

# CODESRIA

## Bulletin

Numbers / Numéros 2, 2018

ISSN 0850 - 8712

## Editorial

Early this year, Africa was embroiled in a debate about the description of the continent as 'shithole.' Around the same period, thousands of African 'dreamers' faced deportation and criminalisation in Israel, following government's

decision to ask them to accept 3500USD and relocate to a third country, return to their home countries or face the threat of incarceration. This law was later suspended in April after protests, an international outcry and legal recourse in Israel. As this happened, in April, a scandal

over the citizenship status of mainly Caribbean peoples broke in the UK that mimics similar developments in the US and Israel. This followed a change in immigration law in 2012 that framed the presence of the 'windrush' generation as illegal forcing them either to regularise their stay or be deported.

A few months after that, in May 2018, a 22 year 'illegal' immigrant from Mali, Mamoudou Gassama, won hearts around the world when an amateur video of him scaling up the wall of a four storey Paris House to save a child dangling on the balcony went viral. The brave action earned him the nickname 'spiderman' as well as honorary citizenship, a certificate, a medal of valour and the promise of a job from the French President. In conferring the honour, President Emmanuel Macron argued that Gassama had demonstrated an exceptional act, heroism and will that is characteristic of the French and

### In this issue / Dans ce numéro

<i>Editorial, Godwin Murunga and Divine Fuh</i>	1
<i>From the Executive Secretary's Desk, Godwin Murunga</i>	5
1. <i>Place, Interest and Political Agency: Some Questions for Michael Neocosmos, Mahmood Mamdani</i>	9
2. <i>The Humbling of the All People's Congress: Understanding the March 2018 Presidential Run-off Election, Yusuf Bangura</i>	17
3. <i>Expanding the horizons of Transformation of Higher Education in Africa, Dennis Masaka</i>	24
4. <i>Othring the Higher Education Sector in Governance and Democratic Processes in Africa, Mlamuli N. Hlatshwayo and Kehdinga George Fomunyam</i>	26
5. <i>Addressing the Trilemma of Educational Trade-offs on Africa's Terrain for Sustainable Development, Felix Kwabena Donkor, Tantoh Bikwibili Henry, Eromose Ebhuoma, Sylvi Fullard</i>	29
6. <i>The Introduction of the Subjects of Slavery and Slave Trade History in African Higher Education Curricula, Paola Vargas Arana</i>	32
7. <i>The Emerging Erosion of Originality and Academic Writing Skills in Higher Education in Africa: The Boomerang Effects of Information Explosion, M. H. A. Bolaji</i>	34
8. <i>Decolonising the Curriculum, Andre Goodrich</i>	41
9. <i>Emergence of Local Language Film Production in Ghana, Africanus Aveh</i>	43
10. <i>Sembene Meets Winnie Madikizela in after Africa, Okello Oculi</i>	48



This quarterly Bulletin is distributed free to all social research institutes and faculties in Africa to encourage research co-operation among African scholars. Interested individuals and institutions may also subscribe. Contributions on theoretical matters and reports on conferences and seminars are welcome.

therefore deserved urgently to be made French. Yet in 2014, Gassama's earlier attempts to reach Europe by crossing the Mediterranean into Italy failed following deportation. Ironically, as Gassama's 'extraordinary story' of conversion from 'illegal' immigrant to citizen was making headlines, the predicaments of transcontinental mobile Africans made news as the *Aquarius*, a ship carrying 629 African migrants rescued in the Mediterranean sea remained stranded at sea as it was denied docking by the newly elected Italian government.

Ultimately, there are parallels between these stories of immigration and the politics of representation that is at the core of CODESRIA's mandate. The question of the representation of Africa and Africans is of greater concern given the historical nature of the debate about the image of Africa within and outside Africa. We therefore feel compelled, on behalf of the diversity of African social science and humanities scholars, and indeed on behalf of all socially conscious Africans, to locate the thrust of this issue of *CODESRIA Bulletin* in the context of the prevailing debates about immigration, mobility and the questions of representation, knowledge and agency that emerge out of these debates. It has become clear that the issues being canvassed at the international level in relation to the location of Africans in the global order and their image across the world is less about Africans and more about the changing politics of the countries where the negative labelling of Africans occurs. It is these knowledge and identity issues that the papers in this issue of the *CODESRIA Bulletin* seek to capture.

The first article by Mamdani engages Michael Neocosmos' study *Thinking Freedom in Africa: Towards a Theory of Emancipatory Politics*. For Mamdani, Neocosmos' study is marred by a two-fold "theoretical lacunae": a "restriction of popular subjectivity to state interpellation" and a "false reduction of tradition to the state and power." Yusuf Bangura follows with a reflection on Sierra Leone's closely contested 2018 Presi-

dential runoff elections; wherein he examines bipolar ethno-regional cleavages in Sierra Leone's electoral processes, and thus the (de)merits of a democratic system underpinned by parochial identity politics. Dennis Maseka examines the consequences of African higher education institutions' overdependence on Eurocentric epistemological paradigms and curricula not grounded in the continent's prevailing circumstances, challenges and aspirations.

Mlamuli N. Hlatshwayo and Kehdinga George Fomunyan's article examines the transmission of responsible citizenship and strategic governance in Africa through what they refer to as 'de-othering' the higher education sector. Felix Kwabena Donkor, Tantoh Bikiwibili Henry, Eromose Ebhuoma and Sylvi Fullard's article addresses the trilemma of educational trade-offs on Africa's sustainable development initiatives. Paola Vargas Arana discusses the importance of Africa addressing its social conflicts by retrieving its traumatic past through the introduction of subjects focused on the history of slavery and slave trade in the African higher education curricula. Muhammed Bolaji addresses the current information explosion and the gradual erosion of originality and academic writing skills in higher education institutions in Africa. Andre Goodrich's article on decolonising the curriculum discusses how curricula produce dumping grounds and zones of exclusion for various disciplines. The Bulletin concludes with two articles on African cinema by Africanus Aveh that looks at the emergence of local language film production in Ghana while Okello Oculi engages with Ousmane Sembène's treatment of gender and women in film.

**Godwin Murunga**  
Executive Secretary  
and

**Divine Fuh**  
Head of Publications and Dissemination