by the old motto of the League of Communists, 'All men are brothers', being replaced with 'Proletarians of all countries, unite!' Since then the meaning of internationalism has shifted along with the global patterns of power and resistance.

The Russian Revolution was the first revolution to be made with consciously internationalist intent. Its isolation after the defeat of revolution in the West brought to an end the assumption that socialist internationalism could take its lead from the advanced capitalist countries. After the formation of the Third International, Lenin looked towards the 'toilers of the East' - the majority of humankind - to continue the conquests of the Russian Revolution. In time this perspective led to a shift in the class basis of socialist internationalism from the working class to an alliance of classes in which the peasantry had a major role.

Under Stalinism, socialist internationalism came to be equated with compliance with the foreign policy needs of the Soviet Union. After Stalinism came to be discredited in the West- initially by Khrushchev's revelations, and the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 - no single model of revolutionary internationalism gained the same degree of hegemony. For a time, the Soviet Union and China competed for the central role in the international socialist movement, with the Chinese championing the cause of the Third World in opposition to the Soviet project of co-existence with capitalism. But the contest between them did as much to discredit the idea that any single party or state should occupy that central role, especially once China's support for Third World liberation struggles became more erratic and opportunist in the 1970s. And at the same time as this contest between China and the Soviet Union was taking place, the international challenge to capitalism was itself being transformed both by the liberation of former colonies and by the emergence of new struggles within the advanced capitalist world. The predominant form of internationalism that took the place of solidarity with the Soviet Union as it declined after about 1960 was Third Worldism.

Third Worldism can be defined roughly as the political theory and practice that saw the major fault-line in the global capitalist order as running between the advanced capitalist countries of the West and the impoverished continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and saw national liberation struggles in the Third World as the major force for global revolution. Third Worldism was the form of internationalism specific of an age in which colonial rule was coming to an end - an age in which the economic power of western capital remained intact, but its global political dominance was contested. It was the internationalism of an age in which the capitalist divide between economic and political power was in the process of being globalised but was not yet firmly established, in which formal equality among nation-states accompanied continuing and then growing inequality in the global economy.

Until 1945, there was no pretence at formal equality between the Western powers and their

colonies in Africa and Asia. The defeat of Nazism and the rise to global hegemony after 1945 of the Western power of the United States that had never had a significant colonial empire made it possible to extend the divide between formal equality and material inequality into a global realm bounded by the reach of the world market alone. In this context, socialist internationalism orientated towards the emerging political power of the Third World and its struggles to remake its place in a global economy dominated by capitalism.[1]

Perspectives on Third Worldism

Third Worldism has been both an ideology *of* the Third World and *about* the Third World. Viewed as a product of the Third World, it can be seen as no more than the assertion of the humanity of colonised or previously colonised people; an essentially timeless proposition, conditioned by the strategic needs of the moment in which it was made. This is the approach of Sartre's famous preface to Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*: 'Not so very long ago, the earth numbered two thousand million inhabitants: five hundred million men, and one thousand five hundred million natives'. This situation is brought to an end, according to Sartre, as the Third World 'finds its voice'.[2] In this view, the 'natives' were simply discarding an alien classification and becoming the 'men' they always had been.

Viewed as a Western ideology, Third Worldism is often seen as a rootless and passing fad, easily discounted and easily disclaimed. 'I have never been a "third worldist"', writes Samir Amin, one of the leading theorists of Third Worldism. 'I believe the term applies only to certain Western leftists who in the Bandung era (1955–1975) thought they could substitute "third world peoples" for the "proletariat" in expressing their messianic expectation'.[3]

These perspectives are in conflict with one another, but there is a certain limited truth to both of them. The driving force behind Third Worldism was indeed the entry of millions of people from the former colonial world into a world-historical arena that had for centuries been dominated by a relatively small number of western capitalist societies. In the West, Third Worldism did not grow out of a rigorous critique of Eurocentrism. Often, the moral imperative of solidarity with specific Third World struggles obscured theoretical question of how processes of global change were determined. In this context, Third Worldism has become a derogatory term, often defined so that no-one would wish to admit to it.

But both perspectives stand in the way of a clear assessment of the historical meaning of Third Worldism and prevent us from recognising the important role it has played in the making of the politics and intellectual life of the contemporary Left. The defects of Third Worldism were significant. At the same time, it was an extraordinary and unprecedented achievement to construct and sustain over decades a political and intellectual project capable of inspiring and harnessing the effort and commitment of millions of people in the advanced capitalist countries in solidarity with the struggles of people in the poorest societies. Even larger numbers of people in the Third World came to see their struggles as part of an effort to create a new world. Third Worldism provided as viable a model as we have of revolutionary internationalism as a living force, an ethos constantly shaping ideas and actions not through pronouncements from above, but through building links of solidarity, exchanging ideas, developing common resources, and engaging in collective action.

The Philosophical Roots of Third Worldism: Marxism

Within the history of Marxism, Third Worldism could be seen as a way of ridding earlier forms of socialist internationalism of their Eurocentrism, historical parochialism, and residual ideas of racial superiority. Eurocentrism was not simply a result of socialist theory having its historical roots in western Europe. Although Eurocentrism conflicted with Marx's keen sense of how societies are formed by specific conditions, it still had a logical place in the Marxist conception of history. Because capitalism was most developed in Europe, a theory that gave the key role in any process of social change to the working class could not easily avoid the expectation that the process of global social change would be initiated in Europe. There was nothing arbitrary about Marx's expectation that the liberation of India would have to await 'a great social revolution' that will have mastered 'the results of the bourgeois epoch, the market of the world and the modern powers of production, and subjected them to the common control of the most advanced peoples'.[4] Before 1917, the Marxist who most fully anticipated an internationalism of truly global reach was Rosa Luxemburg. Not only did she give more importance than her contemporaries to capitalist expansion into the pre-capitalist societies of Asia and Africa in the analysis of capitalism as a global system. She was also more inclined to locate capitalism within a longer historical perspective, seeing it as 'no more than a parenthesis in human history between two great communist epochs, that of the ancient past and that of the socialist future'.[5] In this perspective, Luxemburg foresaw the modern European proletariat and the indigenous peoples of the colonised countries forging an alliance against their common enemy, imperialism. But her argument was still very far from suggesting that the leading role in the struggle against capitalism as a global system could be assumed by the indigenous people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America - what came to be known as the Third World.

After the failure of revolution in the West, Lenin and the Bolsheviks looked towards the periphery of the capitalist system, Asia, in particular, for a new political upsurge. From the Second Comintern Congress of 1920, when Lenin first put forward a perspective for democratic revolution, led by the national bourgeoisie in colonised countries, to the 'non-capitalist' form of development proposed for allies of the Soviet Union in Africa and the Middle East under Brezhnev, Soviet Marxism always proposed a secondary role for the less developed countries, following cautiously on the path opened up by the Soviet Union. Soviet Marxism preserved the linear and evolutionary historical model of Second International Marxism while giving the Third World a more conspicuous role in it. In contrast, Western Marxism, as the name suggests, was mainly concerned with forms of cultural and political hegemony specific to the advanced capitalist countries of the West and had little to say about the Third World. In this sense, the emergence of Third Worldism in the West represented something of a reversal of roles.

Third Worldism, then, did not simply grow out of earlier forms of internationalism. It was a response to the end of European colonial rule and the emergence of national liberation struggles in Asia and Africa. But it was also a response to deep-seated problems within radical thought and strategy in the West. It was a way of resolving a central problem of Western Marxism: the problem of revolutionary agency.

This problem lay at the heart of Western Marxism from the outset. On the one hand, the Western Marxist tradition was born from a sense that the vanguard party - especially in the bureaucratized form it took in Soviet Marxism - did not ensure the active participation of the oppressed in their own liberation, and became a tool for actively denying that participation. On the other hand, for as long as the theorists of Western Marxism remained outside the ambit of Soviet Marxism, they were cut off from the working class whose role they asserted. While the international working-

class movement was dominated by the Soviet Union and the communist parties that followed its line, Marxist theory could do little to address the question of the agency through which revolutionary change could be brought about.[6]

The major theorists of Western Marxism sought essentially philosophical solutions to this conundrum. From Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness* to Sartre's *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, the major works of Western Marxism were concerned with grasping the dialectical movement of consciousness in such a way as to show how workers could come to an understanding of the necessity for their own self-emancipation. As long as the enquiry remained at the philosophical level, it was relatively independent of the actual existence of such revolutionary consciousness and its embodiment in concrete organisations and struggles. As the New Left emerged in the West - partly through radicalisation of student struggles and partly in solidarity with the liberation struggles of the Third World - this problem of agency became more pressing. At the same time, there was no obvious source of revolutionary agency in the advanced capitalist countries in the 1960s, after decades of economic expansion. The majority of the working class were either integrated into the politics of reformism, or looked to communist parties on the Soviet model, or, in the crucial case of the United States, lacked political instruments of their own. In this context, the revolutionary struggles of the Third World provided a kind of solution to the problem of agency that had been central to Western Marxism for decades, and at the same time defined the task of the emerging movement in the West.

If any single work drew together the Western Marxist theme of the dialectical movement of consciousness with the struggle against colonialism, it was Fanon's Wretched of the Earth - in effect, the manifesto of Third Worldism. Fanon's account of the need for the victims of colonial oppression to discover their selfhood and autonomy through armed resistance reworked the Hegelian dialectic of master and slave, one of the central philosophical motifs of postwar French Marxism. For Fanon, decolonisation is 'the veritable creation of new men'; the victim of colonialism 'becomes man during the same process by which it frees itself', putting into practice the Biblical saying, 'The last shall be first and the first last'.[7]

But in Fanon's hands, this dialectic led to a different outcome than previously envisaged in Western Marxism - that is, the freedom that results from the struggle for recognition by the other is not the freedom of the servant, or the exploited class, but rather of the part of humanity excluded from its major institutions, the *outcast* rather than the oppressed. The violence of colonisation is not merely aimed at holding the colonised in a subordinate position within a common set of social institutions, recognized as the product of a common history, but rather to exclude the colonised from those institutions.

Consequently, the colonised cannot seek to join the colonial world on the basis of equality, but must 'break up the colonial world'. Their resistance is aimed at the 'destruction of native social forms' that must be 'broken up without reserve'. This 'does not mean that after the frontiers have been abolished lines of communication will be set up between the two zones. The destruction of the colonial world is no more and no less than the abolition of one zone, its burial in the depths of the earth or its expulsion from the country'.[8] For Fanon, the struggle for freedom takes place on a global stage, but the freedom that results is strangely contained. Freedom is as much a burden and a historical duty as a blessing. Solidarity rather than freedom is often the central normative category of the struggle itself and the vision of the new society it seeks to create.

Fanon was sufficiently consistent to extend his emphasis on the desperate energies of the most marginalised and excluded to his assessment of the class forces ranged against colonialism. He

saw the lumpenproletariat, 'that horde of starving men, uprooted from their tribe and from their clan', as 'one of the most spontaneous and most radically revolutionary forces of a colonized people'.[9] Third Worldism adopted and extended Fanon's assessment of the revolutionary potential of the anti-colonial struggle, but seldom shared his view of the class forces within that struggle. Even in Fanon's own work, the concept of freedom for the outcast was never explicitly contrasted with that for the oppressed. But this changed concept of freedom provided the implicit starting-point for Third Worldism.

The difference between the two conceptions of freedom - for the oppressed, seeking equality, and for the outcast, seeking inclusion within a new social whole - is often obscured by a conception of the two conceptions of freedom as representing different points on a historical continuum between the Biblical world of semi-nomadic pastoralism, on the one hand, and capitalist modernity, on the other. To see the difference in this light is implicitly to attribute the Third Worldist conception of freedom to the historical backwardness of Third World societies, and to comply with a linear conception of history that equates capitalism with progress. It is also to ignore a distinctively modern conception of freedom for the outcast that was most fully developed in Tsarist Russia, between the 1840s and the 1880s, the decades in which Russia's place in Western modernity was most intensely contested.

The Philosophical Roots of Third Worldism: The Modern Outcast

There are complex historical reasons why this conception should have come to the fore most conspicuously in nineteenth-century Russia and not elsewhere - the sudden confrontation of an ancient moral tradition conveyed by Orthodox Christianity with modern scientific and philosophical ideas, rapid capitalist industrialisation along with serfdom and its rural legacy, above all the complex and overwrought class structure of Russian society and the precarious position of the intelligentsia within it. It was in this context that the ancient figure of the outcast took on a modern guise.

The figure of the outcast was morally significant in Biblical times because the mechanisms of social control in ancient Israel were so rudimentary that exclusion was often the only available response to the halt, the lame, the blind, or the prodigal.[10] The figure of the outcast in Russian thought is instead the product of a society in which the mechanisms of social control, especially within the tiny polite, middle-class society, separated by a social gulf from the rural peasantry, exceed the social roles available. Within so small a circle of the privileged, any failure to conform has catastrophic results: Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* no longer has smart enough clothes to make money by giving lessons, and falls into poverty, despair, and murder; Stepan Trofimovich Verkhovensky in *Demons* faces the prospect - which he views as equally dismal - of 'ending my life as a tutor in some merchant's house, or dying of hunger in a ditch' if he loses the favour of his aristocratic benefactor.[11]

The modern outcast that came into view in the context of Russian populism was the product of a peculiarly tense critique of Western modernity. In the work of Dostoevsky, it combined an aspiration to 'learn from the people' and develop the spirit of humility and sacrifice that would bring the intelligentsia closer to the peasantry with a belief in religious redemption under the guidance of a benevolent Tsar. For the populists of the 1870s and 1880s, 'going to the people' had a similar moral cast but was aimed at creating a secular and democratic political order. Both theocratic and populist structures of thought could not easily be reconciled with a linear

conception of history that dismissed the outcast as a relic from a bygone time.

The debates within Russian Marxism about the peculiarities of Russian history, from Marx's correspondence with Vera Zasulich to Trotsky's idea of combined and uneven development, are in their own way a continuation of this theme.[12] For them, too, the question of whether the first will become last and the last first has an eminently practical meaning.

The legacy of Russian populism lived on despite the Marxist critique developed by Plekhanov and continued by Lenin and its seeming relegation to the status of a historical footnote by the Bolshevik revolution. It would be more accurate to say that Russian populism produced two distinct legacies that lived on with little contact with each other. In the context of anti-colonial struggles, Tolstoy's defense of nonviolence had a crucial influence on Gandhi.[13] The idea of sacrifice as the principal means of authentication of national leadership in these struggles had a history that spread far beyond Gandhi, India, and the strategy of nonviolence. In a different vein, 'learning from the people' became crucial to anti-colonial struggles, and was formalised in the radical pedagogy of Paolo Freire. Finally, the Russian populist critique of the idea that each society had to pass through a predetermined set of historical stages found an echo in Maoism, and in anti-colonial struggles elsewhere in Asia and in Africa.

Within the history of political thought, Third Worldism can be seen as an attempt to reconcile these two divergent conceptions of freedom within a unified set of struggles. It has not succeeded, in some measure because it has not been conscious of its own tasks. Despite its stress on the role of the modern outcast - the 'wretched of the earth' - Third Worldism as an intellectual construction has reconciled these two conceptions of freedom mainly within a philosophical framework, derived from the Enlightenment, in which freedom is conceived in opposition to oppression. Paradoxically, Third Worldism has given a global reach to the Enlightenment conception of freedom, and helped to ensure that the radical potential of the Russian theme remains submerged.

The figure of the modern outcast had a second, less explicitly political, afterlife. It lived on also in literary form, in Kafka's victims of an impenetrable bureaucracy, Camus's outsider, Beckett's derelicts and tramps. African–American writers, such as Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison, have drawn on Dostoevsky's archetypal outcast - the underground man - for their depiction of race in twentieth-century America. But it found no clear political expression again until the intersecting needs of national liberation in the Third World and Western Marxism brought together its populist and existentialist strands and gave a new charge of political meaning to the modern outcast.

The French Origins of Third Worldism

The conference of African and Asian governments held in Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955 is often taken to mark the point at which the Third World decisively entered the arena of world history. Aijaz Ahmad's analysis of the roles of three of its leading figures - Nehru, Nasser, and Sukarno - demonstrates that Bandung was a much more ambiguous exercise, as much electoral *realpolitik* as ideological call to arms.[14]

As with many other such initiatives, going back at least to the Anti-Imperialist League that met in Brussels in 1927, Bandung did not result in any lasting political alliance or structure. The attempt by Mao's China during the 1960s to define itself as the champion of national liberation in the Third World, in conflict with the Soviet Union, had considerable impact on parts of the Third World, as widely separated as Indonesia and Peru. But its impact on the political culture of the

Western Left, though far less significant in political terms, may have had the greater role in making Third Worldism into an ideological perspective of global reach.

The internationalist character of Third Worldism was made possible by the political awakening of the Third World, the growth of Western solidarity with it, and their complex interaction in the context of Cold War and superpower rivalry. Rather than the immaculate birth of the Third World at Bandung, the politics of Third Worldism took distinctly different routes in various national contexts, perhaps most distinctively in the major countries of the capitalist West.

Both the theory of Three Worlds and the term 'Third Worldism'(*tiers mondisme*) had their origins in France. The term 'Third World' was coined by the French demographer Albert Sauvy in 1952. The distinction between the three worlds was modeled on the distinction in pre-revolutionary France between the three estates: nobles, clerics, and Third Estate. In each case, the three–part division rested on two binary oppositions. The earlier distinction distinguished between noble and common, and sacred and profane, with the third estate as the residual category, neither noble nor with a vocation for the sacred. The later distinction distinguished between modern and traditional societies, and free and unfree, with the Third World neither modern nor free. The earlier categories of the noble and the sacred were much contested at the time that the Third Estate discovered itself as a political force. In contrast, the Third World was conceived on the assumption that modernity and freedom were the necessary goals of human development. In this sense, the idea of the three worlds was 'thoroughly teleological'.[15]

The term 'Third Worldism'gained considerable currency during the Algerian War of 1954–62. Third Worldism expressed itself mainly in solidarity with the FLN in Algeria, and often in joining the underground resistance to the Algerian War in France. Evans's oral history of French opposition to the Algerian War documents the extent to which Third Worldism drew on the legacy of partisan resistance to the Nazi occupation during the Second World War.[16]

But Third Worldists did not typically see their support for Algerian independence as implying any clear position on social change in France itself. Many of them saw the Bandung conference as an inspiration. But rather than seeing the Algerian War as the front line in a global struggle, they saw it as a form of solidarity owed to a neighbouring country illegitimately subjected to the colonial rule of France.

Support for Algeria was in this sense an *alternative* to revolutionary politics in France, rather than its corollary. The major figure in the French underground network of the FLN, Francis Jeanson, emphasised the division of political tasks between the Algerian struggle and its French supporters: 'Since 1 November 1954 the Algerian problem has become, and becomes every day more concretely, a problem *for Algerians*, so that regrets and criticisms are of no real significance if they are not made by Algerians and if they don't have roots in at least a part of the Algerian people'. The material and moral difficulties faced by an independent Algeria, according to Jeanson, are 'almost inconceivable to our European minds'.[17] After Algerian independence, many French Third Worldists took the logical next step of relinquishing French citizenship and settling in Algeria.[18]

There are specific reasons why French Third Worldism took on this moral cast, and did not develop into a revolutionary internationalism. Algeria was not legally a colony of France, but rather a province of it: the fiction was that 'the Mediterranean cuts through France as the Seine cuts through Paris'.[19] Much of the French support for Algerian, and all of the underground support, was in opposition to the French Communist Party and other established parties of the Left. (The PCF called for 'peace' in Algeria, but voted for special powers for the French military

there.) The FLN's use of terrorism was often seen as a kind of moral exception, justifiable in the context of Algeria but not in France.

French Third Worldism was often concerned with the practical tasks of solidarity rather than putting forward new strategies for social change within their own context or globally. Perhaps the most prominent French intellectual to align himself with the cause of the Third World was Sartre, who sometimes acted as a symbol of solidarity with their struggles and at others developed a sweeping philosophical critique of Western domination. The French Marxist most concerned with questions of strategy, Regis Debray, sought to generalise the lessons of the Cuban revolution for Latin America. French Marxist studies of the Third World, with the exception of Samir Amin, an Egyptian writing in French, similarly remained at a remove from the politics of Third Worldism.

The Third Worldism of *New Left Review*

The French pattern of solidarity with Third World struggles as an extension of, or even an alternative to, domestic politics has some parallels on the British Left in the same period, for example, in the work of Basil Davidson and Peter Worsley.[20] In Britain, this kind of solidarity represented a less dramatic break within left politics. Liberal and working-class opposition to imperialism went back at least as far as the South African War. There was no mass-based Communist Party. The Labour Party's complicity with imperialism was of a piece with its reformism rather than being a major source of division for the revolutionary Left, as in France. Third Worldism in Britain was initially in large measure a translation from the French, but a translation of a specific segment of the French experience made in response to specific needs. It drew above all on the work on Sartre and Fanon, and formed part of a deliberate attempt to assimilate the theoretical legacy of Western Marxism. The crucial context for the development of Third Worldism in Britain in the early 1960s was the journal *New Left Review*, especially after the appointment of a new editorial committee under Perry Anderson in 1962.

The new editors had translated Sartre's account of Cuba and hailed the Cuban revolution.[21] An editorial on 'Internationalism' in January 1963 announced that *New Left Review* had 'chosen to begin with the most acutely oppressed and explosive zone in the world today: the colonial and independent countries that make up the Third World' aimed at stimulating 'a debate on models and options in the Third World', and contributing to 'the necessary internationalization of British socialist thought today'.[22]

Perry Anderson's three–part account of 'Portugal and the End of Ultra-Imperialism' was intended to provide a model of a new kind of analysis of Third World struggles that linked the colonial system and the process of decolonisation to the economy and society of the colonial power and distinguished clearly between different types of colonialism.[23] It is an impressive work: at the same time historically specific and theoretically informed, more fully materialist in its analysis than the work of Fanon, say.

Anderson shows how the 'torpid fascism' of the Salazar regime determines the Portugese system of 'ultra-colonialism - that is, at once the most primitive and the most extreme modality of colonialism'; how the brutality of forced labour in Portugal's African colonies constituted 'the absolute, literal nadir of African misery', and at the same time an essential basis for racial capitalism throughout the subcontinent ('Without gold there is no South Africa, and without Mozambique there is no gold'); and how the whole structure is held together at every point by extreme violence, a contagion which 'settles on everything and deforms it' so that 'in the end, violence tends to coincide with the very notion of social relations themselves'.[24]

But at the same time, the analysis produces no clear perspective for political action; structural determinants are clarified and distinguished, but effective forms of political agency become indistinct. It is 'the wave of African liberation' that threatens to engulf Portugese colonialism; the 'Afro–Asian bloc' is crucial in making repression in Angola an issue at the United Nations, and the United States in disrupting previously united Western support for colonial rule.[25] *New Left Review*'s global and comparative perspective found no firm point of anchorage within the politics of the British Left.

This omission was not remedied by Keith Buchanan's overview of the politics of the Third World, which drew heavily on Fanon, but struggled to translate his analysis into a political perspective for the advanced capitalist countries. Indeed, Buchanan's argument that the 'efforts of Western workers to raise their standards of living have contributed more to the deterioration of the position of the underdeveloped countries than has the profit motive of industrial or commercial leaders' provoked the resignation of older board members.[26]

This divide between the politics of the Third World and the First was never to be bridged by Anderson or *New Left Review*. Some years later, it was to be articulated by Anderson and Blackburn in their account of the 'Problems of Socialist Strategy', describing that divide in terms of the existence of scarcity:

> Socialism as a movement and a critique is based on human *needs* and these needs evolve with society itself. The great, permanent landmark of real abundance will not be the end of ideology, but the *end of necessity*. The empire of scarcity, and its curse, will be over. Integral human freedom will at last be possible. Meanwhile, elsewhere in the world, in Asia, Africa and Latin America, men will still struggle to create a socialism of privation and duress. This must never be forgotten, in the task of creating in the advanced capitalist countries a socialism of liberty and privilege. The aims of both are ultimately the same: they are divided by all the immense distance of different historical time. The last and most vital test of an authentic European socialism is to remember this, and to maintain the fraternity between the two.[27]

But this division between a 'socialism of privation and duress' in the Third World and a 'socialism of liberty and privilege' in the First World could not be overcome by the bonds of fraternity alone. The appeal to fraternity never led to an account of the political strategies that would bring socialists in the two zones together. By the early 1970s, *New Left Review* was carrying substantial critiques of the economic theories underlying solidarity with the Third World. Ernesto Laclau's critique of André Gunder Frank appeared in 1971, and Bill Warren's critique of Lenin and much of the Marxist theory of imperialism in 1973.[28] Robert Brenner's account of capitalist development, published in 1977, assumed a somewhat one-sided conception of Third Worldism, which it saw as the corollary of the critique of capitalist underdevelopment in the Third World: 'The notion of the "development of underdevelopment" opens the way to third-worldist ideology. From the conclusion that development occurred only in the absence of links with accumulating capitalism in the metropolis, it can only be a short step to the strategy of semi-autarkic socialist development'.[29]

The history of *New Left Review* currently on the journal's website admits to a phase of Third Worldism in 1962–3 but to no more than that.[30] By the mid–1960s its main focus had shifted to other themes, above all, the assimilation of Western Marxist theory. But this shift in focus did not bring with it a new conception of the world-revolutionary process and the place of the Third

World in it. It was not so much that Anderson and *New Left Review* had nurtured hopes for the Third World only to have them disappointed, or first defended a Third Worldist perspective and then abandoned it. Rather, the Third Worldism of New Left Review - even at its high points - had never quite resulted in a clearly political perspective.

In the context of popular struggle against colonial power, the Third Worldism of *New Left Review* had not been clearly in conflict with the its Western Marxist emphasis on the consciousness of the human subject. The new regimes established after independence, however, gave less encouragement to this approach. To its credit, *New Left Review* never deceived itself about the nature of these regimes. It showed a sober awareness of the tenacity of Stalinism in the Third World, and its Third Worldism may have foundered on this awareness.[31]

This retreat from Third Worldism was followed eventually by *New Left Review*'s retreat from Marxism during the 1990s - formalised in the relaunch of the journal in January 2000, once more under the editorship of Perry Anderson. In Anderson's opening editorial, he called for resistance to the provincialism of the English-speaking world while at the same time conceding that the ideal of drawing writers for the magazine from outside the 'homelands' of the West remained, for the moment, 'out of reach'.[32]

The U.S. Model of Third Worldism

Although Third Worldism always retained many distinctive local forms and emphases, it was in the United States that it took on its most influential and its definitive political form. Conversely, Third Worldism played an unusually significant role in defining the characteristic form of radicalism in the United States, in a context in which the socialist Left has been unusually dispersed and fragmented.

The global dominance of the United States since 1945 led to military interventions abroad, most conspicuously in Korea and Vietnam, but also throughout in Latin America. In resisting U.S. imperialism, the socialist left moved towards an orientation to the Third World which had deep roots within sections of the African–American community. Robin Kelley has described how militant critics of the Civil Rights Movement in the early 1960s 'sought to understand the African–American condition through an analysis of capitalism, imperialism, and Third World liberation'.[33] Kelley emphasises the role of the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) which advanced 'the theory that the Black liberation movement in the United States was part of the vanguard of the world socialist revolution'.[34] RAM and other African–American militants drew on a black nationalist orientation towards Africa that dated back to the nineteenth century. In the upheavals of the 1960s this orientation made itself felt throughout the U.S. Left. In the process it outgrew its nationalist origins and developed into a new model of Third Worldism.

The example of *Monthly Review* is instructive for an understanding of this process, although no single example can be entirely representative. From soon after its inception in 1949, *Monthly Review* developed a consistent critique of capitalist development in 'backward areas', which took on growing importance in their analysis. By 1951 the editors described it as the *Monthly Review* position that 'social revolution *must* precede economic development in the backward areas' and that any programme based on contrary assumptions - such as those of 'sincere liberals and New Dealers' - was 'doomed to certain failure'.[35]

This perspective was more fully developed in Baran's *Political Economy of Growth* published in 1957. It did not yet give the struggles of the capitalist periphery the major role in global events, but laid the basis for a perspective in which these struggles became increasingly important. The

Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 at the same time led *Monthly Review* to open denunciation of the Soviet Union's claim to 'moral leadership of the world socialist movement'.[36]

From the time of the Korean War *Monthly Review* had drawn attention to the problems of U.S. imperialism, not only in South East Asia, but also in Latin America and the Middle East. During the 1950s it also gave increasing coverage to developments in China. But it was the Cuban Revolution that provided a new point of orientation. Paul Sweezy later described how he and Leo Huberman 'fell completely under the spell of this young and fresh revolution, and became almost immediately convinced that the dialectic of its internal and international development must inevitably turn it in a socialist direction'. Revolutionary Cuba provided a 'brief glimpse of mankind's astonishing potentialities' which was to be crucial for the development of a distinctive *Monthly Review* perspective in the 1960s.[37]

Cuba was an inspiration and in some ways a model for a socialist future, but it did not necessarily make clear the global *process* that could challenge the predominant position of U.S. capitalism. In that context, the critical case was Vietnam and *Monthly Review* kept up a regular commentary and interpretation of events in Vietnam from the initial U.S. military intervention in 1954 until the fall of Saigon in 1975.

Monthly Review's treatment of the U.S. war in Vietnam became increasingly integrated with an analysis of the political economy of the United States. From the outset, this analysis focused heavily on the illegality of the U.S. intervention and its imperialist character, defending 'the right of the Vietnamese people to choose Communist leadership if they want it, as they apparently do'. In an April 1965 article, Sweezy and Huberman raised the larger question: 'Can a country fight its way out of the "free world" - that is, the free-enterprise world, the world open to exploitation by American capitalism - in direct confrontation with the most powerful imperialist nation?' They argued that the U.S. would fail to preserve its supremacy in the Third World and concluded that the road taken by the U.S. ruling class in Vietnam would lead to ruin: 'The course of the Decline and Fall of the American Empire has now been charted for all to see'.

From this point onwards, they came to see the global and domestic implications of the Vietnam conflict as intertwined:

> Inter-imperialist rivalries, revolutionary and national liberation struggles in the Third World, class struggles in both advanced and underdeveloped countries - all will feel the impact of the capitalist world's deepening economic strains. But the greatest effect, at least in the short run, will show itself in an explosive upsurge of that unique and irreconcilable conflict in the heart of the imperialist metropolis itself - the freedom struggle of the oppressed black inner colony.[38]

Unlike in France and Britain, it is possible to see here an orientation to the Third World that is at the same time an orientation to class struggle in the domestic context.

The basic premise of *Monthly Review*'s Third Worldism was set out by Sweezy in an essay published in 1967:

> If we consider capitalism as a global system, which is the only correct procedure, we see that it is divided into a handful of exploiting countries and a much more numerous and populous group of exploited countries. The masses in these exploited dependencies constitute a force in the global capitalist system which is revolutionary in the same sense and for the same reasons that Marx considered the proletariat of the early period of

modern industry to be revolutionary . . . World history since the Second World War proves that this revolutionary force is really capable of waging successful revolutionary struggles against capitalist domination.[39]

In his Foreword to *Modern Capitalism* in 1972, Sweezy was still more specific: The 'primary or principal contradiction of the system in the present period is not between bourgeoisie and proletariat', as Marx had believed of his time, but 'between the metropolis dominated by the United States and the revolutionary national liberation movements in the Third World'.[40] Paradoxically, the threat to U.S. capitalism which *Monthly Review* saw coming from the Third World did not imply the feasibility of socialism in the Third World itself. In their review of the Vietnamese victory in 1975, Sweezy and Magdoff rebuked the 'super-revolutionaries' opposed to reconciliation between classes and building national unity in South Vietnam:

> The point is that in liberated South Vietnam the transition to socialism is simply not on the agenda. . . . Whether the class struggle, as it unfolds in the new and quite unprecedented conditions of liberated South Vietnam, will lead to the definitive political victory of the revolutionaries and the peaceful reunification of all Vietnam as a socialist state firmly on the road to communism, this we do not and cannot know.[41]

This reticence was consistent with a long-held position. *Monthly Review* had praised the ethic of shared sacrifice - 'poverty combined with justice and hope' - that animated the Vietnamese struggle. But they had never described that struggle as socialist. Sweezy and Huberman wrote in 1968 that 'the last stage of American capitalism' had been reached, and added, 'The only way this stage of capitalism can end is through a socialist revolution'.[42] The location of this revolution was not specified, and perhaps could not be. Although the collective energy that brought the prospect closer came from the Third World, this analysis did not require that socialism be initiated in the Third World rather than within the heart of the U.S. empire itself. The struggles of the Third World were the driving-force for world revolution but were not exemplary for socialists, or only in a secondary sense: exemplifying commitment and sacrifice rather than the socialist ideal.
It was only with the splintering of the New Left during the mid-1960s that the U.S. Left's turn to the Third World became pronounced. Although there were many differences and conflicts within the U.S. left, this model of Third Worldism was widely-held and made itself felt far beyond its original context. *Monthly Review* would never have claimed the pre-eminent role for the United States in the process of global change. But its analysis could not exclude this role, and it came to be explicitly affirmed in other registers. Marcuse's *Essay on Liberation* stated in so many words: 'The preconditions for the liberation and development of the Third World must emerge in the advanced capitalist countries'.[43]

Third Worldism and the Struggle for South Africa

From the late nineteenth century, black resistance to racial domination in South Africa was always informed by its global context, with black South Africans appealing to their rights as subjects of the British Empire, to the principles set out in the Atlantic Charter, and the like. By about 1960 there were three major points of global orientation within anti-apartheid politics. The African National Congress (ANC) had traditionally looked towards liberal opinion in the West for support, and as former colonies became independent relied on their support in such bodies as the

United Nations. African solidarity became central to the breakaway Pan-Africanist Congress and increasingly important to the ANC after the turn to armed struggle in 1960. A less widespread but influential perspective looked towards the Soviet Union as the driving-force and model for liberation.

In the years of underground struggle after 1960 the liberation movement came to base its strategies on the premise that racial domination could not be overcome except by a revolution that would put the survival of capitalism into question. For the ANC, the turning-point was the Morogoro conference of 1969 when this perspective was formally adopted. This was clearly stated in its *Strategy and Tactics*:

> In our country - more than in any other part of the oppressed world - it is inconceivable for liberation to have meaning without a return of the wealth of the land to the people as a whole. It is therefore a fundamental feature of our strategy that victory must embrace more than formal democracy. To allow the existing economic forces to retain their interests intact is to feed the root of racial supremacy and does not represent even the shadow of liberation.[44]

Although the South African Communist Party upheld the idea of a two-stage revolution, by the mid-1970s its projected stages were not always easily distinguishable. 'True national liberation is impossible without social liberation', Joe Slovo wrote in 1975. 'No significant national demand can be successfully won without the destruction of the existing capitalist structure'.[45] The *Green Book* issued by the ANC Strategy Commission after a visit to Vietnam in 1979 called for 'protracted people's war' in alliance with the 'Socialist world', the newly independent states of Africa and Asia, people still fighting against colonial rule, and the working class and 'other democratic forces in the imperialist countries'.[46]

In effect, the ANC learned to mobilise the constituency specified by Third Worldism without ever endorsing the Third Worldist conception of social change. It fit in with a Third Worldist theory of world revolution without adhering to that theory. The Black Consciousness movement in South Africa during the 1970s was far more ready to become 'part of a bigger struggle of the Third World that wants to shake off the yoke of imperialism and replace it with socialistic governments'. It rejected alliances with East and West in order to 'join forces with the rest of the Third World in their struggle to break away from imperialist control by the big powers'.[47] But for all its adherence to the theory, this movement never became a legitimate and validated object of it.

The growth of an independent trade union movement in South Africa after 1973 and the emergence of a new Marxist interpretation of South African history strengthened the view of the struggle against apartheid as at the same time a challenge to capitalism. Both the trade union movement and the new generation of radical intellectuals were influenced by Western Marxism and never looked to the Soviet Union for inspiration or support. They helped interpret events in South Africa for the western Left, stressing the need for working-class organisation and pointing out the pitfalls of nationalism.[48]

But for all that the western Left drew on an analysis that was unsympathetic to the ANC and the project of national liberation, its political conclusions often led in a different direction. Saul and Gelb's *Crisis in South Africa*, published in 1981, argued that 'the national liberation movement format remains, under South African conditions, a valid blueprint for socialist revolution' and that the ANC 'demands support as best providing of this format, although it seems likely that the ANC that ultimately wins the struggle in South Africa will be rather different from the movement as it is

today'. The ANC would be moved rapidly to the left, they held, through 'the continuing dialectic between this movement and the considerable revolutionary energies at play within the society'.[49] With the mass uprisings of the 1980s, South Africa came to be seen as pregnant with revolutionary possibilities. In 1986, Sweezy and Magdoff wrote of the South African struggle as 'crucial to the whole history of our time'.[50]

> It is so far the only country with a well developed, modern capitalist structure which is not only 'objectively' ripe for revolution but has actually entered a stage of overt and seemingly irreversible revolutionary struggle. . . . There is no other country in the world that has anything like the material and symbolic significance of South Africa for both sides in the conflict that rends the world today. A victory for revolution, i.e., a genuine and lasting change in basic power relations in South Africa, could have an impact on the balance of global forces comparable to that of the revolutionary wave that followed World War II. On the other hand, a victory for counter-revolution - the stabilization of capitalist relations in South Africa, even if in somewhat altered form - would be a stunning defeat for the world revolution.[51]

Decades of mass struggle engaging millions of South Africans and drawing the support of activists around the world yielded such a stabilisation of capitalist relations in the settlement negotiated between the apartheid state and the ANC after 1990. The global context of the settlement played a major role in its capitalist outcome. The ANC's capacity to contain the demands of its mass base could not be contested by socialists in the West who had argued for the centrality of the organisation.

There is little consensus on how to date the end of Third Worldism, or even whether it has come to an end. In a sense, it has had many endings and also has lived on in residual forms. Certain forms of syndicalist or autonomist Marxism were never much influenced by it. Maoist–inspired versions of Third Worldism were increasingly debunked by indiscriminating Chinese support in the early 1970s for opponents of the Soviet Union - the Shah of Iran, General Pinochet in Chile, Holden Roberto's FNLA in Angola.[52] The rise of political Islam in the 1980s made the idea of inclusive Third World unity less plausible than before. For those who lived through the struggle against apartheid, the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as president of a non-racial South Africa in April 1994 was spelled both victory over apartheid and the end of Third Worldist hopes.

Third Worldism's Unequal Contract

It is possible to imagine a different outcome for events in South Africa, in which the global movement that had developed over decades of solidarity with the struggle against apartheid actively supported a radical challenge to post–apartheid capitalism and in which popular power in South Africa had a radicalising effect on the southern African region and beyond. The linkages existed, but could not easily be activated. The obstacles in their way can be clarified by examining briefly the work of the figure who wrestled most consistently with the problem of giving revolutionary effect to international linkages of solidarity between the First World and the Third: Che Guevara.

If Fanon had written the manifesto of Third Worldism, then its programme of action was provided by Guevara's message to the Tricontinental Conference held in Havana in January 1966. The conference was an outgrowth of the Afro–Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization and it attempted

to draw together guerilla struggles for national liberation in the three continents targeted by imperialism. Guevara's message to the conference was written after his own withdrawal from Cuban government and his abortive mission to the Congo, while he was on his way to participate in guerilla war in Colombia. For Guevara himself there was, at that stage, no turning back. His personal defiance was generalised in his call to create two, three, many Vietnams'.

In 1963 Guevara had spoken of Vietnam as 'the great laboratory of Yankee imperialism'where the people were 'fighting for the common desires which unite the peoples of the three oppressed continents of the present: Asia, Africa, and our America'.[53] In 1966, in what was to be his last message, Guevara acknowledged the 'sad reality' that 'Vietnam - a nation representing the aspirations, the hopes of the whole world of forgotten peoples - is tragically alone'. In this context, solidarity was 'not a matter of wishing success to the victim of aggression, but of sharing his fate; one must accompany him to his death or to victory'. Imperialism is a world system, he argued, and 'it must be defeated in a world confrontation'. For this a 'true proletarian internationalism' was needed in which 'to die under the flag of Vietnam, of Venezuela, of Guatemala, of Laos, of Guinea, of Bolivia, of Brazil - to name only a few scenes of today's armed struggle - would be equally glorious and desirable for an American, an Asian, an African, even a European'. This militant internationalism would be the product of massive sacrifice in the Third World reaching a point where it sparked class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries:

> Over there, the soldiers of imperialism encounter the discomforts of those who, accustomed to the standard of living that the United States boasts, have to confront a hostile land; the insecurity of those who cannot move without feeling that they are stepping on enemy territory; death for those who go outside their fortified compounds; the permanent hostility of the entire population. All this is provoking repercussions inside the United States. It is leading to the appearance of a factor that was attenuated by imperialism at full strength: the class struggle inside its own territory. How close and bright would the future appear if two, three, many Vietnams flowered on the face of the globe, with their quota of death and their immense tragedies, with their daily heroism, with their repeated blows against imperialism, forcing it to disperse its forces under the lash of the growing hatred of the peoples of the world.[54]

Even so fervent and authentic a champion of the Third World captures here the unequal contract at the heart of Third Worldism. The Third World would pay 'with their quota of death and their immense tragedies' and thereby prompt class struggle within the advanced capitalist countries. The standard of living of the advanced capitalist countries averts the need for such 'daily heroism' on their part. The Third World struggle because its national context leaves it no alternative; the advanced capitalist countries take up their role when the global context created by Third World struggles makes this necessary and makes conditions of struggle favorable.

Guevara himself traveled to Africa and to Latin America to share the fate of those fighting imperialism in the most exposed positions. He was aware of the moral ambiguity of his own willingness to sacrifice his life in other countries where his arrival had the effect of 'carrying out a blackmail with my physical presence'.[55] The extraordinary legend that had grown up around him made it possible for him briefly to overcome the barriers between different contexts of struggle. He could become - or symbolise - the global outcast, the prodigal son at home everywhere. But his example could not easily be emulated. Nor could his calculus of sacrifice ensure that Soviet and Chinese differences were set aside in favor of joint support for anti–imperialist struggles in the

Third World.

Nor could the contract implicitly enacted by the Third World's quota of death and destruction easily be reciprocated by revolutionaries in the advanced capitalist countries. They had to choose between making use of the greater legal space available to them or undertaking armed gestures that were largely symbolic and often self-destructive - the Weather Underground, the Symbionese Liberation Army, and the like. Nor could the dilemma easily be overcome by displacing it. In 1970, when Huey Newton offered to bring the entire membership of the Black Panther Party to Vietnam to fight on the side of the NLF, 'the offer was graciously declined'.[56]

Insofar as the contract at the heart of Third Worldism effectively reduced each side's part to their moral commitment and capacity to sacrifice, it obscured a different inequality. The unequal division of death and destruction, in which the Third World carried the main burden, hid from view an unequal division of intellectual labour between the western Left and the Third World, and perhaps continues to hide it. It is not difficult to understand the historical and material reasons why the western Left took on the tasks of theoretical synthesis and renewal and the Third World those of providing raw materials and implementing strategic insights. In the context of left intellectual life, Third Worldism was primarily a Western perspective rather than the product of a genuinely internationalist collaboration. A renewal of socialist internationalism must learn its lessons, but build on a different foundation.

Notes

1. The historical relationship of formal equality in the capitalist polity and material inequality in the capitalist economy is most fully described in Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

2. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), pp. 7, 9.

3. Samir Amin, *Re-Reading the Postwar Period: An Intellectual Itinerary* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1994), p. 10.

4. Karl Marx, 'The Future Results of the British Rule in India', in *Marx and Engels on Colonialism* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1959), p. 87. For an overview of Marxist views on pre-industrial societies, see Horace B. Davis, *Nationalism and Socialism: Marxist and Labor Theories of Nationalism to 1917* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967), chapters 3 and 5.

5. Michael Löwy, 'Marx's Dialectic of Progress: Closed or Open?', *Socialism and Democracy* 27 (Spring–Summer 2000), p. 41, citing Luxemburg's *Introduction to Political Economy* (1908). This text has not yet been published in English. Substantial parts of it will appear in Peter Hudis and Kevin Anderson, ed., *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader* (New York: Monthly Review Press, forthcoming 2004).

6. Cf. Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London: Verso, 1979), pp. 29–32.

7. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 28.

8. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 29.

9. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p.103; cf. p. 109 on the capacity of the lumpenproletariat to be mobilised in the cause of reaction.

10. Some of the relevant Biblical passages are: Psalm 147; Isaiah 11, 35; Jeremiah 30, 31; Leviticus 21, Deuteronomy 18; 2 Samuel 5.

11. F.M. Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment* (New York: Knopf, 1993), pp. 111–4; Dostoevsky, *Demons* (New York: Knopf, 1994), p. 90.

12. Cf. T. Shanin, *Late Marx and the Russian Road: Marx and the Peripheries of Capitalism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), pp. 97–126; L. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1936), pp. 26–37.

13. Cf. B. Srinivasa Murthy, ed., *Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy: Letters* (Long Beach, CA: Long Beach Publications, 1987), Martin Green, *Tolstoy and Gandhi: Men of Peace* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

14. Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (London: Verso, 1992), pp. 293–308.

15. Cf. Carl E. Pletsch, 'The Three Worlds, or the Division of Social Scientific Labor, circa 1950–75' *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 23 (Oct. 1981), pp. 565–90, especially pp. 573–8.

16. Martin Evans, *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War, 1954–62* (Oxford: Berg, 1997), pp. 31–72.

17. Francis Jeanson, 'Algerian Dilemmas', in Ralph Miliband and John Saville, ed., *The Socialist Register 1965* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1965), pp. 80, 89.

18. Evans, *The Memory of Resistance*, pp. 23, 39.

19. Robert Malley, *The Call from Algeria: Third Worldism, Revolution, and the Turn to Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 6.

20. On Davidson's route to the study of Africa, cf. *Crossroads in Africa: Basil Davidson Talks to Antonio Bronda* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1980).

21. Cf. Gregory Elliott, *Perry Anderson: The Merciless Laboratory of History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp. 2, 6.

22. 'On Internationalism', *New Left Review* 18 (Jan.–Feb. 1963), p. 4.

23. Perry Anderson, 'ortugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism (3)', *New Left Review* 17 (Winter 1962), p. 113, n. 2. The three-part study was published in book form in French but not in English.

24. Quotations are from Anderson, 'Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism', *New Left Review* 15 (May–June 1962), p. 90; 'Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism (2)', *New Left Review* 16 (July– August 1962), pp. 93, 99, 97. On violence, cf. 'Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism', p. 88; 'Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism (3)', p. 98.

25. Anderson, 'Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism (3)', pp. 85, 87, 99–100.

26. Keith Buchanan, 'The Third World: Its Emergence and Contours', *New Left Review* 18 (Jan-Feb. 1963), p. 22; cf. p. 20. See also Michael Newman, *Ralph Miliband and the Politics of the New Left* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2002), p. 114.

27. Perry Anderson and Robin Blackburn, 'Problems of Socialist Strategy', in Anderson and Blackburn, ed., *Toward Socialism* (London: Fontana, 1965), p. 290.

28. Ernesto Laclau, 'Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America', *New Left Review* 67 (May–June 1971), pp. 19–38; Bill Warren, 'Imperialism and Capitalist Industrialization', *New Left Review* 81 (September–October 1973), pp. 3–44.

29. Robert Brenner, 'The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism', *New Left Review* 104 (July–August 1977), pp. 91–2. Brenner's work has been subjected to extensive critique in J.M. Blaut, *Eight Eurocentric Historians* (New York: Guilford Press, 2000), chapter 4.

30. Perry Anderson's recent account of the moment of decolonisation as that when internationalism 'starts to change camps - assuming new forms in the ranks of capital' - as if national liberation struggles had no international impact on the socialist movement worth noticing - is not as easy to take seriously (Anderson, 'Internationalism: A Breviary', *New Left Review* II/14 [March–April 2002], p. 16).

31. E.g., Perry Anderson, *Arguments within English Marxism* (London: Verso, 1980), p. 121; Perry Anderson, 'Trotsky's Interpretation of Stalinism', *New Left Review* 139 (May–June 1983), pp. 127–8.

32. Perry Anderson, 'Renewals', *New Left Review* II: 1 (January–February 2000), pp. 22, 24.

33. Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), p. 62.

34. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, p. 77, cf. pp. 81–2.

35. Paul A. Baran, 'Economic Development of Backward Areas', *Monthly Review* 3:4 (August 1951), p. 128.

36. Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy, 'Assessing the Damage', *Monthly Review* 8:8 (December 1956), p. 259.

37. Paul M. Sweezy, 'Paul Alexander Baran: A Personal Memoir', *Monthly Review* 16:11 (March 1965), pp. 46–7.

38. Quotations are from Paul M. Sweezy, Leo Huberman and Harry Magdoff, *Vietnam: The Endless War* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), pp. 35, 58–9, 119.

39. Paul M. Sweezy, 'Marx and the Proletariat', *Monthly Review* 19:7 (December 1967), p. 42; the essay was republished in Sweezy, *Modern Capitalism and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972).

40. Sweezy, *Modern Capitalism and Other Essays*, p. vi.

41. Paul M. Sweezy and Harry Magdoff, 'The Historic Victory in Indochina', *Monthly Review* 27:1 (May 1975), p. 12.

42. Sweezy, Huberman, and Magdoff, *Vietnam: The Endless War*, pp. 51–2, 123.

43. Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (London: Allen Lane, 1969), p. 81.

44. Thomas Karis and Gail Gerhart, eds., *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1990*, vol. 5: *Nadir and Resurgence, 1964-79* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 1997), pp. 391-2.

45. Joe Slovo, 'South Africa - No Middle Road', in Basil Davidson, Joe Slovo and A.R. Wilkinson, *Southern Africa: The New Politics of Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), pp. 139–40.

46. Karis and Gerhart, eds., *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, p. 728.

47. Karis and Gerhart, eds., *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, pp. 739, 743.

48. Cf. Andrew Nash, 'The Moment of Western Marxism in South Africa', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 19:1 (Spring 1999), pp. 66–82.

49. John S. Saul and Stephen Gelb, 'The Crisis in South Africa: Class Defense, Class Revolution', *Monthly Review* 33:3 (July–August 1981), pp. 8, 146.

50. Paul M. Sweezy and Harry Magdoff, 'Notes from the Editors', *Monthly Review* 37:11 (April 1986).

51. Paul M. Sweezy and Harry Magdoff, 'The Stakes in South Africa', *Monthly Review* 37:11 (April 1986), pp. 5–6.

52. Cf. Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che* (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 207–26.

53. John Gerassi, ed., *Venceremos!: The Speeches and Writings of Che Guevara* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 289, 291.

54. Quotations are from Gerassi, ed., *Venceremos!*, pp. 415, 420, 422, 423; cf. Che Guevara, *Global Justice: Liberation and Socialism* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 2002), pp. 61–2.

55. Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1997), p.

632; cf. p. 701.

56. Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air*, p. 67.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Sexual Harassment in Academia in Nigeria: How Real?

Olugbenga Jelil Ladebo
Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development
University of Agriculture, Abeokuta
P. O. Box 2316, Sapon, Abeokuta
Ogun State,Nigeria

Email: adebo@unaab.edu.ng
olugbenga@yahoo.com

Introduction

Sexual harassment in Nigeria's universities appears to be under-researched and even less reported (Adamolekun, 1989). However, the Commission on the Review of Higher Education in Nigeria (CRHEN) (1991) suggests that the phenomenon is gradually assuming critical dimensiosn in Nigeria's higher education institutions. A study of four Nigerian universities reveals that students identified sexual harassment as being among the stressors hindering academic work in the sample of universities (Ladebo, 2001). This contentious issue came to the fore in 2001, when the nation's president, General Olusegun Obasanjo in apparent disregard of protocol during an official engagement, ridiculed the Nigerian university teachers for being unproductive pleasure seekers who sees the female students as sex objects for self gratification. The vituperative utterances of the President regarding academics evoked serious debates from the public, as well as denials and counter accusations from individual academics and collectively as a union.

The motivation for this study stemmed in part from the public debate generated by President's remarks. The intention was to undertake a rapid assessment of the issue of sexual harassment by, first, examining the legal situation regarding sexual harassment either in the work-place in general or academe specifically. The study then undertook fieldwork at a number of tertiary institutions to try to determine whether sexual relationships between faculty staff and students was considred to be widespread, and whether it was coercive or voluntary.

Information for this study was obtained through interviews with key actors and focus group discussions using checklists with both male and female students, and faculty staff in three universities. The three institutions are situated in Ogun State located in the south-west part of Nigeria. To preserve the identity of these institutions, they are referred to as Case I, II, and III respectively in the study. Key actors interviewed included a university legal officer, two student affairs deans, a deputy vice-chancellor for administration, a university registrar, three college officers, a planning officer, and four head of departments, disciplinary committee members, and union leaders. Also interviewed were three lawyers in private practice, a judicial member of the bench in Ogun State, and a senior legal officer (in charge of legal drafting) in the State Ministry of Justice. One hundred and twenty-three subjects were interviewed, but no probabilistic sampling procedure was followed in the identification of respondents. Key actors were interviewed on the need to know basis and/or through referrals from colleagues.

The overall research questions that formed the basis of this study were:
(a) Is there any legislation on sexual harassment in the country; and do focal universities have explicit or formal regulations on sexual harassment?
(b) Do professional associations (such as the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities, (ASUU)) on the campus have codes of conduct for members that contain an explicit anti-sexual harassment provisions?
(c) Are there constituted grievance procedures regarding those who might consider themselves victims of sexual harassment?
(d) What is the perceived extent of sexual harassment amd sexual relationships between female students and male faculty members on the campuses under study?

The paper first conceptualises sexual harassment and identifies its various forms from the literature; second, it discusses the consequences of sexual harassment and considers what might be the extent of harassment in academia; and third, it takes a snapshot view of the perceived situation at three Nigerian universities.

Sexual Harassment: Meaning and its Consequences

Various definitions of sexual harassment have been posited due in part to the wide range of behaviours that may be viewed as constituting harassment. A frequewnt component of these definitions is that of unequal or differential power relationships in hostile work environments. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (1980) guidelines for example define sexual harassment as:

> Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicit or implicit a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment (74677).

The definition identifies the various behaviours that may constitute sexual harassment in a work environment. The first two provisions deal with unequal power relations between the employer/supervisor and employee/subordinate. An employer or a supervisor demands sexual gratification from the employee or subordinate in return for job benefits. In the academic environment, a parallel situation could be argued to arise when faculty staff proposition female students for sexual favours, in return for favourable examination results. The third provision refersto the existence of a hostile work environment, where the offending behaviour interferes with the satisfactory work performance of an employee. Arising from the EEOC (1980) guidelines, sexual harassment cases have been successfully pursued in the U.S (Koen, 1989; Popovich, 1988). Fitzgerald, Gelfand and Drasgow (1995) extended this definition by adding three empirically derived situations. First, unwanted sexual attention such as touching, hugging, stroking and demanding a date. Second, sexual coercion, which relates to sexual advances with the promise of job-related benefits. Third, gender harassment which refers to those verbal and non-verbal behaviours (such as jokes, taunts, gestures, and exhibition of pornographic materials)

directed at and/or intended to degrade women.

However, Husbands (1992) believes that the meaning of sexual harassment is socially constructed depending on the personal and situational characteristics of the individual making the judgement. For instance, behaviour is likely to be labelled harassment when: (a) there are physical advances accompanied by threats of punishment for non-compliance; (b) There is an unequal power relation between the harasser and the victim; (c) It elicits negative response from the person being harassed; (d) The behaviour is perceived as being inappropriate for the actor's social role; (e) The harasser is seen as being persistent in his/her action; and (f) Women professionals are more likely than secretarial or clerical personnel to label behaviour as sexual harassment.

In general, women are more likely to perceive or label behaviour as sexual harassment (Riger, 1991; Konrad & Gutek, 1986; Popovich et al., 1986). Dey, Korn and Sax (1996) in a review of literature present three theoretical models specifying the likely causes of sexual harassment. First, is the socio-cultural model that views harassment as the enforcement of gender role inequalities within the social system. The prevailing patriarchal system subordinates the position of the woman to that of the man. Thus, sexual harassment is seen as a tool of domination to keep the woman perpetually subordinated to men. Second, the natural/biological model argues that the intent is not to harm, or harass women, but that men are naturally aggressive in pursuing their sexual urges. A similar version of this view posits that sexual harassment is the product of attraction of the man to the woman. The tendency is for the man to exert pressure on the woman, but devoid of any intent to harm her. Finally, the organisational model argues that the existing hierarchical authority relations and structures in organisations are responsible for the incidence of sexual harassment.

Victims of sexual harassment

In academia as in other work environments, victims of sexual harassment in most cases have been women; though to a lesser extent men have been the targets of harassment too (Dey et al., 1996). In their sample of faculty staff in the U.S, Dey et al., (1996) report that 15.1 percent of female faculty staff compared with 3.1 percentof male faculty experienced sexual harassment. However, much higher incidence rates have been reported for the women, such as 63 percent by Schneider, Swan and Fitzgerald (1997). Schneider (1987) observes that 60 percent of female faculty staff who were included in a study experienced a form of harassment every working day. But, Kelly and Parsons (2000) suggest that women in the academia must not be viewed as being a homogenous gender group. Rather there are subgroups such as female faculty members, staff, administrators, undergraduates and graduate students. Each of the five subgroups has differing incidence rates (female faculty members 22 percent, staff 30 percvent, administrators 43 percent, undergraduate students 20 percent, and graduate students 19 percent). They also report that the perpetrators differ markedly in the case of undergraduates where fellow students are the main culprits, while for the graduate students male faculty membersare often the offender.

Each of the subgroups of women in academia is vulnerable to certain forms of harassment. Kelly and Parsons (2000) found that employees (62 percent) are more likely to experience gender harassment than do students (43 percent), while more students (41 percent) are likely to be the target of unwanted sexual attention than are employees (30 percent). However, students experience sexual coercion more frequently than do employees. Finally, power differentials play a significant role regarding the identity of the victim. For instance, it has been established that female faculty of lower rank are more vulnerable to harassment from either senior faculty

members or students (Dey et al., 1996; Kelly & Parsons, 2000). This is consistent with research that indicates that women employed in low status jobs (such as 'blue-collar jobs') and highly dependent on them experience more harassment than do other women (Riger, 1991). Similarly, young, unmarried, or divorced women are likely candidates of harassment (Popovich, 1988). Though recognised as a work-place malady, and despite its negative physical and psychological effects on victims, sexual harassment incidents are seldom reported by victims. Most victims of harassment exhibit avoidance behaviour, for example staying away from the aggressor or from the environment that promotes such behaviours, or they simply put up with the behaviour. In some cases, victims blamed themselves for the situation, while others confide in friends or family members. Only a few actually filed a formal complaint against the offender (Kelly & Parsons, 2000; Schneider et al., 1997; Riger, 1991; Schneider, 1987). Victims of harassment, most especially women, are often disinclined to report harassment cases because of fear of reprisals, ridicule, perceived indifferent attitudes by the organisation, and the nature of the grievance procedure, which may be male-dominated (Riger, 1991; Adamolekun, 1989; Schneider, 1987). Studies have shown that the consequences of sexual harassment even at low levels for the victims could include impaired psychological well-being, such as lowered self esteem, nervousness, irritability, and anger (Popovich, 1988); and negative job attitudes, and work withdrawal behaviours that may eventually lead to the discharge from the organisation. Negative outcomes to the organisation include absenteeism, decreased productivity, high attrition rate, litigation expenses, and an impaired organisational climate. In academia, female students who experienced harassment may exhibit a form of 'job withdrawal' behaviour in terms of changing their major subject choices, altering career plans, or avoiding a threatening situation (Schneinder et al., 1997; Riger, 1991). Harassed female faculty members are more likely to suffer strained work relations, view colleagues as professionally incompetent, and become generally dissatisfied with their jobs (Dey et al., 1996). At other times, female faculty members have had to suffer detrimental consequences to their academic careers (Schneider, 1987).

The Nigerian experience

Although the subject of sexual harassment evokes spontaneous reactions from people whenever and wherever it is mentioned, there is no legislation in Nigeria that explicitly penalises sexual harassment at work, including academic environments. Sexual harassment is yet to be officially recognised as the violation of the rights of an individual in the work-place. Organisations and members view it as an employer-employee personal problem, which should be resolved between the parties concerned. Not a single case of sexual harassment has been known to come before the Nigerian courts. A female judicial member interviewed had this to say about it:

> I am not aware of any case of sexual harassment in our records. Since there is no law on it, it becomes pretty difficult for anybody to allege harassment. What we have are assaults and rape, that is all. Certainly, there is sexual harassment here and there; but the nature of our society…is male dominated and nobody will pay attention to you, when you come up with such allegation. Besides, no woman wants to lose her job… jobs are hard to come by, and so, many women have to put up with it as much as possible. It is like rape, nobody wants to be associated with it because of the stigma.

It is believed that sexual harassment permeates all facets of Nigeria's national life. The same respondent observes: 'Even, on the bench there is harassment, so, who is going to judge the case'.

Findings from Fieldwork: CASE I

This private university came into existence in 1958, and its initial focus was on theological education, awarding certificates and degrees in theology. In 1999 it was granted approval to award degrees in secular disciplines. Due to its religious background, most teaching and administrative staff belong to the religious order that established the institution. Student enrolment is 2150, while the faculty number 120.

The University does not have a formal regulation on sexual harassment, though the institution was in the process of preparing a code of conduct for its staff. Key informants reiterated the hope that the proposed code of conduct would include provisions on sexual harassment and normative behaviours expected from faculty members. A top administrator in the institution observed that sexual harassment may not be a problem in the institution considering the religious orientation of the school; and besides, the faculty members were adequately screened to ensure that only those with exemplary character were employed. Another reason cited was that student enrolments in fututre will not exceed 3000 to allow for effective management of the institution. The administrator comments:

> Parents bring their daughters here because of the kind of education we offer here. Should I say we have more girls than boys; and our teachers have a moral duty to be role models to these kids. Besides, the girls are not permitted to wear body revealing dresses.

However, the institution relies on informal awareness education programme where standard behavioural practices are prescribed for the students and faculty staff alike. On Mondays and Wednesdays every week, the university convenes what is referred to as chapel seminar where issues concerning staff-student relations, well-being and moral expectations are discussed. Students are encouraged to express their views on any subject that affects them in this forum. It is believed that if misdemeanours such as sexual harassment are being perpetrated by any of the faculty staff, the students would report it at this forum. Otherwise, studsents may formally notify the student affairs office, which will investigate the allegations. If the allegation of harassment is found to have merit, then the offending faculty member will be arraigned before the Staff Disciplinary Committee (SDC).

Students interviewed observed that sexual harassment in its various forms does not exist on the campus. In a particular instance, a male student directed the author to Case III because the institution's reputation for sexual harassment by faculty is phenomenal. Further enquiries asking why this (male) student made an unsolicited comparison between Case I, and Case III revealed that the subject changed institutions, From Case III to Case I. He was in a better position to know the difference between the two institutions. This respondent went on to recount how a cousin came home for the December 2001 Christmas holidays with complaints that a particular male faculty staff was propositioning her for sex. The student did not think that this experience was an isolated one, rather he believed that sexual harassment of female students by the faculty staff is a common feature in Case III. This perception of Case III as a sexual harassment-prone institution was corroborated by another respondent in Case II who is an academic staff union executive.

However, it is believed by some of the students interviewed that female students are involved in sexual relationships with the faculty staff. In most of the cases, female students who are weak academically out of desperation proposition their course teachers in exchange for academic rewards. Interestingly, the students' views were confirmed by a male faculty member who reported that some of his colleagues said they had been propositioned by female students. A twist to this issue is that a few of the interviewed students (inclusive of male and female) opined that it is normal to have a female student dating the male faculty staff if there is mutual consent between the two parties or if the girl wants to have 'fun' and the faculty staff can provide it for her.

Findings from Fieldwork: CASE II

Case II is a federal government funded institution, which was established in 1988. The academic staff population is 258, while student enrolment is 3,778 (both undergraduates and postgraduates). There is no published university policy prohibiting sexual harassment or staff-student sexual relationship at this institution. Nevertheless, the absence of policy guidelines on sexual harassment cannot be construed that the university is permissive of the act, or the institutional environment is devoid of harassment. Institution members believe that individuals experiencing harassment can file formal complaint with the registrar of the institution, who will refer the matter to the SDC. Aggrieved students can channel their grievances through the student affairs office. For instance, two sexual harassment-cum-examination malpractice cases involving faculty members and female students between 1998 and 2000 were brought before the SDC. The faculty members were adjudged guilty, and consequently relieved of their duties. In the case of staff-staff harassment, no known complaints have been reported to the university.

However, members of the SDC interviewed reported that the aggrieved party must be able to prove the commission of the act against their person as well as present an incontrovertible evidence and witness(es). Due to the absence of guidelines, it was difficult convicting offenders, and most harassment cases are not even reported. In the two cases between 1998-2000 involving faculty-female students, proof of commission of sexual coercion against the offending faculty members was provided by examination malpractices, to which the offence was linked. The first male member of faculty extorted money and sexual favours from a female student in return for awarding good grades to the student, but the lecturer later reneged on the agreement. The student, feeling cheated, decided to brave the odds, and she reported the incident to the school authority, which took the case up. The faculty member was found guilty of examination misconduct, rather than sexual harassment and his appointment was terminated.

The second case involved a male faculty member who harassed a female student about a sexual relationship over a period of two academic sessions, but the student refused to oblige. Consequently, the female student failed the particular course that first year. In the second year, and in a desperate bid to pass the course, the female student employed a 'live mercenary'[1] (Nwagwu, 1997), to write the examination for her, but the mercenary was apprehended by security officials in the examination hall. When the case was referred to the student disciplinary committee the female student narrated how in desperation she had had to employ fraudulent means to pass the course. This situation led to the arraignment of the affected faculty member before the SDC, which eventually found him culpable of examination malpractice, and was subsequently dismissed from the institution. The informant had this to say:

The girl looked (him) in the face and told him, but you are man, why are you now denying that you don't know me and want to have fun with me. Be a man and own up to your actions. Eventually, he (faculty) broke down before the panel weeping, and he (faculty) confessed. We (panel members) were ashamed as academic staff because the girl really dragged our image in the mud. Anyway, the girl was given one year suspension, and she is back on campus.

Both faculty members and students believe that staff-student sexual relationships are a common feature on the campus. Respondents made comments which included the following:
'Guys are doing it (having sexual affairs with their students), oh'; and 'You better believe it some of our people (faculty staff) are sleeping with the girls, and in some cases the girls will come to you. You may not know because you are not in that circle. But those who do it know themselves'.
A female student observed that some of the female students involved in the relationship are sometimes thrilled about having an affair with their teachers; while a female faculty volunteered that the trend now is such that female students are becoming more aggressive and making the overtures to the male faculty.
Faculty members are not solely involved. Administrative personnel also engage in sexual coupling with students; though the parties involved in the relationship usually keep it discreet. Male staff members have been noted to initiate sexual relationships with students, while in some cases female students have been the perpetrators. To support the view that students sometimes make the first move, two disparate incidences were highlighted. A male faculty member recounted how a female student in his college propositioned him for friendship, which was politely turned down by him. The second incident was an extreme case, which is a reversal of the normal relationship between female student/male teachers. In the second incident, a male final year student attempted to woo his female teacher who was of a junior rank.
 The motives for the relationship are varied depending on the situation and the personality involved. Some of the female students enter into a sexual relationship with the faculty to acquire the status of a 'super girl' on the campus. A female student respondent submitted that some of the girls do derive great pleasure for being sexually involved with a faculty. Such female students flaunt the fact when in the company of friends. In some instances, sexual affairs may be due to monetary gains where the student is financially indigent. A number of the relationships between the faculty and female students hinge on the academic favours that faculty are willing to offer the student.
Staff-student sexual relationships are in most cases not evident to the members of the university community except to the close friends and/or colleagues of the parties involved. This may be due to the mutuality of consent between the actors involved in the act. Where any of the actors involved in the act decides to disengage from the relationship, such disengagement has not been known to generate any rancour, which could lead to accusations of sexual harassment.
Sexual coercion is less common when compared with consensual sex but it does exist on the campus. A number of faculty members are believed to be involved in sexual coercion of female students. Most sexual coercion incidents are not being reported in the institution due to the reluctance of female students to file formal complaints against faculty members. Consistent with previous research, respondents, most especially the female students, reported that victims of coercion are always apprehensive about the outcome if they report the harasser to the school

authority. Victims of harassment are sometimes advised by friends not to report the matter because of the perceived tendency to have the case swept under the carpet by the school authority. Another view has it that a few of the university officers in charge of student affairs are not exemplary in character; since they too are involved in sexual relationships with female students. One of the female respondents narrated three cases to me. In the first incident the victim succumbed to the demand of the faculty staff for sex due to helplessness, while in the other two incidents, the female students ignored the faculty members, but were willing to damn the consequences. The female student respondent commented: 'People are really suffering in silence'. Student respondents concurred that students prefer recourse to informal mechanisms such as reporting the offending faculty staff to a respected colleague/friend of the faculty member for intervention. It was further observed that, over time, the informal means paid off, since the message filtered through to the attention of the university management. Consequently, the university management had to call for a formal dialogue with the various trade union leaders on the campus on the issue of sexual harassment. Management sought for the cooperation of the various trade union leaderships to prevail on their union members to desist from all acts that might be interpreted as sexual harassment of female students.

The direct fall-out of the dismissal of two faculty staff between 1998 and 2000 on the grounds of sexual harassment and examination malpractices induced the academic staff union to prepare a code of conduct for its members. The code of conduct covered areas such as work ethics, general conduct, faculty staff-employee relations, faculty staff-union relations, and faculty staff-student relations. Two items relating to sexual harassment formed part of the guidelines. The guidelines specify that: (a) faculty staff must not victimize students on the basis of his/her sex, ethnicity, and religion; and (b) faculty must avoid all acts capable of being interpreted as sexual harassment. It is clear that while there is an effort to check the commission of sexual harassment by its members, the academic staff union failed to define what constitutes sexual harassment for faculty staff. Also, the code did not provide for male faculty-female faculty sexual harassment situations.

Discussions with faculty members on the absence of a provision on male faculty-female faculty sexual harassment suggest that such a provision is unnecessary since no definite case has been reported to either the union or the school. Faculty members were of the opinion that there is nothing wrong about the male faculty making overtures to the female faculty, but the female faculty has the liberty to accept or reject the overtures. However, if the male has been turned down, but he is still persistent, the female staff must employ tact in driving her message home without bruising the ego of the male faculty. A female faculty member submitted that a sexual or friendship proposition might not degenerate into sexual harassment should she handle the situation with decisiveness and maturity.

Findings from Fieldwork: CASE III

Case III is a state government owned institution, and was established in 1983. Student enrolment is over 18,000, while the faculty staff population is 481. No formal policy on sexual harassment exists at the institution, but student victims of harassment can file their grievances through the student affairs office, while staff members are expected to make written representation to the office of the university registrar. In the last six years, two male faculty members have had their employment terminated for being guilty of sexual coercion against female students. Similarly, two staff (a female secretary and her boss) went before the SDC for fighting on the university

premises. The secretary alleged that her superior was putting pressure on her to engage in sex with him.

Sexual intercourse between faculty and female students is believed to be widespread on the campus. Initiators of the sexual relationship might be either the faculty or the female students depending on the motives for the relationship. Both faculty and students agreed that it is common-place to have female students proposition faculty members in exchange for academic rewards. A male faculty recounts a popular line of some of the female students to him, thus: (a) 'Oga, you have both the yam and knife in your hands', meaning 'Sir, you are at liberty to make your request'; and (b) 'Oga (Sir), you seems not to understand the message we are communicating to you with our eyes or mouth'.

Respondents agreed that sexual coercion of female students by male faculty takes place, but not all colleges in the institution experience the same level of harassment. In a particular college, both faculty and students concurred that sexual coercion is non-existent, due largely to the small size of student population, and to the faculty members who are perceived as men of outstanding character. However, certain colleges were reported to be notorious for harassment due chiefly to the large student population (of which women constitute a large proportion) in the colleges. Sexual coercion is not restricted to faculty-female students but is also prevalent among staff, most especially junior female staff and their bosses.

Some respondents observed that academically weak female students are more vulnerable than good students. In fact, some faculty prey upon those they perceive as being poor students to minimise the risk of complications that might arise later. Coping mechanisms include ignoring the faculty if the student is bold and good academically; bringing their parents to personally complain to the school authority; and soliciting the assistance of fellow mature students, who can approach the faculty. Most respondents are of the opinion that cases of sexual coercion go unreported in the institution.

A worrisome vice reported by subjects is sexual assault, mostly being perpetrated by people alleged to be 'cult members'[2] on the campus. There is consensus among the students and faculty members that sexual assault is rampant at the institution. Female victims are coerced into sex through threats to their life with the perpetrators brandishing knives or guns. An example was cited which involved a male student (a cultist) and a female student. The male student took the female student out on a date ostemnsibly to see the film showing on the campus on that night. Instead of driving to the venue of the film show, the male student headed to a secluded part of the university campus, and, drawing out a gun, sexually assaulted her and thratened to kill her if she dared report to the authorities. The victim reported the incident to the student affairs office the next morning, and the eventual outcome was that the aggressor had his studentship terminated by the institution.

Discussion and Conclusion

Sexual harassment has been recognised as a critical stressor that constitutes a threat to the task performance of the individual and even to overall organisational outcomes. Unlike in some nations such as the USA where there is legislation protecting individuals against every form of harassment (Husbands, 1992; Koen, 1989), Nigeria lacks any form of law against sexual harassment be it in its national life or in academia. The absence of legislation against sexual harassment is likely to be at least partly responsible for the fact that some of the universities in the country do not have any

policy guidelines against it (personal communication with the legal officers). The absence of policy guidelines defining what constitutes sexual harassment could in turn have encouraged the perpetration of the act in the institutions studied.

Institutions of higher education without explicit policies against sexual harassment are less likely to have a stress-free environment that will promote positive employee and student attitudes. For the students, it is believed that a person-environment match is crucial for the development of satisfaction, which is more pronounced for the female student than in the case of males (Bean & Bradley, 1986). Similarly, Winteler (1981) suggests that students who are congruent with their environment (particularly with their peers and faculty) appears more satisfied with aspects of their college experience than those who feel out of place. Therefore, unless the academic environment is sanitised and completely free of harassing experiences, negative social and performance outcomes will be experienced by the students, perhaps in the main by female students.

This study has shown that it is becoming imperative to have a congenial environment on the country's university campuses, and there has to be an attempt at defining sexual harassment by the various university managements. This will enable potential victims and perpetrators to understand what constitutes harassment, and offending behaviours appropriately interpreted. Secondly, there has to be a formal policy condemning harassment in the institutions. Thirdly, both staff and student of the institution must be sufficiently aware of the enacted policy. Fourthly, the institutions must endeavour to educate its members on the moral expectations from each one of them. Further, members must be educated on the inherent risks of sexual harassment. Fifthly, there must be a grievance procedure to investigate and punish those found guilty of the offence of harassment. Members of the investigating panel need be those that are of impeccable character and well respected by the community. Above all, it is believed that the absence of national legislation recognising sexual harassment is a major contributory factor to the perpetration of the act in the institutions. Therefore, the government of the country needs to awaken to the fact that sexual harassment is a work-place scourge that must be tackled decisively, if the productivity of its members is not to be jeopardised. An urgent intervention effort expected from the government is the passing of a law on sexual harassment, which will protect the rights of individuals in their respective work environments.

Notes

1. 'Live mercenary' refers to someone (either a student from within the university or outside) employed by a student to write his/her examinations.

2. Cultism is a common feature in the Nigerian tertiary institutional system. Members of various cult groups in the nation's universities at different times have been responsible for murdering students or rival cult group members, and of raping female students. For instance, on the 10th July, 1999, a group of suspected cultists attacked and killed seven students at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife (south-west Nigeria) (Ladebo, 2001). Similarly, on the 13th February, 2002, a male student was murdered by suspected cultists at Lagos State University, Lagos.

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'Gone but not forgotten': Chieftaincy, Accountability and State Audit in Ghana, 1993-99

E. Kojo Sakyi
Department of Public Administration
University of Ghana, Legon

P.O. Box 78, Accra
Ghana

E-mail: Kpekojo@hotmail.com

Introduction

Chieftaincy is the oldest, enduring and most respected governance institution in Ghana despite the fact that the impact, influence, and effectiveness of traditional leaders have been steadily eroded over the years. Even in its weakened state, it remained the governance institution that impinges both positively and negatively on the majority of Ghanaians on daily basis. In previous years, many have believed that chieftaincy in Ghana is doomed to dwindle away or disappear. David Apter, one of the most perceptive analysts of Ghana's politics in the 1950s, argued for mutation rather than outright extinction. The functional significance of chieftaincy, he wrote, was by the mid-1950s, 'being transposed in kind via charisma to the larger social membership around the symbol of nationhood ….' (Apter 1960). This is in sharp contrast to the impact of Parliament, The Executive, Judiciary and even the Police have a limited effect on everyday lives of rural Ghanaians. Of note in this regard is the fact that Chieftaincy is not part of Ghana's modern democratic governance regime. Rather, it is a parallel traditional governance institution which sometimes works in step with government and other times acts as counterweight to the Government of Ghana.

Traditional leaders once held a firm grip on the social, economic and political system that governed society. There were systems in place to regulate behaviour, and rules were well enforced to ensure a safe and orderly society. They had an adequate revenue base through taxes and other donations and royalties to support families and meet their societal obligations.
The decline in the influence and reach of traditional leadership in Ghana is a result of a combination of factors including the politics of colonisation, the modernisation of society, and the intended and unintended consequences of modern government and decentralisation. The weakening of traditional leadership and governance institutions has created a power and institutional vacuum, which central and new local government institutions have failed to fill adequately.
This situation notwithstanding, past and present governments have never ignored traditional leaders completely in national affairs (Arhin 1985). By creating the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils, the government has recognised traditional leaders as important agents of development, especially at the local levels. Thus the government has continued to provide some financial support to chiefs in the hope of sustaining the chieftaincy institution. Budget allocations are regularly made for them to supplement revenue obtained from their traditional sources such as stool lands and royalties. Since government over the years continued to provide some funding, no matter how meagre, to traditional rulers, the latter are required by law to give accounts of their financial transactions annually. By virtue of this requirement, traditional leaders, although no longer part of the governance system, are not excluded from the need to demonstrate accountability. Politically, the institution may have seemed to fade away, but it is still required like other organisations to submit books of accounts to the Auditor-General for examination.

This paper is a modest attempt to evaluate the work of the Auditor-General (henceforth 'A-G') in respect of its impact on accountability in managing resources of the Chieftaincy institution. The first part of the paper outlines the objectives of the study, approach, scope and methodology. This is followed with a reference to the literature on two contending views on the position of Chieftaincy in modern democratic politics. The section also discusses the history of the institution over time, highlighting its current status in the context of the 1992 Constitution, decentralisation and the new local government system. Part two of the paper then looks at the A-G's Reports and reviews the major issues raised from 1993 to 1999 regarding financial administration and management of the Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils. Part three discusses the issues within the context of accountability, noting its implications for traditional governance and development in Ghana.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to analyse the Auditor-General's performance in fulfilling the constitutional responsibility of state audit and evaluation of local government transactions. Within the context of this overall objective the study attempts to::

•   Appraise the content of the report with respect to financial administration;
•   Identify common trends and recurrence of opinions, observation and recommendations;
•   Explain possible reasons underlying non-response to the recommendations, and its implications for the promotion of public accountability and good governance.
•   Undertake a critical evaluation of the data in the context of the purpose of state audit and accountability.

Approach, Scope and Methodology

This paper is based on documentary research into the Auditor-General's reports on the Public Accounts of Ghana for the period 1993-1999. Basically, it is a trends study that uses information from the Auditor-General's report of the Public Accounts of Ghana on ten Houses of Chiefs and their Traditional Councils. Adopting a content analytic approach, the paper provides an overview of the AG's reports, noting the recurrence of certain significant issues that touch on accountability, responsibility, compliance, efficiency and transparency in managing public affairs. The paper is limited to the period 1993 to 1999 and therefore does not cover the full ten year period of the country's return to constitutional rule, as reports for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002 were not available at the time of this review.

Contending views on traditional rulers and governance

Two diametrically opposed views often emerge on the role of the institution of chieftaincy (and chiefs) in Ghanaian politics. The first holds that chiefs should stay out of partisan politics. Traditionally, chiefs maintain strong ties with their communities, so their involvement in party politics is likely to undermine or compromise their authority and legitimacy, weaken communal cohesion and create division (Arhin 1985, Busia, 1951; Crook 1986). In the process, the chiefs' capacity to act as the custodian of tradition, custom, law and order, justice and peace in their

communities would be eroded. As such, the 1992 constitution explicitly debars chiefs from active political participation. The wisdom of the constitutional framers cannot be questioned, based on the history of confrontation that had marked the relations between government and the chieftaincy institution during the pre-colonial and post-colonial periods.

The contrary view is that traditional leaders have helped maintain a system of government based on accountability, consultation and decentralisation, albeit through traditional rather than modern democratic systems; and that they have been and remain widely respected. Thus, to ask chiefs to stay out of politics is undemocratic, and it means they are excluded from the decision-making process (Nsarko 1964, Ansere 1993). This, it is asserted, is likely to affect the progress of our democratic experiment. The point that cannot be glossed over is that chieftaincy institutions have served not only as the centrepiece for mobilising the people for communal development but also as the effective link between the people and the central government. It must be noted, however, that such a relationship has become controversial and at times tenuous over the years due largely to the continued erosion of the power base of chiefs upon the introduction of modern structures of government. The 1992 Constitution is, in fact, a bold attempt to free the institution from the gridlock of partisan politics and thereby guarantee its sustainability.

Chiefs and National Politics: An Historical Overview

For many communities the chieftaincy institution constituted the embodiment of political power in pre-colonial, colonial, and even post-colonial periods (Busia 1951, Nugent 1996; Drah 1979). However, it must be said that the traditionally unfettered powers of chiefs have undergone changes as a result of formal colonial rule and the introduction of parliamentary democracy after independence.Even though Ghana has experienced political instability through unwarranted military interventions, it is a known fact that the chieftaincy institution has demonstrated amazing resilience and still remains a key player, not only at the local level, but also in national life. Though the key role of chiefs as the bastion of local political authority has been dented for many reasons, the institution is still revered, especially in communities where chiefs have made name for themselves by spearheading local development.

The nature of the challenges confronting the chieftaincy institution over the years are varied and range from attempts to break their authority to the hardly noticeable marginalisation of chiefs in political life through constitutional provisions. A common threat to the institution is the perceived erosion of the both the political power of chiefs and of their economic resource base (Kraus 1969, Frimpong 1973). It is true that the institution of chieftaincy and the role of chiefs in national development efforts have been formalised by the fairly recent creation of National and Regional Houses of Chiefs.

The 1992 Constitution and Chieftaincy

The 1992 Constitution explicitly refers to the specific role the chieftaincy institution in our new democratic era. However, this constitutional reconition in chapter 22 of the Constitution is not altogether clear what is expected of traditional rulers to support and sustain democratic governance. Nevertheless, it is arguable that if chiefs play their specific traditional roles, it will guarantee development and enhance democratic governance. By their respect for the constitution, and by implication their adherence to its provisions, chiefs should be in a position to impact

positively on democratic consolidation.

Article 272 of the Constitution states that the National House of Chiefs, which represents the interest of all chiefs at the national level, shall:

• Advise any person or authority charged with any responsibility under this Constitution or any other law for any matter relating to or affecting chieftaincy
• Undertake the progressive study, interpretation and codification of customary law, and compile the customary laws in lines of succession applicable to each stool or skin;
• Undertake an evaluation of traditional customs and usages with a view to eliminating those customs and usages that are outmoded and socially harmful;
• Perform such other functions, not being inconsistent with any function assigned to the House of Chiefs of a region, as Parliament may refer to it.

As noted earlier, the debate on whether or not chiefs should engage in partisan politics rages. The constitution states categorically in Article 276 (1) that 'a chief shall not take part in active politics, and any chief wishing to do so and seeking election to Parliament shall abdicate his stool or skin'. This view is reinforced in Article (94) (3). It is the view of many that by debarring chiefs outight from active politics, good talents that could be tapped for development purpose may be left out. This fear is however allayed by Article 176 (2) of the Constitution which states that a chief may be appointed to any public office for which he is otherwise qualified.

But a counter argument to Article 276(1) quoted earlier is that it contradicts the spirit and letter of the constitution. In the sense that if the constitution upholds individual rights to freedom of association, which include 'freedom to form or join any association or union at national or international level, for the protection of their interest (Article 21 (e)' then the restriction imposed on chiefs is undemocratic. Some chiefs have condemned their disqualification, seeing it as an infringement on their fundamental constitutional rights.

The anger of the chiefs against their disqualification notwithstanding, it must be stressed that the constitutional provisions debarring chiefs from meddling in active politics appears sound both in letter and in spirit. Whilst one cannot gloss over the fact that the constitutional provision does contravene a fundamental democratic right of chiefs to join any association or political party of their choice, one needs to look beyond that, and realise the political harm that such meddling in party policies will bring to the revered institution. In any criticism of the provision, one should never lose sight of the history of the relations between chiefs and central governments since colonial times. Also, the complex nature of modern politics and the inherent dynamics of chieftaincy and modern politics should be considered in any analysis and understanding of the constitutional provision. Above all, the desire for peace at all levels of governance to facilitate development should be seen as paramount in this regard.

Chieftaincy in the Context of Decentralisation and Local Government Administration

The role of chiefs in local government has not been consistent over the years. In an attempt to promote people's participation at the grassroots, the PNDC launched the local government reforms of 1988 and its concomitant decentralisation program. The local government law (PNDCL 207) was promulgated. This changed the structure of local government administration in Ghana by introducing the District Assemblies. One result was that chiefs lost their one-third

membership of local government bodies. The PNDC asserted that the representative or active participation of chiefs in decentralised institutions such as the District Assemblies or any organ of power would be undemocratic and anti-revolutionary. The PNDC local government administrative reform therefore reserve a place or status for chiefs within the structures of the new local government system. However, the local government law does not preclude the appointment of chiefs as DA members, since the central government has the power to appoint 30% of the DA membership.

Under the 1992 Constitution, Article 242 (d) makes provision for two chiefs from the Regional House of Chiefs to serve on the Regional Coordinating Councils. The Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462), Section 5 (d) makes a similar provision. Unfortunately, neither the constitution nor Act 462 makes a provision for chiefs to be automatic or ex-officio members of the DAs. This is a serious omission that needs to be reconsidered.

Historical evidence about the contribution of chiefs to local governance and development abound; the utility that is likely to be derived from involving chiefs in local government administration has received extensive consideration. The Coussey Committee Report on Constitutional Reform had this to say on Chieftaincy in Ghana: 'The whole institution of chieftaincy is so closely bound up with the life of our communities that its disappearance would spell disaster' (Schiffer, 1970). This Report argued that, though the new local government system is good for building a stable democracy, such efforts should respect 'community interest', which meant not only that local government should only be close to the people but, by implication, that local administration should be rooted in the tradition of the people. As Kwame Arhin remarked, 'Chieftaincy appears as a force of continuity and of integration in a period of considerable flux' (Arhin 1985). The institution of Chieftaincy according to some people 'is in itself sacred to us, because in it are reposed our traditions and culture. It has always been our link with the past and the root of our homes'. In other words, the traditional political system of chieftaincy provides the linkage between the old and the new - 'modern democracy' and 'traditional democracy', and the present and the past, all in attempt to maintain continuity and stability. The complete disbarment of chiefs from our present system of local governance may therefore be unwelcome and counter to local developmental programmes.

The Local Administration Act of 1971 was a remarkable attempt in the right direction, where both the elective and traditional elements were represented in differing proportions. In this structure traditional authorities were given two-thirds representation on the local Councils and one-third representation on the District Councils. This provision of 1971 was, however, removed in the 1988 reforms. This step was a major blow to the Chieftaincy. The provisions of PNDL (207) and the 1992 Constitution further undermined their status. For many, these measures sacrifice Ghanaian tradition and culture on the altar of democracy and modernity.

A further point is that there is no legislative provision for the automatic inclusion of chief in any of the sub-district structures such as Urban, Zonal, and Town Councils and Unit Committees. However, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives are enjoined to consult chiefs in the appointment of persons to be members of the sub-district political institutions. This lack of institutionalised representation of chiefs in the local government structure has created a series of tensions and strained relations between some chiefs, functionaries of DAs, and some DCEs at the local level. The new local government system has failed to fully integrate chiefs structurally and functionally into the decision-making process. This situation has for sometime now left chiefs in a limbo, thereby hindering their effective participation in decision-making and development at the

local levels. Since chiefs wield enormous power at the community level, to by-pass them in implementing the democratisation project is likely to undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of such as effort. The question that remains unanswered is how can chiefs be fully integrated into the process of democratic governance? The system of State audits is one such process that still incorporates the institutions of chieftaincy in the course of its annual work.

The State Audit and the Auditor-General's Authority

The Auditor-General derives his mandate to audit the accounts of the Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils annually from the Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana, 1992, Article 187(2) and the Chieftaincy Act, 1971 (Act 370), Section 59(2). At present there is a National House of Chiefs, 10 Regional Houses of Chiefs, and 176 Traditional Councils. Article 187(5) of the 1992 Constitutions enjoins that the A-G within six months after the end of the immediately preceding financial year submits his report to parliament and in that report draws attention to any irregularities in the accounts audited and to any other matter which in his opinion ought to be brought to the notice of Parliament. This paper, among other things, tries to assess the performance of the A-G in his discharge of this responsibility on the basis of available reports to Parliament covering the period 1993-1999 on the financial operations of the Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils within the same period, with focus on compliance with existing regulations. On the whole, the A-G satisfactorily performed his mandated functions of auditing the accounts of the various Managements of the chieftaincy institution and reporting to Parliament accordingly. What this review cannot establish for certain is the promptness with which these obligations were met.

Significant issues arising from the Work of the Auditor-General, 1993-1999

A careful examination of the reports reviewed revealed two issues of significance, which are pervasive in the A-G's findings and recommendations. The first is a low standard of accounting. This finding characterised the A-G's reports to Parliament within the period under review (i.e. 1993-1999). The accounts of most of the Traditional Councils were not maintained in a satisfactory manner. Consequently, most Traditional Councils were not able to prepare and submit their Annual Accounts to the A-G for validation. For instance, the A-G submitted in his 1995 report to Parliament that two out of the ten Regional House of Chiefs and 102 out of the 168 Traditional Councils which operated in the country defaulted in the preparation and submission of annual accounts for validation (1995 report, p. 83; section 325). This situation did not change much in 1996, especially with the Traditional Councils where 94 out of 165 Councils audited again defaulted. (1996 Report, p. 98, section 371). In all these instances, the A-G attributed the violations to the lack of competent accounting personnel able to handle professionally the accounts of the Councils.

The second fault found by the A-G as reflected in reports suggests that operating without approved estimates had become the norm of most Traditional Councils contrary to section 58 of the Chieftaincy Act, 1971, and the persistent reminders by the AG to the Chieftaincy Secretariat to rectify this anomaly (1993 Reports, p.74, section 360; 1994 Reports p. 113, section 545; 1995 Reports, p. 84 section 327; 1996 Reports p. 98-99 section 373). Apparently, the Chieftaincy Secretariat had failed to find a solution to this unacceptable practice - hence its recurrence in the

1993-1999 reports. The same applies to the problem of incompetent accounting staff managing the accounts of the Councils.

A Profile of Selected Regional Cases from the Auditor-General's Reports

This section of the paper presents data drawn from the A-G's reports regarding the administration of funds by various traditional authorities. The data show a fairly consistent pattern as regards the lack of sound accounting practice and the failure to work within the approved monetary estimates. These data could be elaborated by reference to other regions studied in the course of the research, but the following cases exemplify the general picture.

Case 1: Ashanti Region

Two Houses of Chiefs and 18 Traditional Councils operated in the Ashanti region during the period 1993 to 1999. The low standard of accounting in most of the Councils was consistently reported on by the A-G in his Reports. This phenomenon was attributed to the inability of accounting staff to prepare the accounts due to their lack of accounting knowledge. Consequently, 3 out the 20 councils failed to submit their financial statements and accounts for validation, in 1993 (see 1993 Reports, page 78 section 374), 5 in 1994 (1994 Report, page 114, Sections 348-550), 6 in 1995 (1995 Report, page 84, Sections 329-330), and 3 in 1996 (1996 Report, page 99, section 376). At the end of the 1996 financial year, Mampong, Kumanu, Asokore, Nsuta and Manso Nkwanta were in heavy arrears, Manso Nkwanta being the guiltiest with arrears of 12 years operating without submitting annual accounts for validation.
Operation without approved estimates was the norm in the region during the period under review, in contravention of section 58 of the chieftaincy Act, 1971. This flaw was reported by the A-G in all his reports. (See 1993, section 375; 1994, section 551; 1995, section 331 and 1996, section 373).

Case 2: Greater Accra Region

One Regional House of Chiefs and 7 Traditional councils constitute the Traditional Authority in the Greater Region of Accra. In 1993, all the six Traditional Councils and the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs submitted their 1993 annual accounts for validation (1993 Report, section 383). According to section 592 of the 1994 Report of the A-G, the accounts of the Councils and the House of Chiefs were satisfactorily kept. The only problem was the delay in the submission of their accounts for validation (1994 Report, section 592). The undue delay in the submission of accounts for validation was again recorded in 1995. This time, at the time the A-G compiled his report for the year ending 31st December, 1995, four Traditional Councils had failed to submit their annual report for validation (1995, section 350). There was an improvement in 1996, though three Traditional Councils still defaulted in the submission of their annual accounts as at 31st December 1996 (1996, Report, Section 419).
Operating without approved estimates was recorded in both 1994 (section 590) and 1995 (Section 351) reports. As stated by the A-G in his 1994 report (section 591), 'In the absence of approved estimates, control of expenditure exercised over the Traditional Councils and the House of Chiefs could not be meaningfully assessed'. This does not augur well for prudent financial management

by traditional authorities in the region.

Case 3: Northern Region

Six (6) Traditional Authorities comprising one Regional House of Chiefs and five (5) Traditional Councils operated in the northern during the period under review. According to the A-G's report of 1993, only the Northern Regional House of Chiefs and the Gonja Traditional Council submitted their annual accounts for the financial year ended 31st December, 1993 for validation. The other two (2) Traditional Councils defaulted. The accounts which were submitted were reportedly kept satisfactorily and annual accounts promptly submitted. The arrears of defaulting councils ranged between 2 and 5 years, Mamprusi being the worse offender (1993, Section 387-389). In 1994, probably due to the ethnic conflict which broke out in the course of the year, only the Regional House of Chiefs submitted its accounts to the A-G for validation. The state of default of the Traditional Councils (including the newly established North Mo Traditional Council) ranged between one and four (4) years (1994 Report, Sections 601-602).

According to the A-G's report of 1995, the trend in default persisted as only one out of the five Traditional Councils submitted their 1995 annual accounts for validation (1995 Report, Section 354). This situation did not change in 1996 as the A-G reported four (4) defaulters in relation to the submission of annual accounts.

Operating without approved estimates appeared across board in the region during the period under review. (See 1993, section 390; 1994, section 603, 1995, section 355 and 1996, section 425 of the A-G's Reports). The only exception was the Gonja Traditional Council whose estimates were duly approved by the Northern Regional Administration in 1993.

Case 4: Western Region

As at 31st December, 1996, The Western Regional House of Chiefs and 21 Traditional Councils operated in the region. At the close of the financial year ending 31st December 1993 only the Regional House of Chiefs and 9 Traditional Councils submitted their accounts for audit. Out of these the accounts of the Regional House of Chiefs and 7 Traditional Councils were examined and certified as being properly maintained. Time constraints prevented the validation of the accounts of the remaining two Councils. The 12 defaulting Traditional Councils were in arrears of between one and sixteen years. Lower Axim, Gwira and Western Nzema had 10, 14 and 16 years respectively in arrears of submitting their accounts for validation. (1993 Report, sections 395-397).

In 1994 only four Traditional Councils together with the Regional House of Chiefs had their accounts audited. These accounts were certified by the A-G as properly maintained. Six (6) other Traditional Councils which submitted their accounts could not have them validated due to time constraints. Again Gwira ranked highest in default with 15 years arrears followed by Lower Axim and Suaman with 11 and 5 years arrears respectively in submission of financial statements and accounts to the Auditor-Generals Department for validation. (A-G's Report 1994, section 606 & 607). The State of Accounts in 1995 was not better than in 1994. At the end of the financial year only 8 Traditional Councils had submitted their annual accounts. Two (2) of these were not validated (A-G's Report 1995, section 371). There was an improvement in the state of accounts in 1996. The accounts of the Regional House of Chiefs and 9 Traditional Councils were audited and

found to be properly maintained. The remaining 12 Traditional Councils failed to submit their accounts for validation (A-G's Report, 1996 Section 448).

For the period under review almost all Traditional Authorities in the region whose accounts were validated operated without approved estimates from 1993 to 1995 (A-G's Report 1993 section 398, 1994, Section 609; 1995, Section 372). In 1996 however, The Regional House of Chiefs and five (5) out of the nine Traditional Councils whose accounts were validated operated with approved estimates (A-G's Report 1996, section 448).

Case 5: Eastern Region

The Eastern Region has 12 Traditional Authorities comprising one Regional House of Chiefs and 11 Traditional Councils. It seems to be one of the few regions whose books of accounts were properly kept and whose Traditional Councils, relatively, operated with approved estimates. The A-G's 1993 Report indicated that the State of Accounts remained poor as in previous years in 6 out of the 12 Traditional Councils. This called for intervention by AGD in preparing the accounts for them. However, Akwamu Traditional Council failed to submit its accounts for validation (A-G's 1993 Report Section 362). Apparently due to the involvement of the AGD in the preparation of the accounts of some Traditional Councils in the region in 1993 coupled with the reported regular training programmes organised for Registrars of the various Traditional Councils by the Eastern Regional House of Chiefs, the Eastern region scored 100% in the preparation and submission of annual accounts for audit for the year ended 31st December 1994 (A-G's Report, 1994, section 576).This trend probably continued in 1995 as it was reported in 1996 that 'The accounts of the Regional House of Chiefs and the ten Traditional Councils whose accounts were examined continued to be well kept and rendered for audit'. The validation of the New Juabeng Traditional Council was in progress at the time the report was written (A-G's Report 1996, Section 410).

According to the A-G's report of 1993, apart from two Traditional Councils, Anum and Manya Krobo, the Eastern Regional House of Chiefs and the other nine Traditional Councils operated with approved estimates (A-G's Report, 1993, Section 363). With the exception of the Anum Traditional Council which consistently defaulted in operating with approved estimates over the years, and Akwamu Traditional Council, which failed to submit estimates for the year 1996 for approval, all Traditional Authorities complied with the requirement of submitting for approval and operating with approved estimates (A-G's Reports: 1994, section 577; 1995, section 347; 1996, Section 411).

Case 6: Upper East Region

At the beginning of the period under review the Upper East Regional House of Chiefs and four Traditional Councils constituted the Traditional Authority of the region. Six new Traditional Councils were however created in the course of 1993, bringing the number of Traditional Authorities to eleven. The A-G submitted in his 1993 report that with the exception of the newly created Councils, all the old Councils maintained satisfactory books of accounts and submitted their annual accounts for the 1993 financial year for validation. This record was reversed in 1994, with as many as 8 out of the 11 Councils defaulting. This trend did not change in 1995 and 1996. In 1995 six Traditional Councils failed to prepare and submit their annual accounts for audit while

eight defaulted in 1996. This negative trend in financial management by the Traditional Authorities in the region was attributed to the low-calibre of Registrars who manned the Councils, in terms of accounting know-how (Refer A-G's reports: 1995, Section 358; 1996, Section 431).
During the period under review, all the Traditional Councils operated without approved estimates. The only isolated case occurred in 1996 with the Regional House of Chiefs operating with approved estimates (A-G's Reports: 1993, Section 573; 1995, Section 359; 1996; Section 432).

Case 7: Brong Ahafo Region

The Regional House of Chiefs and 42 Traditional Councils constituted the Traditional Authorities in the Brong Ahafo region in 1993, 1994 and 1995. An additional Traditional Council was created in 1996 to increase their number to 43. The lack of competent accounting staff was identified as the main hindrance to proper financial management and adequate financial reporting. Failure to prepare and submit financial statements and annual accounts for audit was the dominant feature in the A-G's reports on the state of accounts of the House of Chiefs and Traditional Councils of Brong Ahafo-during the period under review. For example in 1995, 35 councils failed to submit their annual accounts for validation, 32 in 1996 and 20 were in arrears up to 1988 for the 1993 and 1994 financial years. For lack of competent accounting personnel to handle the accounts, most of the Traditional Councils failed to maintain proper accounts. Consequently, none of the 43 Councils that operated in the region in 1993 was able to prepare and submit their annual accounts for validation by the A-G (A-G's Reports 1993, Sections (401-402; 1994, Section 560; 1995, Sections 337-338 and 1996, Section 338)). According to the A-G's reports covering the period under review, almost half of those Councils which did submit their annual accounts for audit still operated without approved estimates contrary to section 58 of the Chieftaincy Act, 1971.

Fraud, Losses and serious Irregularities

During the period under review, the category in the Auditor-General's reports labelled 'Fraud, Losses and Serious Irregularities' was minimal with regard to the Traditional Authorities. There were four cases, two each in 1993 and 1996, reported on by the A-G. While the 1993 cases involved cash shortages, outstanding advances and payment for goods not delivered, irregularities identified in 1996 concerned an outstanding vehicle advance as well as a deposit for a bus not delivered. The first instance of defalcation placed under the heading 'Fraud, losses and serious irregularities' was associated with the Manya Krobo Traditional Council – Odumase of the Eastern Region. The A-G's 1993 report indicated that the Registrar was unable to account for the sum of ¢709,426, 92 being part of a total cash balance of ¢836,266.92. In the same Traditional Council, the A-G's report revealed that an amount of ¢400,000 granted as a loan to a late employee to purchase a car had not been refunded since 1988. In both cases, the A-G strongly recommended that appropriate steps should be taken to recover the various amounts (A-G's Report, 1993, Sections 371-372).
The Kpone Traditional Council was the second to be found guilty of inappropriate financial management with respect to frauds, losses and irregularities. The A-G reported that the Council deposited an amount of ¢240,000 with the Tema Municipal Assembly in February, 1993 for the purchase of two television sets which, as at the close of the fiscal year, had not been delivered (A-G's Report, 1993, Section 386 p.82). The A-G's 1996 report recorded another instance of fraud,

losses and serious irregularities in the accounts of the Amantin Traditional Council in the Brong Ahafo Region. The A-G reported that an advance of ¢12,688,000.00 was given to the Amantin Community in November 1995 to purchase a vehicle for Commercial use, but as at the end of the 1996 financial year no repayments had been made. The A-G recommended immediate action to recover the amount (A-G's Report, 1996 Section (400), p.104). The second irregularity identified by the A-G in his 1996 report involved the Volta Regional House of Chiefs which paid ¢10m to the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) Accra in February, 1996 for the purchase of a 25-seater Neoplan bus. At the end of the fiscal year, the bus had not been delivered.

Conclusion

In sum, the data indicate that the Auditor-General conducted thorough audits on Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils for the period 1993-99. Two major issues attracted the attention of the A-G: the low standard of accounting and the widespread phenomenon of operating without approved estimates. Financial mismanagement under the item 'Fraud, losses and serious irregularities' was reported to be minimal. The lack of competent staff to manage the affairs of the Traditional Councils is a particular causal variable behind such matters as poor accounting, operating without estimates, failure to submit books for auditing and the unintentional violation of financial regulations.

Chieftaincy, though the oldest and most respected traditional governance institution in Ghana, has undergone neglect and marginalisation for a very long time. Ghana has implemented far-reaching institutional reforms but not single reform programme has been directed at improving the institutional capacity of the oldest institution in the country. Consequently, traditional authorities could be argued to fail to promote accountability, peace, security and good governance. The increasing neglect of chiefs has created a cleavage in the democratisation and decentralisation process underway in Ghana. The potential influence of traditional governments in Ghana is still significant: though they are gone they cannot be forgotten. Traditional government will remain part of our political and governance systems. We must not ignore them.

In addition to the several recommendations from the Auditor-General over time in connection with issues discussed the following further observationss are made: the administration and management of all Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils in Ghana should be subjected to rigorous modernising reform; the Councils should be resourced and staffed with competent personnel; transactions of the Councils should be made more transparent; Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils should be obliged by statute to publish financial statements annually; and outmoded laws obstructing the operations of the Houses of Chiefs and the Councils should be reformed or revoked.

Overall, the entire institution should be considered for reform in the hope of building its capacity to govern and manage development.The decentralisation and new local government system should be restructured to integrate chiefs more meaningfully in the decision-making process. Any further neglect of them could turn them into obstacles to Ghana's democratic experiment. Indeed, they are gone but they cannot so easily be forgotten.

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A Note on Alcohol Consumption and Sexual Behaviour of Youths in Botswana

Eugene K. Campbell
Department of Demography
Private Box 70075
University of Botswana
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel: (267) 355000 (W); (267) 322356 (H)
Fax: (267) 585099, Email: Campbell@mopipi.ub.bw

Introduction

The global incidence of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) has led to a flood of research into their causes, processes and effects. Theoretical and empirical dimensions that link alcohol with sexual intercourse, sexually transmitted infections (STI), HIV and AIDS relate largely to youths in the United States of America (Cooper, 1992; McEwan et al., 1992; Dermen et al., 1998; Murphy et al., 1998; Santelli et al., 1998; Anonymous, 1999; Chapko et al., 1999; Fromme et al., 1999; Mott, 1999; Anonymous, 2002). But few studies in southern Africa (and none in Botswana) have focused on this subject. African ideology about alcohol and sexual intercourse are strongly based on folklore, mythology and symbolic manifestations; and it is ironic that both are capable of producing joy, through sustained lifespan within a community, and misery through premature death. While moderate alcohol consumption may have positive health effects (Dufour, 1999), large quantities of alcohol could result in physical trauma, falls, malnutrition, poor intellectual and work performance and death (Kinney and Leaton, 1983; Gossop, 1989; Milgram, 1990; Van der Gaar et. al., 2000; Rehm and Rossow, 2001). Indeed, alcohol plays an important role in fostering poverty - a factor that is crucial to the quality of human immune system and exposure to HIV infection. It is also known that alcohol-induced intoxication lowers inhibitions, and increases the likelihood of men fumbling over condom application, having sex without condoms and having multiple sexual partners (Gordon et al., 1997; Ford and Norris, 1998; Poulson et al., 1998; Estrin, 1999). Risky sexual behaviour in this era of HIV/AIDS could lead to contraction of STI, HIV infection and, eventually, death.

This paper seeks to examine alcohol consumption and its effect on sexual behaviour of youths. It also examines possible relationship between alcohol use and other social factors. In this paper, alcohol use and alcohol consumption are employed interchangeably. Consistent condom use refers to use of condom always. While alcohol is probably the most abused substance in Botswana, Batswana (citizens of Botswana) are not among the highest of the world's alcohol consumers. In 1996, Botswana ranked eighty-third among 153 developed and developing countries for which data on alcohol consumption exist (United Nations, 1998). Indeed, per capita consumption of alcohol in South Africa, Gabon, Liberia, Zimbabwe, etc. exceeds that in Botswana. Its level of alcohol consumption is by far lower than the case in the United Kingdom, United States of America, Germany, France, Ireland and Switzerland, among others, all of which have far lower HIV prevalence rates than Botswana. The indications are that while alcohol consumption is declining in developed countries, it is increasing in developing countries (United Nations 2001). But whereas per capita alcohol consumption increased in about 43 percent globally between

1970/72 and 1994/96, it declined by 1.4 percent in Botswana during the same period (Anonymous, 1998). This begs the question, what then justifies investigating a link between alcohol and sex in Botswana?

This study is partly justified by uncertainty about the completeness of data on alcohol consumption in Botswana and other southern African countries. Home-brewed alcoholic beverages are commonly and illicitly sold and consumed in Botswana's rural and urban areas by especially the poor and those aged 18-34 years (Molamu and Manyeneng, 1988; MacDonald, 1996b; Campbell and Ntsabane, 1997; Molamu and MacDonald, 1996). While traditional beverages, such as *bojalwa*, were initially designed to contain small amounts of alcohol, their increasing economic value has influenced the inclusion of solvents and sulphuric acid from motor vehicle batteries to enhance their capacity to intoxicate (MacDonald, 1996b). So, although statistics indicate that black people drink less alcohol than their white counterparts, it appears that alcohol intake is much higher among blacks that drink than statistics reveal. Given relatively high levels of unemployment and poverty among Batswana, nutritional levels are generally low among the poor due to inadequate food intake. Thus, home-brewed alcoholic beverages that were previously perceived to have nutritional value are now contributing towards compromising nutritional levels of the poor that abuse alcohol to the extent of exposing them to easy access by physically and mentally debilitating diseases. A further rationale for this study is argument in much of the existing literature that Batswana women are perceived as objects of sexual pleasure, certainty that heterosexual sexual intercourse is the primary mode of HIV transmission in sub-Saharan Africa, observations about a probable link between alcohol and sexual intercourse and Campbell et al.'s (2002) observation in South Africa of an association between alcohol consumption and increased rates of HIV infection.

The Social Profile of Botswana

Botswana's population, 1.7 million, is one of the smallest in Africa. With current HIV infection rate of 36 percent among the population aged 15-49 years, the global demographic effects of HIV/AIDS are highest among Batswana (citizens of Botswana). Some 34 percent of females and 16 percent of males aged 15-24 years are infected with HIV. The life expectancy of Batswana fell from 65 to 46 years between 1991 and 2000. By 2005 it would be 36 years, when it could have been 70 years if AIDS did not exist (United Nations, 2000). For over a decade, the government has maintained a massive campaign to sensitise people about HIV/AIDS and how to minimise the risk of infection. Consistent condom use, delayed age at first sexual intercourse and sexual abstinence are among intervention strategies recognised by national government and non-governmental organisations. Alcohol use and abuse, on the other hand, have hardly featured among HIV-related policies. Several social scientists have investigated the determinants of high HIV infection rates in Botswana, with sexual intercourse among youths being the prime focus. These studies examined factors influencing sexual behaviour from several perspectives, including modernisation effect, poverty, multiple sexual partners, poor parental guidance and non-institutionalised prostitution (Seboni, 1993; Ball, 1996; Macdonald, 1996a; Letamo and Bainame, 1996; Selolwane et al., 1999; Meekers and Ahmed, 2000). But none of these studies focused on the role of alcohol, thereby eliminating from the policy equations one of the most important determinants of risky sexual behaviour among youths. Seboni noted that taking alcohol before sexual intercourse was rare while Ball's sample population did not consider alcohol an important

motivator of sexual intercourse. Apart from fleeting references by Selolwane et al. to alcohol and other drug use where forced sex was initiated by male youths, other researchers apparently ignored the effect of alcohol.

Up to the late 1980s commercial sex workers (CSWs) were mostly found within spaces occupied by hotels and other amusement places where alcohol was sold. Since the 1990s CSWs have increasingly been motivated by poverty and increased demand for luxury goods to operate on the street in major towns at night, mostly sheltered by the shadows of nearby trees and wall fences. Commercial sex work (or prostitution) has been linked with heavy alcohol (and other drug) use amongst CSWs and their clients particularly where sex workers operate in or near drinking places (Plant *et al*., 1989; De Graaf, 1995). Though little is known about prostitution in Botswana, evidence from South Africa, Kenya, Zaire and Rwanda indicate that up to 80 percent of black sex workers in parts of the region have HIV (Plant *et al*., 1989; Rees *et al*., 2000). Given the dependence of CSWs and their clients on alcohol to reduce social inhibitions, its ability to intoxicate and reduce mental coherence and enhance risky sexual behaviour (including the characteristic multiple sexual partnership and poor or non-use of condoms), it is easy to perceive that a combination of alcohol and sex through prostitution contributes to the spread of HIV and AIDS in Botswana. Though recent studies suggest awareness of HIV/AIDS and preventive measures amongst most CSWs in southern and eastern Africa, very few use the condom consistently. Indeed, most would proceed to have unprotected sex where clients are prepared to pay extra to do so (Rees *et al*., 2000; Gysels, 2001; Varga, 2001; United Nations, 2002).

In Botswana women are often exposed to rape, the incidence of which increased by 7 percent between 1995 and 1997 and increased further by 11 percent during the next twelve months. A considerable number of such cases involved alcohol consumption by the assailant, victim or both (Botswana 1999). Violent sexual abuse of women persists, and this is steeped in traditional belief that women are inferior enough to be referred to as children (Macdonald 1996a). Studies elsewhere in the region reveal a presence of alcohol in rape incidence and fear of rape serving to deter women from using alcohol (Mamman *et al*. 2002). In South Africa, most rapes occur during weekends - the period when exposure to alcohol consumption leisure activities is highest (Swart *et al*. 2000). Alcohol abuse in Botswana's cities is easily visible on weekends by the heaps of empty cans of alcohol beverages that lie near drinking places awaiting collection for recycling. Several studies have attested to rape victims' exposure to risk of HIV infection from the assailant. But unlike South Africa, where the spread of HIV is as alarming as in Botswana, HIV intervention policies in Botswana have not yet incorporated assistance to rape victims.

Though the proportion of Batswana males and females who become sexually active by their twentieth birthday is lower than in other Southern African countries, relatively more Batswana than Zimbabweans and Tanzanians commence sexual intercourse by age 15 (McCauley and Salter, 1995; Singh, et. al. 2000). Sexual intercourse is understood by Batswana youths as a critical expression of love, so much so that having boyfriends or girlfriends is considered to be more or less synonymous with having sexual intercourse (Ball, 1996). Unprotected sexual intercourse contributed to high and increasing levels of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection (STI) among Batswana youths between the 1980s and 1990s (Botswana 1994). While premarital sex and pregnancy were frowned upon prior to the 20th Century, an effect of modernisation has been increasing tolerance of pre- and extra-marital sexual relationships and premarital pregnancy. Migration of Batswana men to South African mines and poverty are also assumed to be among factors that have contributed to risky sexual behaviour and spread of HIV among Batswana

(Macdonald 1996a).

Methodology

Primary quantitative data were obtained from a sample survey of 1124 males and females aged 14 to 24 years between November 1997 and January 1998. A stratified sample design, structured questionnaires and canvassers (or 'face-to-face') methods were used to collect the data. In Gaborone, the selection of an appropriate sample size for this study was based on an assumed proportion (p) of sexually active youths in the city. From the variation in the proportion of sexually active teenagers in Botswana, it was assumed that the true level of sexually active youths (14-24 years) in Botswana is between 60.0 percent and 80.0 percent. The sample size was therefore predetermined at three levels of precision where the percentage random standard error (prse) corresponding to 60.0 percent, 70.0 percent, and 80.0 percent sexual activity were computed. In order to obtain populations that were not affected much by social and economic conditions in Gaborone, rural areas were selected purposively from the northern part of the country. Selection of sample population in each sample locality was done randomly. Though the initial sample size in Gaborone was 1000, 891 youths were enumerated. The additional 233 were enumerated in the villages, namely Masunga, Sebina, Shashe/Semotswane, Tawana, Tsamaya and Zwenshambe. To ensure confidentiality and, thus, reliability of responses, each responded was enumerated, with permission, out of earshot of a third person. Qualitative information was collected through in-depth interviews.

Quantitative Analytical framework

Chi square, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression analysis were used. Chi square was applied to examine bi-variate interactions between alcohol use and selected factors. ANOVA was applied to examine the effects of a single factor on frequency of sexual intercourse. In each case, a third variable (age of youth) was used as a control. Multiple regression analysis was used to isolate the determinants of alcohol consumption and sexual intercourse. Because the data lacked additivity, logarithmic transformation was done to induce normality. Consequently, the means in Table 1 are actually antilogarithms of the initial means obtained from transformed data. Stepwise method was used to select the predictors because of its ability to correct for effects of multicolinearity (Draper and Smith, 1981; Neter *et al*, 1985; Mukherjee *et al*, 1998).
In applying multiple regression analysis, the response variables are (1) number of (alcoholic) drinks consumed per day and (2) frequency of sexual intercourse per month (i.e. 'number of times youth had sex in the past month'). The first response reflects quantity of alcohol consumed. It is a better indicator of alcohol consumption than the number of times youth drink alcohol. The second response reflects current sexual activity. Initially the predictors included in the development of the equations are age of youth, education of youth, education of youth's father, education of youth's mother, proportion of surviving brothers, proportion of surviving sisters, age when youth first knew about sex, number of sexual partners youth had simultaneously, number of boyfriend or girlfriend had in the past 12 months, current number of boyfriend/girlfriend, age at first sexual intercourse, number of children ever born or fathered, number of times youth went to nightclub, bar or party, number of times youth drank alcohol and number of drinks youth consumed per day. While number of times youth had sex in the past month was initially included as a predictor when the response variable was *number of drinks consumed per day*, it was excluded where the

response was *frequency of sexual intercourse per month.*

Two of the alcohol-related predictors (i.e. number of times youth drank alcohol and number of drinks consumed per day) were excluded when developing the first model. The second model includes the effect of number of alcoholic drinks youth consumed per day while the third model includes the effect of number of times youth drank alcohol. The contributions of individual variables to total coefficient of determination (R^2) are excluded from Table 2 due to its presentation. Where appropriate, they are included in the text. It is worth noting that education of respondent' parents was included among the predictors because it is better for explaining respondent's attitudes and behaviour than the respondent's education (Campbell 1993, Campbell and Campbell 1997).

Results

Out of 1,124 youths interviewed, 59 percent were females and 41 percent were males. Only 1 percent of the youths never went to school. 34 percent of those that attended school attained senior secondary and post-secondary education. 96 percent were never married and more than three-quarters (76 percent) had no income. Among those that were sexually active, 61 percent were females and 55 percent were males. There were relatively more alcohol consumers among males (41 percent) than among females (23 percent). Chi square revealed that youths' age and education are significantly associated with alcohol use. Alcohol use is significantly higher among out-of-school youths than those that are in school. Most of those in school live with their parents while those not attending school live with relatives, other guardians or spouses. The family that males live with influences their use of alcohol. Sexually active youths consume significantly more alcohol than their virgin counterparts. Though consistent condom use is relatively higher among non-alcohol users, there is no significant association between condom and alcohol use.

Perceptions about Alcohol and Sex

It is not always clear what is meant when people make statements that associate sexual intercourse with alcohol consumption. Do they perceive that the relationship (if there is one) is an outcome of biological, social or psychosocial factors? The in-depth survey revealed that people generally believe that alcohol does affect adolescents' sexual behaviour. Indeed, most respondents' views were consistent with the environmentalist theory. Some of the responses are cited here; but, for purposes of confidentiality, the names are not the real. Pontsho, a 25 year old insurance agent, felt that 'youth nowadays drink alcohol excessively. After drinking, they become reckless by having sex all over the place. Alcohol lowers the mind's alertness, and despite the fact that they know about AIDS/HIV, they engage in behaviour that leads them to contract it'. While Pontsho correctly refers to the inhibiting effect of alcohol, her association of alcohol consumption with reckless sexual behaviour by youth is too general and appears to have been influenced by the tendency to stigmatise HIV infection as a product of irresponsible sexual behaviour. Still, the statement draws attention to a realisation that there is a strong element of social intervention in the behaviour of people after taking alcoholic drinks. According to 17 years old Thabo, 'there is a definite connection between alcohol consumption and reckless sexual behaviour. Sometimes people have sex when they are drunk, and it is not something they planned. They just do it under the influence of alcohol. There are cases where drunken individuals rape or are raped. Also, when people are drunk, they may forget or be unable to protect themselves by using a condom'. This

remark includes the effect of alcohol-induced intoxication on rape and concurs with observations elsewhere about the effect of alcohol on crime (Gossip 1989, Chapko 1999). Where rape occurred due to the perpetrator being intoxicated, it may be surmised that most of such acts were implemented due to sexual arousal following alcohol consumption. Thabo's remark captures much of the social and health factors associated with alcohol use and abuse. It is consistent with remarks by Namibians on this subject (LeBeau et al. 2001).

What seems to be missing in the statements by Pontsho and Thabo is a tendency by others to associate alcohol with sexual intercourse as if there was intervention from biological factors. For instance, 35 year old civil engineer Mpho stated that:

> I have never taken alcohol. But my friends who drink alcohol tell me that after drinking, the alcohol drops below the waist (*bo a tsheta*), meaning that it causes them sexual arousal and desire. In that sense, I would say that alcohol is a factor in adolescent sexual practice. After drinking, I don't know if you understand me, one becomes more excited and sociable. So, like my friends tell me, when they want a girl, and they are scared to approach them, they go drinking to gain the bravado to approach the girl.

In addition to social effects on the interrelationship between alcohol and sex, Mpho also includes intervention from biological factors that interact with alcohol to directly affect sexual arousal in humans. This is consistent with hereditarianism and empirical observations about the biological effect of alcohol on sexual behaviour.

Alcohol Consumption and Frequency of Sex: A Behavioural Perspective

The number of sexual intercourse youths had during the past month increased according to the number of times that they drank alcohol (see Table 1). Males who drank at least once a week had 2 times more sex than their non-drinking counterparts. The quantity of alcohol consumed is implicit in the number of alcoholic drinks consumed at a single drinking session. The drinking status of youths' partners does not seem to have significant effect on the sexual behaviour of youths. The frequency of sexual intercourse among males who have had sex with a casual acquaintance when under the influence of alcohol is significantly higher than it is among those who have never had such a sexual encounter.

-=------**Table 1 Here (On seprate file)**---------

Multiple Regression Analysis

Both models in Table 2 indicate that alcohol consumption by youths is influenced by attendance of nightclubs, bars and parties; and this is especially so for females. This presents an impression that a link exists between sexual intercourse and alcohol consumption of youths in Botswana. Considering that Batswana youths tend to associate having a boyfriend or girlfriend with sex, it may seem that the negative signs of the regression coefficients corresponding to number of boyfriends that females had currently (b = -0.347) and in the past 12 months (b = -0.351) are inconsistent with expectation. Meanwhile, Models 1 and 2 indicate positive relationship between multiple sexual partners among all youths (total) and quantity of drinks consumed per day (b = 0.167 and 0.172, respectively).

----------**Table 2 Here on Facing Page** (On seperate file)-------

While the educational attainment of youths is mutually independent of the number of drinks consumed in a day, both models indicate a significant effect of their father's education on alcohol consumption. The negative signs of the regression coefficients for all adolescents in Models 1 and 2 (-0.168 and -0.143, respectively) are consistent with expectations, and they indicate that offspring of less educated fathers have a greater tendency toward alcohol consumption than their counterparts with more educated fathers.

Models 2 and 3 in Table 3 indicate that alcohol consumption has a significant influence on frequency of sexual intercourse among Batswana youths. Additional results to those presented in Model 2 (not shown in Table) revealed that alcohol consumption contributed 11.3 percent and 26 percent to variations in sexual behaviour of males and females, respectively. With regard to Model 3, the corresponding contributions are 2.1 percent and 24.1 percent, respectively. These R^2 values point towards a greater effect of alcohol on sexual behaviour of females than among males. Models 2 and 3 in the table indicate that attendance of nightclubs, bars and parties tends to influence sexual intercourse among youths. While the effect of nightclub, bars and parties on sexual frequency among youths seems to be stronger among females than males, the models indicate that activities associated with these places tend to reduce the frequency of sexual intercourse among such females (b = -0.301 and -0.304, respectively).

----------**Table 3 (on seperate file) on Facing page** ----------

Although alcohol appears to have significant effects on the sexual behaviour of youths, other social factors also play important roles in determining frequency of sexual intercourse. Table 3 shows that for males and females the number of boy/girlfriends youths had over the past 12 months or currently influences the frequency of sexual intercourse. Additional statistics (not shown in the Table) revealed that the number of boyfriends a females had over the past 12 months and the number of girlfriends a male had currently have the greatest influence on frequency of sexual intercourse among female and male youths. From Models 1, 2 and 3 results, it was revealed that number of boyfriends over the past 12 months contributed 67.6 percent, 29.9 percent, and 24.1 percent, respectively, to variance in frequency of sexual intercourse among females. The corresponding contributions of current number of girlfriends among males are 74.4 percent, 54.3 percent, and 58.3 percent, respectively.

The table further indicates that older youths have more sex than their younger counterparts (see Model 1). The model also suggests the existence of a relationship between number of children ever born to females and the frequency of sexual intercourse by females. Likewise, having multiple sexual partners tends to influence the frequency of sexual intercourse among females. While the absence of a significant relationship between multiple sexual partners and sexual intercourse in Models 2 and 3 suggests caution about drawing conclusions from these observations, they should not be overlooked entirely. Model 3 indicates that having brothers contributes towards males' participation in sexual intercourse.

Conclusion

Batswana entertain beliefs (and myths) about alcohol's ability to influence sexual behaviour; and the qualitative part of this study reveals that in general, Batswana youths perceive that alcohol consumption influences people's sexual behaviour. With opinions as strong as this, it is probable that the absence of scientific analysis on alcohol and sex interrelationship in previous studies in

Botswana is partly due to a general conclusion that the two variables are highly related. But conclusions should be based on evidence; and the evidence from this study points to the need for further investigation in order to strengthen conclusions about the subject.

This study reveals strong effects of social factors on sexual behaviour of youths in Botswana. They include alcohol consumption, having a boyfriend or girlfriend, entertaining multiple sexual partners and sibling's behavioural effects. In effect, the sexual behaviour of youths is not determined by alcohol alone (see Harvey and Beckman, 1986; Hines et al., 1998). Alcohol-induced intoxication influences non-use of condoms, and inconsistent condom use by alcohol users partly explains why the incidence of sexually transmitted infections is significantly higher among alcohol users than non-alcohol users. Implicitly, attention is called to the contribution of alcohol to HIV/AIDS infection among youths in Botswana. This serves to reinforce the need for HIV-related policies in Botswana to address every risk factor. In effect, the results point towards adopting an alcohol policy that is designed to control consumption of alcohol in Botswana. But the symbolism of alcohol consumption within cultures that are still steeped in traditional beliefs could pose serious challenges to governmental interventions.

Apparently, alcohol consumption by youths influences sexual behaviour just as much as their sexual behaviour influences consumption of alcohol. Given the interaction between testosterone level and youths' sexual behaviour (Udry and Billy, 1987; Halpern et al., 1994), it is reasonable to expect linearity between alcohol consumption and sexual behaviour of youths. Mindful of the health effects of previous practice of consanguinity in the country, future studies should address biosocial contributions to sexual behaviour, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

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REVIEW SYMPOSIUM

Neville Alexander. *An Ordinary Country: Issues in the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy.* Pietermaritzburg. Natal University Press. 2002.

Reviews by Andrew Nash, Z.Pallo Jordan and Luvuyo Wotshela.

Neville Alexander occupies a remarkable position in the life of the South African Left. He speaks with the authority of a former Robben Island prisoner - Nelson Mandela's major left-wing adversary in prison debates in the 1960s and early 1970s - and a lifelong activist, always at the frontlines. But he has never been trapped by this authority. He retains the freedom of a creative thinker, always willing to explore new arguments and perspectives. In this, he is an emblem of what the intellectual Left in South Africa could be, resembling in some ways Mandela's embodiment of what was best in the new South Africa at the moment of its birth. In both cases, the promise is worth having even if it cannot always be kept.

Alexander's latest book *An Ordinary Country* started life as a series of lectures given in Germany in 1999 and 2000. Alexander speaks of it as a 'work in progress' (p. vi) and as 'a volume of essays on important related themes or topics rather than a continuous narrative' (p. 6). Both descriptions seem to me only partly true. The nature of the South African transition will occupy the minds of activists and commentators for many years to come, and no doubt Alexander himself will have more to say on it. But this book is written from a point of view that takes the transition to be essentially completed, for all that important new issues remain unresolved. In this sense, it is very different from *Some Are More Equal than Others* (Cape Town, Buchu Books, 1993), his volume of essays and speeches analysing the transition as it was in process, with its outcome still undecided.

Similarly, although the essays in *An Ordinary Country* are often quite loosely connected, Alexander seeks in all of them to grasp the overall character of the process and its line of movement, rather than treating specific topics in isolation or solely in retrospect. It is not so much that this work is incomplete or episodic, as his disclaimers suggest, but rather that its overall account of the new South Africa does not always add up, and its syntheses are often contradictory. Although the individual essays are illuminating and engaging each in their own right, it is worth asking how these larger lacunae and contradictions come about.

'Viewed as historiography', Alexander writes, 'this book's thesis is that the new South Africa had to happen in the way it did because of the specific history of the country and of the two main organisational expressions of the interests and desires of the population of South Africa at the end of the twentieth century and in the context of the geopolitical shifts that were taking place during the last quarter of the century'(p. 6). Elsewhere he speaks of the new South Africa having become 'inevitable' (p. 53). 'No other outcome was possible', he tells us, apart from that achieved by the negotiated settlement (p. 58).

What was it exactly that 'had to happen in the way it did'? Before we can assess whether no other outcome was possible, we have to be able to say what the outcome of the negotiated settlement actually was. The title of Alexander's book suggests an answer that is straightforward but

strangely hollow: *An Ordinary Country*.

The new South Africa is ordinary, in this account, in that it conforms to the patterns of global capitalism in the aftermath of the Cold War. Alexander emphasises that 'the ANC government, first and foremost, serves the interests of the capitalist class' (p. 49). Despite changes in its racial composition, this is 'the very same capitalist class that profited from the system of overt and systematic racism which the world called apartheid and which is now allegedly a thing of the past' (p. 59). This class has 'placed their property under new management' without compromising their right to private ownership of the resources of the country (p. 63). The new South Africa is ordinary insofar as the imperatives of globalisation drive it 'towards becoming a deeply divided society in which, as in all countries today, the divisions are determined by class' (p. 96). Alexander concludes that this pattern is set to continue into the future; that is, that class struggles will 'be fought out within the framework of a normalised capitalist society' or 'accommodated within the liberal democratic constitutional order, as they are in other such states' (p. 167).

But there is a second account of the outcome of the negotiated settlement running through Alexander's essays which is which is more or less openly in conflict with the argument that South Africa has become an 'ordinary country'. According to Alexander, the new South Africa's nation-building project is 'moving at a glacial tempo' and post-apartheid identity politics promise 'volatility and danger' (p. 82). The new South Africa has 'yet to find the appropriate political and social strategies to preclude the danger of a Yugoslav-like fragmentation of the country' (p. 85), in which the country 'falls apart into warring ethnic groups' (p. 91). In the meanwhile, poverty and desperation grows and the 'tidal wave of organised and syndicated crime that is overwhelming the country' takes on the dimensions of 'a surrogate low-intensity civil war' (p. 155).

To complicate the picture, Alexander alludes to a third possibility in his concluding discussion of 'new forms of struggle . . . being forged by ordinary people defending themselves against the barbaric effects of neo-liberal economic policies and practices' (p. 171). He is surely right to see these emerging struggles as no immediate threat to the new ruling-class. And it might be argued that even if these struggles were to grow in strength and cohesion, they could still be contained within a liberal democratic order. But if Alexander is right that 'a reincarnation of socialist thought, mass organisation and mass action will take place sooner rather than later' (p. 167), then there is at least a question of whether it will leave the basis of the new South African order intact. Which of these three is the inevitable outcome of the negotiated settlement: the stable and functioning liberal democracy, the powder-keg about to be blown apart, or the capitalist order in which workers are gradually creating new ties of solidarity and struggle? There is some truth in each description. But each of them describes no more than a single tendency within a larger and more confused whole. To project any one of these three lines of development into the future, as if no conflicting possibilities existed, would be a mistake.

My own view is that, as soon as one looks beyond the short-term future, the description of the new South Africa about which Alexander is most emphatic is also the least plausible. South Africa has always been subject, although in its own peculiar way, to the pressures of global capitalism. This was obscured by the exceptional moral status of apartheid after the 1960s. But there is no such thing as an 'ordinary country' in contemporary capitalism. Even if some are exposed to the pressures of the global system in more conventional ways than others, the system itself remains

irrational, arbitrary, unequal and oppressive. And if you were to set yourself the task of imagining an ordinary capitalism, it would differ from the new South Africa in at least one respect. Normal societies do not have to work so hard at maintaining their normality. They do not depend so much on the illusion that they have undergone a fundamental change of character.

The new South Africa is a contradictory amalgam, in short, and the outcome of its contradictions is still far from decided. It is far from clear that the system will be able, as Alexander suggests, to 'slough off the integument of racially determined social relations' (p. 22). Does any part of its ruling elite still think this is a real possibility? They hope the black middle-class will grow fast enough to create the impression that the impoverishment of the majority is temporary, or that there is a real prospect for individuals of joining the privileged minority. But they rely on the rule of fear - not fear of arrest under the pass-laws or detention without trial, but the privatised fear of crime, debt, unemployment, and the countless other ways of not making it in capitalist society which do not easily lend themselves to collective resistance. The essential change in social relations has been to erode the racial basis of collective resistance, not to make race irrelevant in the lives of most South Africans.

Alexander is well aware that the new South Africa is the product of political choices. He is especially effective in pointing out the role of the South African Communist Party and Left forces within the ANC which have sought to 'dress up enforced compromise and retreat as victory' (p. 63). The essays in *An Ordinary Country* are conceived as a left-wing corrective to new South African 'triumphalism' (p. 5), deliberately aimed at 'identifying the points of leverage that are available to those who are not deluded by the trappings of representative democracy' (p. 7). But despite his own strong sense of how social outcomes are shaped by political action, it seems to me that Alexander's analysis yields no clear perspective for the Left in the new South Africa.

Why not? Although Alexander gives a central place to class issues in describing the making of the new South Africa, these issues are far less conspicuous in his account of the political choices it raises. Capitalist industrialisation, he argues, by throwing together 'people of diverse provenance in South Africa' has established 'the loom on which the fabric of a united South African nation can be woven'. However, warping tendencies originating within the capitalist system itself' have strengthened 'those elements that are disposed to tear this fabric apart'. As a result, 'the question that poses itself today is whether a post-apartheid government can neutralise these tendencies and initiate the centripetal patterns that are needed to keep the national state together' (p. 40). I think it is fair to say that this question - how to ensure national unity and keep forces of sectionalism in check - is at the heart of Alexander's account of the politics of the new South Africa. But the question lends itself to a deep ambivalence about class.

For the sake of argument, let us grant Alexander's point that 'if we do not promote national unity, that is, arrive at a core of common values, practices and national projects', then the new South Africa will 'fall apart into warring ethnic groups, each with a more or less separatist agenda' (p. 91). My own view is that this point is too broadly stated for it to be conceded or contested with much meaning; it leaves undecided how large a core is needed, how adherence to that core is ensured, and too many other questions. But it is more difficult to concede Alexander's point that the imperative of national unity must be pursued 'regardless of the class character of the leadership for the moment' (p. 91).

Since he joined the liberation struggle in the early 1950s, Alexander writes, he has adhered to a

view that there is one South African nation (p. 38). This view was most fully argued in his *One Azania, One Nation*, published under the pseudonym No Sizwe in 1979. However, he now argues that 'the mistake that earlier versions of this theory of one emerging or evolving South African nation made was to assume that such a project was, or is, necessarily a socialist or working-class project' (p. 39). But the problem lies not so much in his answer to the question of which class will solve the 'national question', but rather in his assumption that this question can be the defining issue of a socialist agenda in the new South Africa.

In a context in which the relationship of the liberation movement to capitalism and socialism is genuinely contested, the national question provides an important arena in which a working-class programme an be defended and its tasks addressed. By focusing on the national question, socialism can be explained as a coherent response to a broad range of social problems, not only those that relate directly to the condition of workers. But in the context in which Alexander is writing today - in which the left has been decisively defeated within the movement - to give priority to the national question 'regardless of the class character of the leadership' is effectively to commit yourself to creating national unity under the leadership of the capitalist class.

This slippage is most clearly evident in Alexander's major essay on 'Nation Building and the Politics of Identity', from which a number of quotations have already been taken. The essay begins with a critique of ANC policy on language and culture, but gradually shifts into a first-person plural presentation. For example, 'one of the most urgent issues *we* have to address in South Africa is that of ensuring . . . that our radical position on the language question [that is, the equal status of eleven official languages in the constitution—A.N.] is not rendered meaningless through the pressures of middle-class interests' (p. 92, emphasis added).

Who 'we' are in this and other formulations is never really specified. But its use becomes increasingly consistent with an appeal to a 'capitalist government' that 'wants to maintain its place in the new world order' (p. 96). Is this the leadership that will ensure that 'antagonistic contradictions are not generated . . . through sectarian mobilisation in the interest of self-seeking class agendas' (p. 99)? Is the national question to be solved by those whose class agendas are concerned strictly with exploitation of labour and would not make use of ethnicity to further that agenda?

Alexander's account of language and culture in the new South Africa is devastatingly accurate. His defence of Afrikaans, in this volume and elsewhere, is principled and courageous. His argument that an English-only or English-mainly language policy is 'in fact a policy of middle-class advancement' (p. 92) gets to the heart of the matter. But its importance is not quite what Alexander thinks it is. It is important as a means of resisting a new form of class-rule rather than imposing a progressive agenda on the new ruling-class.

There is a complex and difficult balance between building a socialist agenda and taking on larger historical tasks partly defined by the peculiarities of national context. Neville Alexander has much to teach us about finding and maintaining that balance in the South African context. He does this best when he keeps the limits of capitalism clearly in view.

Andrew Nash
Monthly Review Press
122 West 27th Street

New York, NY 10001.

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War clouds darken the skies as the first month of the year 2003 ends. There is a great likelihood of the history of a century ago repeatingitself, neither as tragedy nor as farce, but as an international holocaust. In its day the Anglo-Boer War which ended a century ago, was regarded as emblematic of imperialist bullying of the weak by the powerful. That war came close on the heels of a British attempt to effect regime change, under the pretext that Kruger's South African Republic was undemocratic. Both Boer Republics, where Black people were rightless helots denied the vote, were indeed explicitly undemocratic. Despite this, with the exception of Turkey, every European government was opposed to Britain. An unusual consensus ensued among otherwise mutually competitive imperial powers, who became odd bedfellows in their shared antagonism towards British aggression. It was generally acknowledged that the war was preciptated by the 19th century's principal imperial power. Within every other nation too, public opinion was overwhelmingly critical of Britain for provoking a war with what the Irish republican socialist James Connolly described as a 'simple peasant nation'. On this issue Tsar Nicholas II, and his arch enemies - the populists, the social democrats and anarchists - found themselves in the same trench. In Germany, the Kaiser exploited vocal anti-British sentiment to his advantage and piloted a naval construction programme through the Reichstag virtually unopposed. In France, the socialists and radicals sat comfortably in the company of their political opponents on the right in a movement not dissimilar to the broad spectrum of opinion opposing the war plans of the Bush Administration in our day.

Britain felt herself vindicated by the policies pursued in her two colonies, the Cape and Natal. The Cape's policy of the franchise for all civilised men in principle was colour blind. In Natal the more conservative White minority had effectively kept the franchise from all but six Black potential voters despite official rhetoric about a colour blind property-owners franchise. The concentration camps cast light on an aspect of colonial warfare, well known to its victims, but hitherto hidden from the view of most European citizens, that made Britain's case even less convincing. Though she was victorious, Britain had lost the moral high-ground.

To win the war Britain marshalled the forces of her vast empire. Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and even Indian troops fought alongside Welshmen, Scots and Irishmen. The war turned out costlier than its instigators had anticipated but the prize of South Africa under British dominion was thought well worth it. To make its newly acquired territories a going concern Britain had to win the cooperation of the defeated Boers. The compact concluded at the end of the Anglo-Boer War signalled the recognition that the shared interests of the White propertied classes transcended ethnicity. The search for Boer-Brit unity, in the face of the colonised majority, is the backdrop against which 20th century South African history unfolded.

The Chinese peasants' secret society, the Yo Hetuan or the Boxers, who rose up against foreign encroachments on China's sovereignty in 1900 were not as fortunate in attracting international solidarity. In the far east the imperial powers stood together. The German general, Waldersee, led a mixed expeditionary force made up of European, United States and Japanese troops, marched on Beijing and suppressed the uprising. It was, parenthetically, in the context of the Boxer Rebellion that Kaiser Wilhelm coined the phrase 'yellow peril'. The sensibilities that had inspired so much sympathy for the Boer cause did not apply to the Chinese.

Ironically, the title of Dr Alexander's monograph, *An Ordinary Country*, belies its substance. What one discovers between the covers of this book is precisely how un-ordinary South Africa and the South African experience has been. 'South African exceptionalism' was debated for most of the 20th century among the left and liberation formations of South Africa. Political strategists pointed to its relatively large naturalised White population as one among many features that made South Africa different. The distinct patterns of interaction between colonised and coloniser as well as the contradictions engendered by inter-imperial rivalry had ensured that colonialism in South Africa evolved features that were not so much exceptional, as different, from the rest of the continent.

Speaking in the Cape Colony's legislative council in 1852, William Porter, the Attorney General of the colony, declared: 'Now, for myself, I do not hesitate to say that I would rather meet the Hottentot at the hustings, voting for his representative, than meet the Hottentot in the wild with his gun upon his shoulder'. It cannot be considered coincidental that these words were uttered after what South African history books used to call 'the Second Hottentot Rebellion' of 1851. The rebellion of the Kat River settlement was suppressed with a good measure of brutality and, after being found guilty of treason, its principal leaders, were transported to Australia as convicts. While Black South Africans were victimised by both the Boers and the Brits, neither had been in a position to act with absolute impunity. Colonial history before 1902 abounds with examples of alliances, relations of clientage and dependency that tempered, re-channelled and contained the capacity of the rival colonisers to act as they pleased. The last two decades of the 19th century witnessed the re-negotiation and re-definition of these through war and peaceful political struggles.

The peace concluded at Vereeniging in 1902 began to bring South Africa into closer alignment with the other African colonies. As Mahmood Mamdani has argued, in its essentials, apartheid was the institutions of European colonialism in Africa carried to their logical and absurd extreme. The 1909 Act of Union raised the Whites, collectively, to the status of a ruling race, lording it over subject peoples. Presiding over this racial oligarchy were the country's leading economic institutions, the mines and the mining finance houses, whose power and influence affected practically every facet of life. But while the special form of colonialism which became the hallmark of 20th century South Africa served the interests of big capital, personified by the mines, it was the outcome of struggles waged between White colonial society and independent Black polities during the 19th century; struggles waged by Blacks in alliance with some Whites within colonial society; as well as struggles waged among Whites, to the exclusion of Blacks, within colonial society. The basic law of the land defined South Africa's political institutions as the preserve of the Whites. Black voting rights in the Cape suggested that Blacks might incrementally be allowed to enter this charmed circle. But most Whites saw them as a temporary nuisance to be tolerated for the time being, but destined to be discarded at the convenience of the White electorate. Thus from 1910 until the mid-1940s Black South African politics was in large measure a rearguard action to fend off the threat of complete disenfranchisement.

At the end of the 1866 war Count Cavour of Piedmont reputedly remarked, 'Now that we have created Italy, we have to create Italians'. The pertinence of Cavour's remarks resides as much in the similarities as in their differences between the South African and Italian transitions. The unification of Italy came about through a combination of military expeditions undertaken by a

reformist state, revolutionary warfare conducted Garibaldi and his colleagues and a number of negotiated compacts leading to the incorporation of the Papal states. In contrast, by the time of the 18th Brumaire of 1799, the imperatives of the revolution had rendered the creation of a French nation superfluous. The struggle against absolutism at home and wars against its allies from the rest of Europe had forged France into a nation state and her people into a nation with a shared identity.

South African liberation movements optimistically expected to rerun the French experience. Every strand of opinion and tendency among the liberation movements, including the most hardline 'Africanists', envisaged a democratic order in which Whites would constitute a significant component of the South African population. All shared the confident belief that the liberation struggle would have the therapeutic effect of lancing the boil of racism, thus creating the environment for a process of healing which would result in the emergence of a single nation.

Every political struggle invariably entails an element of contingency that may lead to unexpected and unplanned for outcomes. The historical upshot was simpler yet more complex than many of the theorists and strategists had anticipated. Rather than a revolutionary eruption, change came to South Africa as a negotiated settlement with a host of explicit and implicit compromises. The radical courses that either the Black elites or the working classes might otherwise have preferred had to be deferred. *An Ordinary Country* attempts to explore the implications of this outcome and the feasibility of a successful nation-building project given the internal and international constraints within which it will have to unfold.

Though he is aware of the constraints imposed by the negotiated settlement and the international environment, Dr Alexander tends to write of these as if they are extraneous and might well have been evaded or even ignored. At the end of the 1980s, democratic agitation in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR had led to the collapse of Communist regimes in each of these countries. For the first time in decades the right felt comfortable with the aggressive promotion of democracy and the protection of civil liberties. Hitherto these had been the causes of the left. While the left held western and imperial governments accountable for human rights violations it adopted an attitude of benign tolerance to the abuses of socialist and post colonial governments. South Africa's democratic breakthrough occurred in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the consequent discrediting of socialism as a viable and humane alternative to late monopoly capitalism.

It remains unclear to what extent the events of 1989 and 1991 led to a rethink among many of South Africa's Communists. Without even a cursory bow in the direction of Maynard Keynes, many of these former socialists have embraced cautious macro-economic policies designed not upset the sensibilities of transnational corporations and potential international investors.

The growing strength of the right as an international political force can also be measured by the retreats executed by the Social Democratic parties of Europe. The enthusiastic embrace of the market economy by the exponents of 'post modern socialism' and the 'third way' became an additional expression of neo-liberal triumphalism. The international political environment after 1990 did not favour movements of the left - more especially those that would have to appeal to western altruism and empathy in the absence of a Soviet bloc that might have compensated for western hostility. A number of events and occurrences during the 1980s had made western

socialist, social democratic and left-liberal formations wary of colonial liberation movements. The atrocities of the Cambodian Khmer Rouge and the brutal suppression of the democratic movement in China had confirmed their scepticism.

The African environment in which South Africa embarked on its path to democracy had been greatly transformed since the 1960s. True, some of the old stalwarts of the anti-colonial struggle were still on the scene. Kenneth Kuanda, during whose presidency Zambia had hosted every liberation movement on the sub-continent, received Nelson Mandela in Lusaka as an honoured guest in 1990. Shortly thereafter he himself was ousted from the presidency of his country by an ex-trade unionist, Frederick Chiluba, at the head of a post-liberation democratic movement protesting the one-party state. Chiluba's victory represented both a repudiation of past political practice as well as the left-leaning policies UNIP had pursued. Left-inclined social policy had been discredited by the political practice of the party that had led Zambia since independence. It shared responsibility with the leadership of UNIP for the country's failure.

The indigenous constituency mobilised to support these policies was the highly educated elite who staffed the offices of multi-nationals, local and international banks, government offices and who dominated the professions. By the 1990s in a number of African countries some thirty years of independence had resulted in the crystallisation of a new social stratum - a highly mobile middle class, in possession of internationally marketable skills, who had lost faith in radical solutions and preferred conventional trickle down economics. They are local, but networked and associated through business and politics, with their counter-parts in the rest of the world. In one country after another they were turning their backs on the old parties in search of coalitions that better expressed their interests and aspirations. Though the social policies they advocated were conservative, these movements were able to ride the crest of a wave of mass discontent and popular disaffection.

The post-liberation democratic movement assumed a number of forms across the continent. In Uganda Yoweri Museveni's national movement had taken power at the helm of a popular revolt against a thoroughly corrupt indigenous elite. In Zaire, now once again Congo, active democratic agitation was beginning to stir among bodies of civil society. In Kenya a more resilient opposition to Arap Moi's regime was taking shape but it required another twelve years to drive him out of office. In Mozambique the revanchist-inspired RENAMO also lay claim to the mantle of democratisation and won recognition as a loyal opposition to the ruling FRELIMO. The governments against whom these movements took the field were often conservative, but others were considered radical. What the movements had in common was the demand that governments be compelled to be more accountable to the nation by the holding regular free and fair multi-party elections. They attracted varying degrees of support from the international community.

Political democracy in South Africa is the product of extra-parliamentary democratic action by a constituency of poor and propertyless people. The franchise enables the ordinary citizen to intervene in the political process in order to shape social policy. The expectations the newly enfranchised had of democracy inevitably were high. Democracy would empower them by redistributing wealth and opportunity. Arriving at a moment of historic defeat with the left in retreat internationally, South African democracy was born constrained by an international climate of neo-liberal triumphalism.

The jury was in on publicly owned economies, we were told, the private sector did it better, more

efficiently. Market forces stimulated a consistent improvement of quality. The avowedly socialist regimes of China, Cuba and Vietnam bent with the prevailing wind to avoid being broken or uprooted. A democratic South African government, no matter by whom it was led, would have been compelled to take account of these realities once it had assumed office. Recognition that one's options are limited is the pre-requisite for rational action.

It is nonetheless true that South Africa's eight year old democracy has generated new contradictions of its own. Seizing the opportunities that opened up with the arrival of democracy, elements of the Black elite have clambered or have been assisted into the corporate elite. Others have become leading civil servants, some are serving on the bench, yet others head state-owned enterprises. A yawning income gap separates them from the majority of Black South Africans. The salience of race in defining political options will very likely decline. But it is still self-evidently the dominant factor today.

Alexander's attempts to press apartheid into the mould of the Indian caste system are as unconvincing now as they were in the late seventies. While he finds Mahmood Mamdani's characterisation of apartheid as the quintessence of colonialism very attractive, Alexander appears hesitant to recognise its dominant colonial features lest these lead him to embrace a national democratic rather than a socialist solution. He consequently prefers the deficient phrase, 'racial capitalism', to 'colonialism of a special type'. Perhaps because the latter is so closely linked to SACP and ANC discourse?

Among the liberation movements of our region the illegal ANC was probably the most prolific publisher. Commencing with less formal early publications, *Spotlight on South Africa* and *South African Freedom News*, by 1990 the ANC was producing a monthly, *Sechaba*, a weekly *Newsbriefing*, a cultural quarterly, *Rixaka*, in addition to *Dawn*, the journal of Mkhonto weSizwe, *Voice of Women*, and the newssheet *Mayibuye*. Inside South Africa the ANC-aligned mass democratic movement churned out an impressive number of journals permeated with political debate. It would be surprising if Alexander was unaware of these publications and the debates they carried. His assertion that the explanation given to him in prison by Nelson Mandela in 1965 remained the ANC's approach to the armed struggle is unsubstantiated. At best, it is misleading. Its a matter of historical record that the late 1980s the ANC was still considering an insurrectionary option.

Thanks to decades of mass agitation the politically mobilised and socially active among the Black population are the working poor of the urban areas. The urban unemployed and the rural poor remain largely marginalised, though squatter communities and informal settlements have mastered collective action and employ it regularly to back their demands. Black elites, with the exception of NAFCOC, are largely unorganised, relying more on effective networking than the weight of their numbers. Organised labour remains the best organised and most numerous progressive constituency.

It is an historical fact that democratic institutions - the rule of law; the separation of powers; an independent judiciary; regular elections; freedom of the expression; equality before the law; etc - were brought to the peoples of southern Africa through the agency of their respective national liberation movements. The corrosive effect of the expediencies that persuaded some movements when in government to compromise these institutions, eventually corrupted them. Some degenerated to become the principal violators of democratic freedoms and human rights. While a number of parties and governments have adapted to and embraced the post-liberation democracy wave, others thought that they could resist it by riding the leopard of other sources of mass

discontent. ZANU (PF) chose the latter course and embraced illegal land occupations as though it had initiated them. It then harnessed the energy of that movement for electoral purposes using its activists to intimidate political opponents and to impress voters into supporting it.

The ignominious collapse of Soviet socialism completely discredited authoritarian regimes of the left along with their coercive methods. Socialists, social-democrats, left-liberals and even the remaining Communists, these days display far less patience with left governments that employ anti-democratic methods to remain in office. The widely held view is that democratically elected governments, even if they are right-wing, are preferable to unrepresentative left-wing power wielders who feel constrained to repress the very people whose interests they purport to represent. That shift implies that today the international left is no longer willing to accept progressive social policy as an alibi for undemocratic political practice.

Principled socialists have consequently felt obliged to repudiate the Ton-ton Macoute methods of Zanu(PF) while holding at a distance the MDC, a democratic opposition that seems to lack a social conscience.The parties of the Socialist International, including the Swedish Social Democrats who had previously supported ZANU during the liberation struggle, have all abandoned ZANU(PF) and seek instead to promote the MDC. The left-liberal civil liberties and human rights lobbies in the west have turned away from ZANU(PF) in disgust, leaving it open to hostile attack by its long-standing enemies on the right and centre.

The mass mobilisation that finally brought the apartheid regime to the negotiating table has bequeathed South Africa a vibrant civil society and a plethora of mass organisations. In addition to the Constitution this politically engaged public are the best guarantor against any temptation to exceed its powers on the part of government. Such mass formations will also keep government alert to the needs of the poor and will become the hatchery for politicians representing the popular classes.

Regrettably the least talked about dimension of the so-called 'South African miracle' is the manner in which it reconnected democracy and liberation. The door to democracy, prised ajar by mass struggles re-inforced by international solidarity, was finally flung open when both sides recognised that their shared interest in the success and prosperity of South Africa could be more swiftly and certainly attained by reducing the potential for conflict in the South African polity. A negotiated settlement necessarily entailed hard-nosed trade offs and conscious retreats from previously held positions by both sides. Submitting to the temptation to characterise these as a 'sell-out' is not merely puerile, but also sterile. Not surprisingly, those political formations that have yielded to this temptation find it difficult to make themselves relevant in the post-1994 political terrain.

At a time when White ultra-right revanchism is once again a palpable national security threat, social scientists should resist the siren songs of historical amnesia. During the last three years of apartheid South Africa came closer to the racial armageddon the White right hoped to provoke than many today care to remember. If the then clear and present threat of the war was averted by the concessions the ANC made to Constand Viljoen's phalanxes, surely that should outweigh defence of an abstract principle.

In spite of imperfections, the bitter disappointments and its evident shortcomings, South African democracy has delivered what it has because this country's economic infra-structure remained largely intact. Even a brief war would have gravely impaired the state's ability to bring health care, education, clean running water, electricity and telecommunications to the working poor. The housing backlog would have been compounded by the devastation of existing housing stock.

Casualties among the young, who invariably do the actual fighting in all wars, would have profoundly complicated the impact of the HIV-Aids pandemic.I am still persuaded that accepting a great deal more than we had, while recognising that it was less than what we had striven for, was the wisest course.

Peace and stability are not mere abstractions to those who actually live through and with the consequences of war. The wealthy and other members of elites can usually buy their way out of fighting wars, as the 'chicken hawks'leading the Bush administration can testify. The poor pay for wars with the sweat, tears, blood and the corpses of their young. This is especially true in Africa where instability and wars have all but destroyed the promise of independence. The pursuance of stability and peace require the eschewal of zero sum politics in Africa. The firming up of democratic governance is a sine qua non for the success of that project.

Among the great weaknesses of South African historiography is a tendency to objectify Black South Africans. It was easier to portray them not as subjects acting on and shaping the historical process, but rather as history's victims. Neville Alexander strays perilously close to casting Blacks as the objects of the decisions of others. His treatment of the post-1990 transition to political democracy throws this into particularly sharp relief. Reading his account one could form the impression that the course of events was determined by South African monopoly capital, the reformists among the Broederbond and international imperialism. In this scenario the leadership of the liberation movement appear as bit players, borne along in the slipstream of the real actors of history. The defectiveness of such an approach is clear when one recalls the relative helplessness of the De Klerk government faced with the escalating provocations of the 'third force' among its own security forces. Let us recall too the uncertainty of the ANC's efforts to contain mass anger after the murder of Chris Hani.

Yet my reservations about the manner he treats these issues do not detract from the quality of the book. The way it provoked me to argue with it attests to this. Dr Alexander raises a host of issues and questions that are fundamental to South Africa's transition . It is a stimulating read that is bound to provoke much debate. The British gold standard had established the centrality of gold as the international medium of exchange in the first decade of the 20th century. The First World War demonstrated that oil, as an energy source and as our primary lubricant, would assume even greater importance than gold in the future because it keep the cogs of our industrial society turning. It is ironic that after a century that supposedly put an end to ideology, Hobson is being vindicated by both the words and deeds of western policy makers. The weaknesses of the 20th century left notwithstanding, the events unfolding during these first months of 2003 demonstrate the continuing relevance of the Marxist critique of imperialism.

Z. Pallo Jordan
Parliament of South Africa
Cape Town

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South Africa's transition to democracy and the African National Congress's accession to power in the late twentieth century have stimulated new historiographical developments. Neville Alexander's book, *An Ordinary Country* (2002), provides an invigorating examination of issues

and developments that have influenced the transition to democracy in South Africa. Dealing with a subject on which there is ample new material and no lack of opinion, Alexander skilfully illustrates how the socio-historical background of South Africa and the leading contributors to South Africa's negotiated settlement shaped the transition as it did. As difficult as it is to be confident about writing on the recent past, let alone the challenges of understanding new historical processes, Alexander even goes a step further by making predictions concerning directions the South African transition is likely to follow.

These predictions are not provided without conjecture and indeed they are articulated well, after an examination of the most glaring and salient features that characterised the process of South Africa's transformation to democracy. Alexander's analysis of South Africa's transition to democracy and of the formation of the post-apartheid state (chapters 3 and 4) provides a contextual framework that is equally critical of the issues that form the main thrust of his book, that is, his detailed analysis of the process of nation-building, as well as the generation of the new politics of identity. As significant aspects of South Africa's social transformation, these are well rehearsed and have been fused well in his discussion of his politics of reconciliation (chapters 5 and 6).

An Ordinary Country is divided into seven chapters with an impressive introduction in chapter 1. Separate sections are provided for notes providing references for points raised in the main text. There is also a comprehensive bibliography, as well as an index. The only appendix contains extracts from the South African Constitution (1996). Selected extracts deal with the 'promotion and protection of rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities, role of traditional leaders and self determination'. They appropriately correlate with some of the main issues regarding social transformation highlighted in Alexander's study: identity, authority, citizenship and democracy.

Alexander begins his study with a one-chapter background that discusses 'race' and class in South African historiography. Unlike Fukuyama, who following the significant changes in South Africa from 1989 onwards pronounced the end of history, Alexander chooses history as a basis for his examination of South Africa's transformation process.

> Throughout this work, I have tried to spotlight the relationship between events on the ground and the conception or visions of the political and the cultural-intellectual leadership of the people. The interplay between the objective movement of history and the ways in which this is perceived, influenced and shaped by those who, for whatever reason, have been vested with the authority and the power to initiate, co-ordinate and organise mass action is the real subject of historiography (Alexander, 2002, p.7).

In identifying his examination of post -1989 South Africa's transformation process as a subject of historiography, Alexander provides a useful criticism and synthesis of 'race', class and the South African historiography. It is well known that the main influential historical themes: industrialisation, mining, nationalism, both African and Afrikaner, have shaped the pattern of the South African historiography. Liberal and radical historians have concentrated on the speed with which a common South African economy and a society emerged, but were reshaped profoundly by forced segregation.[1] Acknowledging this factor, Alexander goes even further to illustrate how the study of 'race' and class triggered the broadening of research methods, drawn widely from other fields of the social sciences during the 1980s (pp.19-23). These have added a new dimension

to South African historiography, which for a long period has been almost exclusively, dominated by a liberal/radical rapprochement approach.

There are even more intriguing and perhaps some unresolved concerns highlighted on issues relating to nationalism and the dynamics of the liberation movement. The underlying assumptions of the revisionists who drew labour and reserves into the 'race' and class debate did at least recognise the shifting role of the reserves in the late twentieth century but failed to fully appreciate it. From being predominantly the home for rural migrants engaged in the formal sector of South Africa, the role of the reserves changed to that of facilitating social control, as well as offering space for the surplus people.[2] These multifarious groupings of people were drawn to various strands of socio-political involvement, ranging from homeland tribal politics and their patronage network, to militant resistance movements that were subsequently drawn together under the banner of the United Democratic Front (UDF) from the early 1980s. The complexity of the homelands' social and political setting and that of the South African townships, clearly meant that the history of political opposition could not be reduced to that of the working classes or the rise of African nationalism.

The complexity of the social formation of South Africa is noted by Alexander, as his provision of divergent conceptions of the South African nation suggests (pp.31-42). Nevertheless, he is at a quandary to quantify the one conception that he himself adheres to: that of the *one South African nation*. Perhaps, though reluctantly so, he is also seduced by the liberal and revisionists writers' emphasis on apartheid's relationship to capitalism and class interests. So he argues 'the ordinary processes of capitalist industrialisation have thrown together people of diverse provenance in South Africa during approximately the past century and a half, thus establishing a loom on which the fabric of a united South African nation can be woven' (p.40).

Significantly, he does elaborate on this statement and more particularly he has highlighted the fact that the capitalist system also tends to reinforce elements that are disposed to tear this united fabric apart. There is, however, a strong case, based on historical evidence, to credit such an outcome more to the dynamic, but yet disruptive, nature of the apartheid policy than to the capitalist system on its own. Some of the human labour force this policy assembled around the industrial areas of South Africa had to filter through and adapt to different mechanisms that were also applied to the homeland base where it resided. The objective of assembling an idle labour force at this rural end encountered other competitions – control of rural resources and 'tribal' configurations that became day-to-day features of the politics in the homeland, while simultaneously creating interests and 'identities' other than those strictly confined to migrant labour patterns.

In acknowledging capitalism's role in assembling divergent elements for labour and production, Alexander should also emphasise that apartheid displaced a large number of the South African population away from the urban economy and proper infrastructure while its rural policy threw villagers into new 'ethnic' or 'tribal' arrangements by means of political party affiliations. The consequences of such contrasting practices remain a vital challenge to the conception of *a one South African nation*. It is almost impossible to quantify the disparities that resulted from the segregation policy. Nevertheless, it is clear, at least at a superficial level, that South Africa does appear as two worlds in one geographical field – from the first world of Johannesburg and Cape Town highways and suburban areas such as Sandton, Rosebank, Constantia and Newlands to the makeshift roads and shanty towns of Alexander, Soweto, the Cape Flats and Crossroads, from the well-administered, financed and organised farming communities of the Sundays and Gamtoos

river valleys in the Eastern Cape to the communal and dilapidated rural villages of the Ciskei and Transkei.

Glaring socio-geographical and economic disparities did, however give an impetus to the liberation movement. Alexander illustrates convincingly how the four pillars of the ANC's resistance strategy were visualised between 1969 and 1980: home-based mass mobilisation campaign, armed struggle, underground struggle and international isolation of the apartheid government (p.47). But, surprisingly it was the negotiation path initiated by Nelson Mandela from the mid-1980s that was to constitute the basis for the transition to democracy, prompting some writers to conclude that the insurrectionary strategy the ANC had adopted hitherto was not succeeding.[3] Nevertheless, using his discussions with Mandela in prison during the 1970s as a valuable source, Alexander does illuminate the critical point that the decision to open up a negotiation process was conceived much earlier than it was unleashed (p.47).

There are some peculiarities of the transition to democracy that he brings to our attention. As a multi-class organisation, the ANC was prepared to adopt a neo-liberal economic policy notwithstanding its long-standing relationship with the South African Communist Party (SACP). One must ponder deeply whether or not the shift from a social democratic Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to a neo-liberal Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy was a recognition by the ANC government that the swift redistribution of the country's resources could not primarily hinge on the state fiscal policy without a proactive input from a privately controlled market-base. Even more peculiar for Alexander was how the leadership of the white minority were caught by surprise when the ANC leadership was prepared to accept a neo-liberal economic policy. Its presentation on the world stage by the ANC, which hitherto had been mythologised as a 'communist and terrorist' organisation by the National Party and some right wing white political parties, benefited the ANC immensely (pp.48-49).

There is perhaps no peculiarity in the overwhelming role of Mandela in South Africa's transition. His outreaching negotiation process did at least diffuse the threat of 'white fears' and also accommodated their interests to a large extent. It also provided for other political organisations like the Inkatha Freedom Party, (IFP) which advocated the preservation of 'tribal' and regional interests. Nevertheless, Alexander does point out that even after eight years of transition to the post-apartheid state there has been no social revolution in South Africa, largely because service delivery operates at a snail's pace. For him, the ever-growing nest of poverty and unemployment is shaping the terrain for future political struggle that 'will constitute a challenge to the foundations of the prevailing system in southern Africa' (p.71). The economic pressures for even those who have jobs to work are enormously high and they could precipitate a militant class struggle as recent sporadic incidents around the country's work places have indicated.

There are even tougher challenges on issues relating to nation-building and the politics of identity. Ethnic division, racial and territorial segregation were the slogans of the apartheid government. Mandela's government of national unity (1994-99), fostered nation-building and a rhetoric of reconciliation. Nevertheless, as Alexander points out, the multicultural nature of our society raises a critical identity crisis in the new South Africa. This is epitomised aptly by the existence of eleven official languages in South Africa. Vast challenges remain in promoting multilingual awareness let alone multilingual proficiency in a state as ethnically diverse as South Africa. Moreover, the imperative role of language around issues of social transformation clearly means that South African institutions have to ensure that 'language policy is synchronised with other social strategies calculated to promote national unity' (p.98).

National reconciliation and national unity were carried out through a formal vehicle in the form of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that was established by means of legislation in 1995 to investigate and document gross human rights violations committed within and outside South Africa in the period 1960-94. As Alexander points out, it was a point of convergence for many of the contradictions and the conflicts as well as of the many attempts at their resolution in South Africa. There were, however, stark problems regarding reconciliation none more so than that issues of morality, justice and the trauma and pain inflicted on the victims of apartheid atrocities had to be shared publicly and also between the victims and the perpetrators. Reparations were promised to the victims and amnesty was provided for perpetrators, on condition that they in turn provided full disclosure of their actions. Equally critical, the TRC proclaimed prosecution and no amnesty for those perpetrators who did not disclose their deeds.

As the instrument of a 'historic compromise', the TRC will go down as one of the most dramatic stage-managed processes which failed to achieve its goals. Most reparations to apartheid victims have yet to be paid. Perhaps fearing the disclosure of skeletons from its own closet and perhaps fearing to rattle the unity government it had forged with its previous opponents, the ANC-led government has allowed perpetrators who never disclosed their deeds to escape prosecution. Justice and issues of morality were sacrificed for political expedience. Moreover, as Alexander illustrates, there are very few people and hardly any social commentators and analysts who believe that reconciliation will be achieved by the TRC in the short to medium term (p.121).

Alexander's examination of the TRC takes us even further than the problems associated with reconciliation. In respect of its truth-finding mandate, its investigation into the gross human rights violations of the past, he poses the question whether the TRC process could be defined as history and whether the TRC report could be accepted as a historiography. There are critical limitations, not only do its findings fall short in factual detail of the deeds that were committed, but its text has also been constructed by authors who indicated unfamiliarity with the vast volumes of literature on apartheid, colonialism, racism and capitalism pertaining to South Africa. It serves as a classic example of how the past can be constructed and presented, but by no means will the TRC and its report close the door on the past. Nevertheless, the TRC report is held up as the 'official' history of apartheid South Africa (pp.132-133). In this particular circumstance, politicians have reconstructed what they perceive to be the past and have also made their mark on the South African historiography.

There have been many significant achievements. The fundamental aspect of the strategy of the Mandela government hinged on the 'continuity, coherence and stability of the present political entity and the social order on which it is based, minus its racial fault-line' (p.54). All South Africans have been enfranchised and the ANC has come into office, not into power. Alexander warns that the social ills of syndicated crime along with the high rate of unemployment have generated widespread feelings of insecurity, paranoia, intensified racial prejudice, xenophobia and pessimism. These have all led many, especially young professionals and skilled artisans, to abandon all patriotism and noble intention by choosing to emigrate.

There are even tougher challenges, Alexander argues further. For stability and confidence to be maintained, South Africa has to maintain its present liberal democratic constitution and its multi-party system. The hard core facts of history that have shaped disparities will not disappear, although South Africa has been put on the African map through the African Renaissance campaign, having been the subject of world eyes for its achievement of a liberal democracy. Despite potential challenges from either the right or the left of the ANC, the inflated but less

delivering bureaucracy and the declining quality of life of the majority of South Africans represents the real threat to the continued rule of the ANC. As much as democracy is central to social justice, formal political rights conceived merely as 'one person one vote' are not sufficient for the full democratisation of our country.[4]

Alexander should be highly commended for providing an exhilarating and thought-provoking study. Ironically, as he himself subscribes to a specific political theory, his book is not for those whose thinking is confined to a specific political grouping nor is it for those whose thinking is formed by a certain guru. This book is an examination of a number of issues relating to the history and the transformation process of South Africa. It can be recommended to those who are interested in this field, as well as for those who are in the field of social sciences and policy studies.

Notes

1. W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa* (Second Edition Oxford 2001), p.5.
2. Reserve, Bantustan and homeland are all terms for those areas officially designated for South African black people. These terms changed concomitantly with politics in South Africa. S. Greenberg and H. Giliomee, 'Managing influx control from the rural end: the black homelands and the underbelly of privilege', in H Giliomee and L Schlemmer (eds), *Up Against the Fences: Poverty, Passes and Privilege in South Africa*, (Cape Town 1985), pp. 68-84. H. Wolpe, 'Capitalism and cheap labour-power in South Africa: from segregation to apartheid' *Economy and Society*, 1,4 (1972), pp. 438-440. There is ample literature dealing with resettlement and villagisation on parts of the Eastern Cape; see C. de Wet and M. Whisson (eds), *From Reserve to Region: Apartheid and Social change in the Keiskammahoek district of the former Ciskei, 1950 to 1990*, (Grahamstown 1997). C. de Wet, `Betterment planning in South Africa: some thoughts on its history, feasibility and wider policy implications', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, vol 6, No 1/2, (1987), pp. 90-97. F.T. Hendricks, 'Loose planning and rapid resettlement: the politics of conservation and control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol 15, No 2 (1989), 306-325.
3. H. Marais, *South Africa: Limits to Change: The Political Economy of Transformation* (London 1998), pp. 74-75.
4. D.M. Smith, 'Redistribution and Social Justice after Apartheid' in A. Lemon (ed), *The Geography of Change in South Africa* (Chichester 1995), pp. 60-61.

Luvuyo Wotshela
History Department
University of Fort Hare
Alice, 5700
South Africa

BOOK REVIEWS

Dorothy L. Hodgson and Sheryl A. McCurdy (eds.). *'Wicked' Women and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa*. Portsmouth. Heinemann. 2001.

Hannington Ochwada
African Studies Program
Woodburn Hall 221
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47405-6001
hochwada@indiana.edu

The fields of women and gender studies have come of age in African studies. There is ample evidence to vouch for their maturity - African and Africanists are increasingly using gender analysis as a framework for the study of the culture and history of Africans. In the use of gender analysis they have drawn from several modes and frameworks of inquiry including life histories, oral sources, and oral history to capture the activities of women and men. The fourteen contributors to the book under review analyse the process through which men have stigmatised some women in Africa as 'wicked' and 'wayward'. They use a wide range of paradigms in the social and human sciences to capture power relations in African communities.

The contributors to the volume under review explore the nature of women's alleged transgressions and effects of their actions on social relations. Consequently, they provide us with tools for analysing the paradox the so-called wicked women have grappled with in their day-to-day experiences. They also explain how 'wicked' women have translated their predicaments into sites for debate over the reconstitution of gender relations, social practices, cultural norms and political-economic institutions in Africa (p. 2). Thus, the text is about how women in Africa have responded to the received notions of gender relations - how they have resisted patriarchal control and domination.

The fourteen contributors to the text argue that African women have struggled to determine their own destinies and gender spaces in their communities. In fact, the vexing question they attempt to grapple with is how women have sought to rid their societies of oppressive and patronising systems by taking advantage of available opportunities to them. Cognisant of this fact, the authors postulate that women have been and still continue with the struggles to influence the process of marriage, mechanisms of economic autonomy and increase their financial and material opportunities in societies. Women have variously challenged masculinity and its oppressive patriarchal forms in the realm of political power, seeking ways to inculcate notions of just moral authority and responsibility in society. The authors argue in the various chapters of the volume that to achieve their objectives women have pursued their agenda individually as well as through interest groups. More importantly, they proceed to demonstrate that women have used existing systems of social redress such as legal processes, commercial market trade, rituals and dances to seek justice - explicitly or implicitly. Working from the premise that to understand the meaning of being a 'woman', one must also understand the meaning of being a 'man', the authors interrogate cultural and social relations of power between men and women. They argue that different forces in society have historically worked in collaboration to institutionalise male power. For

instance, colonial male administrators and male elders connived to assert and maintain patriarchal authority over women and young men. Male elders accomplished this by constructing, reifying and reinforcing 'customary law' and 'traditional authority' across the continent (p.3). In spite of efforts by men to dominate them, women have constantly struggled to circumvent patriarchal authority. Acknowledging that African and Western notions of manliness have been instrumental in reconstructing masculinity in Africa, the authors illuminate the ways individual African communities have negotiated gender. The authors draw considerably from life histories, oral histories, legal cases, material culture, artifacts, rituals, performance, earlier ethnographical accounts of travelers, missionary, and other written sources as supporting evidence. For instance, in her chapter on 'My Daughter Belongs to Government', Dorothy L. Hodgson uses life histories and court cases to demonstrate how one woman named Aloya defied her father to marry a man of her choice as opposed to being forced into an arranged marriage in the Maasai community. Conversely, Andrea C. Cornwall effectively uses women's life histories and Yoruba oral traditions to explain the changes that have taken place in gender relations in Ado-Odo since pre-colonial times. She asserts that 'wayward women and useless men populate discourses on the present, but are completely absent from narratives about the past' (p.68). Cornwall analyses the narratives she collected to debunk the notion of merrie golden days in Yoruba country where women were supposedly subservient to male authority. She engages contemporary talk that women have turned their backs on old lifestyles, hence lost their ways. While rejecting the assumption that women have lost their ways, Cornwall draws on oral as well as archival evidence to argue that historical dynamics have been readily involved in the making of gender relations in Africa. By this she argues that women were only described as wicked or wayward as long as they challenged the existing order power relations that oppressed them.

Alongside the so-called 'wayward' or 'wicked' women were also 'useless men': a discourse that was developed by women to describe men who did not live up to notions of masculine breadwinning. Richard A. Schroeder's 'Gone to their Second Husband', Gracia Clark's 'Gender and profiteering', and Sheryl A. McCurdy's 'Urban Threats', use material culture, ritual and performance to demonstrate how women sought material autonomy and negotiated their independence in society.

Schroeder argues that Gambian women transformed women's communal gardens into formidable income generating ventures for themselves, effectively replacing the male peanut crop as the source of cash income in many areas (p.85). This development impacted the fulcrum of power in the family, allowing women to catch the attention of men and negotiate gender relations. For instance, men who had been economically marginalised increasingly spent a great deal of time in the spatial confines of the family or in its immediate vicinity - in other words men began to attend to domestic chores that were ordinarily considered anathema for them in heterosexual masculine expectations. These chores included fetching bath water and preparing meals for themselves (pp.87-88). Because a growing number of women challenged masculine authority, men became bitter and re-invented discourses that demeaned powerful women in society - for instance, they referred to the occupation women engaged in such as gardening or market trading as 'second husbands'. On the other hand, using colonial reports and missionary accounts McCurdy explores how slave women exploited their sexuality to negotiate gender relations in the Manyema society that appeared to exploit them. She asserts that 'wealthy traders and waungwana in Ujiji kept some female Menyema as concubines, forced other female slaves to work as domestic servants and fieldhands, and made other women, girls and boys march east in caravans' (p.214). As

concubines, Manyema women attached themselves to men and exchanged domestic and sexual services for food and clothes (ibid.). Clark provides the reader with more evidence about how material culture impacted the lives of Ghanaian men and women. When market women acquired wealth and autonomy in their lives, they became the target of attack as the ones responsible for the soaring food prices and sabotaging the economy (p.294). Men characterised such women as witches of some kind, obviously acquiring the label of 'wicked' and 'wayward' women. How, then, do the authors problematise the 'wicked' women? They argue that wickedness is produced on a terrain that appears to accommodate multiple dimensions. These dimensions include; agency and structure, discourse and practice as well as the process through which culture and the political economy are mediated. In other words, we can describe wickedness as a discourse that masculine power uses to control and oppress women. The authors claim that masculine power does this by stigmatising the actions of some women, either by normative or conventional procedures, designating them as unacceptable and abominable. On the other hand, 'wickedness' may also refer to a manifestation of feminine power in cases where women purposefully and effectively challenge political, social, or cultural constraints on their behavior (p.6). Cast in the twin concept of 'wickedness', the authors have analysed distinct domains and strategies of the phenomenon. The text is divided into four sections. These are Contesting Conjugality; Confronting Authority; Taking Space/Making Space; and Negotiating Difference. The authors also argue those women who had their own earnings were compelled to struggle with their husbands to retain control over their incomes. Women constantly negotiated and renegotiated their labour time and their household financial obligations in order to retain access on the available economic resources such as livestock, land, agricultural inputs, water, and fuel. In fact, they would adopt various tactics ranging from hiding their earnings from their husbands to providing their husbands money as way of winning favors. While some men also tried to sabotage their wives businesses others tried to cooperate with them as ways of re-inventing their masculinity.

What are some lessons the reader gets from this volume? That we can use other tropes such as wicked and wayward women to inquire into the economic and social lives of both men and women. That women were not docile even though they have been portrayed as victims of male oppression - they constantly struggled against subordination and marginalisation. What this volume fails to provide is the discourse used by women to counter the label of waywardness and wickedness - the term 'useless' men is not adequately problematised to provide us with insights into the psychology of men. One question preoccupying the mind is how women perceived manhood. The authors simply assert that females perceived males as architects and custodians of the moral order in their communities. Is it possible that women also constructed their own discourses about men who derided women as wicked and wayward? In short, the authors do not provide the reader with a discourse from the perspective of women - what the reader sees is what men say about women and not vice versa.

Abubakar Momoh and Said Adejumobi (eds.) *The National Question in Nigeria - Comparative Perspectives*. Burlington, VT, USA. Ashgate Publishing Company. 2000.

Layi Erinosho
Social Science Academy of Nigeria
Crescent 12 Flat 99 Kado Estate,
Abuja, Nigeria

This book is about the national question, defined by Lenin as 'the right of nations to self-determination…'. It is about a subject matter and indeed a problem that transcends all human societies regardless of race, geographical location, or stage of socio-economic development. For example, Canada, an ostensibly developed country, has not successfully done away with the national question. Nor have the Russians been able to manage the Chechen crisis with commendable ease. The barbaric civil war in the former Yugoslavian federation, Sri Lanka, and the uneasy calm in the Fiji Islands among the indigenes and emigrants citizens of Indian descent are equally a reminder of the import of the national question. Furthermore, the national question is at the root of the brutal conflict in Sudan, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, and Burundi to name a few countries in Africa. Consequently, the book deals with a topical and burning issue that is likely to pre-occupy humankind in the 21st century.

These preliminary remarks notwithstanding, the book focuses on the national question in Nigeria that scholars like Nnoli, Egwu, Osaghae, Mustapha among others have sought to address through the prism of ethnicity. It is therefore undeniable that the book marks a significant leap from the study of the crises underlying political development in emergent nation-states like Nigeria from the standpoint of ethnicity to a much broader framework that encapsulates the role of critical factors like class, elite formation/interest, including economic factors.

The book incorporates eleven chapters that can be sub-divided into three broad areas. The first consists of the chapters by Abubakar Momoh on the one hand and Benson Osadolor on the other. These chapters provide the conceptual and historical overview of the national question. The other contributions by Mark Anikpo, Cyril Obi, Yima Sen, Ibrahim Baba Gana, Said Adejumobi, Angela Idem, and Wale Adebanwi may be viewed as cases studies because they deal with specific aspects of the national question in Nigeria. The concluding chapter by Eghosa Osaghae in which the author seeks to outline a federal solution to the national question could be designated as the third section of the book.

The book is holistic while its contributions are informative and analytical. Besides, the work provides a refreshing assurance that home-based scholars can fill the gap created by the dearth of perceptive books on political change in Nigeria. Because of this, the work constitutes an important addition to the list of books on Nigerian studies for readership within and outside Africa.

Be that as it may, it is unfortunate that such a well printed book that contains seminal articles is replete with a wide range of editorial errors, a few of which could be spotted in the following pages: 99 - Niger Delta; 120, 2nd line of paragraph 2 - "to" missing; 121 last line of paragraph 2 - comma to replace full stop; 129 2nd paragraph line 3, comma to replace full stop; 133 – incomplete sentence; 134 – persistence ("p" should be in small letter); 133; 146 line 29 – incomplete sentence; 156 2nd paragraph line 7 - section two instead Chapter 2; 159 2nd paragraph line 3 – colon; 175 line 2 – 1998 instead 998; etc. Furthermore, the write-up on conceptual issues in the contribution by Obi should have come before the discussion on the role of oil in the minority question.

In concluding, the author hopes that the editors will take care of the foregoing and other errors in the second printing of this extremely important book.

David Marsden. 1999. *A Theory of Employment Systems: Micro-Foundations of Societal Diversity*. Oxford. Oxford University Press. 1999.

Geoffrey Wood
University of Middlesex
United Kingdom

Drawing on the rational choice model, this book explores the manner in which managerial authority is delimited, but assumes that access to relevant information is imperfect; rationality is 'bounded'. David Marsden argues that the modern firm is dependent on two great innovations, limited liability and the open-ended employment contract. The latter allows management flexibility regarding work assignments and provides a platform for investing in skills. However, there are limits to managerial authority in this regard. Invariably there is some clash with worker needs for protection. Moreover, whilst the employment contract is between individual firms and their employees, Marsden suggests that the solutions adopted by different firms and sets of workers are interdependent. As one form of employment relationship becomes common, it is in the interests of other firms and workers to move over to this model. This interlinkage between firms, and the support and stability provided by inter-firm institutions, means that the employment relationship forms part of a broader employment system. In addition, the effectiveness of contracts may be enhanced by collectivism, through combinations of employers and/or employees. Finally, any employment relationship model is likely to impact on a wide range of broader human resource management policies. Based on these assumptions, Marsden outlines his 'theory of employment systems', an institutional theory of HRM and labour markets, stressing the interdependence of firm-based practices.

After outlining the above assumptions in Chapter 1, Marsden next explores the limits to managerial authority - limits that make the employment relationship worthwhile to workers. He argues that there are four principal transaction rules limiting managerial authority over work assignments: those governing work posts (regulated by job description), job territory (task allocated by tools, materials and types of operation), competence ranking (stabilising task allocations) and qualifications. These rules provide some flexibility, but are sufficiently robust to underpin the employment contract. In other words, firms are entitled to have some expectations as to the amount and quality of labour power provided by those it hires, but these are circumscribed by the rules.

These themes are further developed in Chapter 3, where the author traces the emergence of such rules from an uncoordinated and decentralised system. This occurs owing to the fact that the two alternative methods for running the employment contract, extreme flexibility or ever more detailed job descriptions, are extremely unstable. Overly detailed descriptions become unwieldy, and obviate any of the room for manoeuvre that makes the employment contract worthwhile to both parties. On the other hand, extreme flexibility places a large burden on relations of trust. Consequently, most firms adopt a compromise position, allowing room for both specificity and diffuseness, deploying a framework of basic rules to provide stability. These rules may be created by firms and employees, or be assisted by labour market institutions and/or government intervention.

In chapter 4, the author looks at 'classification rules and the consolidation of employment systems'. Here his argument is that job classification systems (dealing with job contents) also

impact on the demarcation of job boundaries. Job classification systems seek to make job contents clearer to both management and employees. However, invariably, the emphasis on certain attributes (such as skill) means that others are downplayed. Under certain circumstances, job classification systems may encompass an entire sector or national labour market; this provides a shared language readily intelligible to both employers and employees. This may be through formal sectoral classification agreements (e.g. France) or familiarity and convention (e.g. Britain). This underscores the point that transaction rules - whilst fully capable of diffusion on their own merits - are likely to be promoted through labour market institutions and the state.

The above chapters constitute Part I of this volume, which sketches out the basic elements of the 'theory of employment systems'. Part II provides additional supporting evidence and 'personnel management implications'. Chapter 6 gives some evidence of the societal diversity of employment systems. It seeks to demonstrate that the distribution of transaction rules within different countries mirrors that of the classification systems. This is done by assessing whether countries take a production or training approach to work allocation, and whether rules are task or function centred. He concludes that employment transaction rules 'provide the key to understanding societal differences in the employment relationship'.

Further substance to the idea that firms are embedded within particular social and institutional contexts is provided in the following three chapters, which apply the theory of employment systems to three key functional areas of HRM. Chapter 6 deals with performance appraisal systems. The utility of predeterminined performance evaluation criteria is greatly enhanced if it is shared between firms and organizations. In addition, wider transaction rules impact on the choice of such criteria. At the core of the managerial prerogative is performance management, yet it is limited by the prevailing transaction rules regulating the allocation of work.

Chapter 7 looks at pay and incentives. Although there is inevitable competition, this is transmitted through job classification systems. Stable co-operation depends on predetermined categories of labour and related price rules. Moreover, they provide the necessary information for the competitive process to function. Chapter 8 looks at skills and labour market structures. Marsden argues that the four basic transaction rules govern labour market structures and vice versa. However, the initial impulse is provided by whether firms use production or training approaches to work allocation. This is followed by a look at how the rules of employment systems extend to secondary labour markets, yet may prove relatively fragile in a low-trust environment.

Part III consists of a single chapter, the conclusion. Marsden begins with a caveat. Owing to reasons of space, method and evidence, the role of law and state training systems has been excluded. He argues that by excluding these factors it is possible to identify the basic rules governing labour markets, legal differences notwithstanding - an especially important task given the global trend to deregulating labour law. In any event, he argues that an emphasis on the law implies that it is somehow external to, and independent of, the free choices made by both employers and employees. In practice, Marsden suggests, employment systems constitute the basic institutional framework through which the employment contracted is acted out in such a manner as to protect either party from opportunism by the other; even in an individualistic employment relationship there are strong pressures to conform to basic norms.

The value of this somewhat opaque account cannot be disputed. It provides an interesting alternative perspective on the role and importance of institutional regulation, starting at the level of the employment contract. However, there are a number of important limitations. Firstly, the author uses the term 'rule' far too loosely. At times it appears to denote not just transaction rules,

but a plethora of other norms, in a manner that can be bewildering to the reader. Secondly, there could have been room for an exciting synergy between the author's own insights and business systems theory. Strangely, the author does not even refer to what has already become one the principal frameworks for analysing national variations in employment practices. Thirdly, the author glosses over the fundamentally unequal nature of the employment relationship. Workers may be impelled to enter or continue a 'weak rule' relationship in circumstances other than their choosing. The transaction costs imposed by protest either through 'voice' or 'exit' may be simply too great.

Louise Meintjes. *Sound of Africa! Making Music Zulu in a South African Studio*. Durham. Duke University Press. 2003.

Michael Drewett
Department of Sociology
Rhodes University
Grahamstown
South Africa.

Anyone who has ever observed the studio recording process of a popular music album will be very aware of the tedium involved in standing around while take after take is recorded: instrument after instrument, vocal after vocal, over and over until the producer is satisfied with the sounds captured on the mixing desk. The mixing itself is also a tedious process, as each component part of the music is played back again and again, involving numerous processes of technical fiddling, to be added to other similarly tweaked takes. The entire process culminates in the final sound. For anyone other than the technically minded this is a laborious and painstaking process. Louise Meintjes's *Sound of Africa!* takes the reader into the heart of the studio and effectively captures the tedium of the recording process, page by page. This is not to say that the book is boring. It is an interesting ethnomusicological text filled with valuable debates. It would have been equally effective had she summarised her constant 'takes' and perhaps preserved the fuller versions in appendage form, allowing the reader to access the punchier discussion and arguments more readily in a less tortuous manner.

However, the strengths of the book should not be lost in the stylistic manner in which it is presented. It is commonly accepted that the notion of 'authenticity' is problematic in all areas of culture, and music is no exception. The value of *Sound of Africa!* is not so much that the overall argument is new but in the intricate way in which the author goes about deconstructing the notion of an 'authentic popular music album'. She focuses in meticulous detail on the recording process of Isigqi Sesimanje's 1992 album entitled *Lomculo Unzima* (This music is heavy/weighty/potent). The album was intended as an authentically Zulu product for both the local (South African) and, to a lesser extent, overseas (world music) market, and involved the construction of an 'authentically' Zulu sound. Meintjes very successfully chronicles the meaning-making process involved in the production of the album by exploring all aspects of the recording procedure. She demonstrates the multifaceted ways in which the idea of 'Zuluness' is negotiated and constructed by those involved in the production of the final product. The way she does this (repetition apart) is fascinating. By sitting in on the recording sessions she 'eavesdrops' on the music making process, and captures the quarrels, the joking and the experimentation integral to any recording

process. Through this exploration Meintjes provides invaluable insights into the complex multi-stranded process of constructing authenticity in the recording process. Specifically, she underscores the extent to which multiple versions of Zuluness are reproduced and mediated in the recording and packaging of the Isigqi Sesimanje album. This ranges from the use of the ngoma drum, the actual timbre of the drum, the poetics and narratives of the lyrics and the Mahlathini-style growling vocals to the Zulu costumes worn by the musicians in the album cover photographs and the performance of Zulu dancing in the group's concerts.

Sociologists will be pleased that Meintjes's analysis is not restricted to the studio. Influenced by Bakhtin's dialogism, she works outward from the musical gestures within performed utterance to an analysis of their significance for the socio-political world. She entwines her narrative of the recording process with the socio-political context of South African and global society. For example, she provides a historical context for *mbaqanga* (although not in sufficient depth for my liking), explores the tensions of Inkatha-induced political-ethnic conflict of the time of recording (1991-1992) and considers the conflicting demands of the local and global 'world music' markets. In the process she stumbles across and interrogates various interesting contradictions, like the attempt by producer West Nkosi to construct an 'authentic' Zulu sound by approximating the sound and feel of 1970s *mbaqanga* albums, setting aside the technological and historical specificities of that particular constructed sonic moment. The numerous interesting insights and arguments presented in *Sound of Africa!* make it a worthwhile reference for ethnomusicologists and sociologists with an interest in debates about authenticity in popular music. However, it is probably best suited as a text to be ordered for university libraries. Only ethnomusicologists with a specific interest in the technological side of debates about the creation of musical authenticity ought to consider purchasing a personal copy of this book.