



## CODESRIA Acceptance Speech

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On behalf of the President of CODESRIA, Professor Fatima Harrak, and on behalf of the Executive Committee and Secretariat of CODESRIA, and on my own behalf, I would like to express sincere thanks to the board and the Executive Secretary of CLACSO, Professor Pablo Gentili, for selecting CODESRIA to be the recipient of "The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Integration Award."

We feel very highly honoured and we are extremely pleased. We also take this as a very good 'anniversary present', because CODESRIA is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. CODESRIA was established in 1973 by African scholars with a view to creating an autonomous space and a forum for social science research and knowledge production in Africa.

CODESRIA, like CLACSO, is arguably a child of what could be called the 'Bandung Spirit'. We tend to think about Bandung primarily in political and international relations terms. But the 'Bandung Spirit', I would argue, also existed in the field of knowledge production.

As the Cold War was being fought between the then East and the West, the nations of the global South which, after having suffered from one form of imperial domination or another, refused to take sides in what they saw as a war between great powers seeking to dominate the world, not for the sake of justice and equity, but for their own hegemonic interests. Representatives of the "non aligned" nations met in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955 to discuss ways of collaborating to protect and promote

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the interests of their peoples, as well as the interests of all the peoples of the world.

The scholars who, twelve years later, met to set up CLACSO were driven by the same spirit: a desire to transform the global epistemological order that overly favoured

the West, that tended to mirror the global power relations and the inequalities associated with those relations, as part of the struggle for a better world. The struggle to transform the global epistemological order is part and parcel of the struggle for the transformation of global relations for a just world.

Transforming the global epistemological order has not been, and is not going to be easy. We have, for a long time, been working with 'colonial libraries' (Mudimbe), because the social sciences, as we know them today, are to a large extent products of the European Enlightenment that came to us through the encounter with the West and we, in the South, have internalized many of the Eurocentric theories and paradigms in our work. The study of our regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean) has become a big international industry and large sections of our communities (including our Diasporas) are members of 'epistemic Communities' that extend far beyond our regions.

Geographical aspects aside (after all, the 'South' is not so much about geography, but about politics, power relations, and social conditions), the issue is also that of putting scholarship and knowledge production in the service of humanity, rather than to the service of dominant classes or powers. The geographical South is now very highly diversified, with some of the BRICs

resembling the advanced capitalist countries (the ‘developed world’) more than they resemble what used to be called the Third World.

Participants in the founding congress of CLACSO decided to encourage the building of regional research councils (similar to CLACSO) all across the South. The Africans who CLACSO invited to its founding congress, most notably Professor Samir Amin from Egypt, carried the message back and decided to implement the decision that they – the participants in the CLACSO congress who came from across the Global South – had made, i.e., to form independent councils and organisations of scholars such as CLACSO, in Asia and Africa as well.

The context in which CODESRIA was established in Africa was one of extreme political fragmentation, because of the colonial partition of the continent into a multitude of small territories, each of which has, since gaining independence been struggling to build itself into a cohesive nation and a truly independent state. Promoting social science research in such a context therefore required overcoming of many barriers that were not only of a disciplinary nature, but also, linguistic barriers (because, in addition to the many African languages, each one of the colonial powers had left its own language as the official language of its former colonies), and political, gender, and generational barriers. CODESRIA therefore adopted a pan-African approach right from the start, out of conviction, given that it comes out of a long history of struggle for liberty that the global pan-African movement was part of, but also out of necessity. The need for an autonomous continental research space and a networked, a pan-African research community, was made even greater by the prevalence of authoritarian regimes on the continent at the time. Therefore regional integration and South South cooperation were inscribed in the philosophy and work of CODESRIA from the outset.

We are right now in the closing session of the sixth edition of the South South Institute jointly organized by CLACSO, CODESRIA and IDEAs. Each edition has been attended by between 20 to 30 young scholars; the institute has become a formidable vehicle for building lasting scholarly collaborations across the South. The research conferences and workshops, the research grants, and the publications produced by our institutions serve the same purposes.

The ultimate objective is to think together and project the perspectives of scholars from the South on all the global issues of our time. The only way to make knowledge truly global, and bridge the global knowledge divides, is to have knowledges of various kinds, including indigenous and endogenous knowledges from all over the world recognised, which would be an important step towards the transformation of global political, economic and cultural relations.

As I said, the struggle to transform the global epistemological order, to make it truly universal, is part and parcel of the transformation of the world to make it a better place for everybody. Latin America and the Caribbean have been at the forefront of that struggle. The pan-African movement has some of its roots in this region (Latin America and the Caribbean), with great people such as Toussaint L'Ouverture, Henri Sylvester Williams, Marcus Garvey, Leon Damas, Aime Cesaire and others.

Many of the dependency theorists, such as Frank, Prebisch, Cardoso, and Stavenhagen, whose work shifted development paradigms in a major way, were from this region. Liberation philosophy had its roots here. Henrique Dussel wrote *The Invention of the Americas* a few years before Edward Said's book titled *Orientalism*, and Valentin Mudimbe *The Invention of Africa* and, later, *The Idea of Africa* were published. These books and many others (like Samir Amin's *Eurocentrism*, and Cheikh Anta Diop's works on African history and civilization, Partha Chatterjee's work on nationalism and modernity, etc.) have had a profound impact on how we think about the Americas, the Orient, Africa and the global South.

The challenge has been to deepen the paradigm shift away from the reference to the West as the primary centre or mover of history and theory, towards more de-centred theory and approaches to history (like the Comaroffs, Mbembe, Boaventura de Sousa and many others have been doing). In some sense, this is also what the great pan-Africanist thinkers such as Du Bois, Nkrumah, Nyerere, Cabral and others have been engaged in. The reverse movement was also very important. African culture and scholarship inspired scholarship and struggles in this region – Senghor was read in Columbia, Amin was read along with Prebisch, Frank, Cardoso and others, Mkandawire's work on transformative social policy was highly appreciated in Latin America.

Regional integration is nowadays presented as a necessity, if we want our regions to preserve their sovereignty and negotiate more respectable positions in the world; it is also necessary for the preservation of the interests of our peoples; and for development. Kwame Nkrumah, Cheikh Anta Diop, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Amilcar Cabral, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Tajudeen Abduraheem and many other great African leaders, and the leaders of the global pan-African movement were all in support of regional integration, and right now there is an interstate movement towards greater integration in Africa, led by the African Union and Regional Economic Communities of Africa (ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, IGAD...). But there is also a popular movement for integration. Regional integration is also necessary to ensure peace and greater human security. Latin America and Africa can learn a lot from each other in terms of their experiences.

Of course, Regional integration is not going to be a miraculous solution to all our problems of development: the class divisions that exist at the national level also manifest themselves at the regional level, and for that reason, there are competing regional integration projects: there are those driven by and favour capital, informed today mainly by neoliberal philosophies and serving the interests of the big businesses of the world. There are also the alternative regional integration projects that seek to enhance the freedoms and well being of the peoples of the different regions (there are interesting examples here in Latin America). Here too, I think it is very important that research informs regional integration policies that seek to enhance the freedom and well being of our peoples.

As I am saying this, in this beautiful and historic Senate Building, my mind also goes to all people like Salvador Allende and Simon Bolivar, who sacrificed a lot in order to see to it that their regions and their peoples unite to become and remain free, and live in much better social and economic conditions.

Our South South programme, I would argue, is a model of collaboration. CODESRIA has been involved in many programmes of this kind, and still is: SEPHIS, the South-South Sustainability Forum (SSSF), WSF... and works with many South South networks. However, this programme is, in many ways, unique: the way in which it has been conceptualized and the way it is managed are good examples of scholarly collaboration, and I would like to acknowledge all those who made it possible for the programme to come this far: Atilio Boron, Emir Sader, Bayo Olukoshi, Hari Singh (of the APISA), Sam Moyo and, before then, Marcia Riviera, Thandika Mkandawire, Abdallah Bujra, Samir Amin, and many others.

There are also the programme staff who, on a day to day basis, make sure that the programme stays on course and moves forward—Gladys Lechini, Alberto Cimadamore, Luciana Gil, Carolina Mera, Victoria Mutti, Mauricio, Dominique... on the CLACSO side; at IDEAs (Malini, Chandru), and at CODESRIA: Pinkie Mekgwe, Carlos Cardoso, Mame Sokhna Thiare Toure.

Before concluding, I would like to take this opportunity to also thank Sida for the support rendered to the South-South Programme, and for the decades-long support to both CLACSO and CODESRIA. The challenge now for Pablo Gentili, Jayati Ghosh and I, is to encourage research funding agencies of the South, both state and private, to also support the programme.

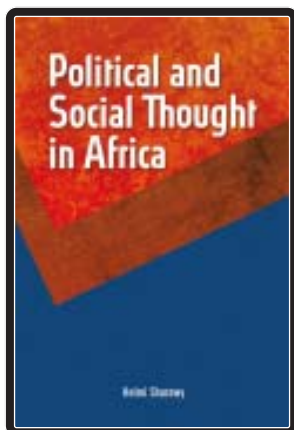
We are now enlarging the membership and broadening the thematic coverage of the programme. And we are reaching out both to the social movements, and to the policy makers. The next level of cooperation is that of establishing joint research and publication projects, and to engage in the study of each other's regions more systematically, and more deeply.

Last, but not least, we also need to disseminate the results of our work much more effectively, using all the possibilities that the information and communications revolutions have created.

I thank you for your attention.

## Political and Social Thought in Africa

Helmi Sharawy



The essays collected together in this book reflect the author's varied experiences in the realms of politics and social struggle, he notes that they cannot be separated from his other experiences in my own country, Egypt over the years. These extend from popular culture or folklore, to the wide world of African liberation politics, and to the Committee for the Defence of National Culture.

This book is like a long trip with African culture from the 1950s to these beginnings of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is most likely going to provoke many memories, sweet and bitter, with maybe the bitter ones as the more lasting. The author notes that it seems as if the only relationship that seems to have mattered for a long time, for the Egyptians, was the river Nile which joins the country with ten other African countries, while a vast desert stands in-between. Such separation ignores the ancient relations between Pharaonic Egypt and the rest of Africa, the Egyptian role in supporting many African liberation movements seems to have been forgotten.

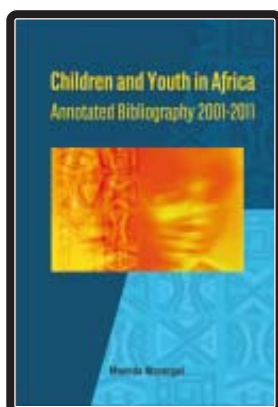
The author has set himself some tough questions: Is it legitimate today to sub-divide the African continent according to the races it contains? Can this, moreover, be simply done with a-historic content for race, or an idealistic concept of identities? Or are we going to talk about the Arabism of Egypt, Libya or Maghreb as if it were an identity gained with the advent of the Arab race, implying that these

were 'lands with no people' – a sort of 'No Man's Land' or fragile spaces that could not confront the invading empire? Or will Arabism equate with Bantuism or negroism sometimes, and Hausa and Swahili cultures at other times? These are the types of issues that Helmi Sharawy examines in this very important book.

Experiences that inform this book began with the author's first encounter in March 1956, with some African youths who were in Cairo for higher studies or as representatives of African liberation movements with whom he worked as an intermediary with the Egyptian national state left an everlasting impression.

## Children and Youth in Africa: Annotated Bibliography 2001–2011

Mwenda Ntarangwi



This annotated bibliography provides a summary of scholarly work specifically focused on children and youth in Africa published between 2001 and 2011 in both journals and books. Some African scholars have questioned this view of children especially when it comes to their own agency and full participation in socioeconomic production for households, the idea of children as vulnerable social subjects continues to shape much of the research that was carried out on African children.

This view of children as passive and vulnerable is also reflected in much of the work and perceptions of children in the West especially when seen from an economic perspective. Western restrictions on specific age limits that govern children's participation in work or labour, whether paid or not, and the subsequent rights that go along with them are often not easily translatable to many African contexts. As is often the case of children acting as household heads and fending not only for themselves but for their siblings and times their parents, the Western notion of children as 'emotionally priceless but economically useless'<sup>3</sup> is not tenable. This construction of African children and youth in terms of received Western categories of personhood is still very strong today.

The overwhelming focus of research publications on HIV/AIDS and orphans, violence and child-soldiers, children's rights, and street children, demonstrates this continued interest in regarding children as vulnerable and in need of adult protection. Moreover, with most of the research projects being shaped by external funding agencies it is not surprising that many of the research questions being pursued tend to focus on areas of study preferred by these agencies. Focusing on the vulnerable child in Africa is mostly a result of the construction of childhood in modern (mostly) Western perception of childhood based on chronological age. This book examines the wide spectrum of writing on children and youth in Africa. It is very important for all scholars working in this field.