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Editorial

Reaching New Frontiers

This issue of the *CODESRIA Bulletin* is produced at the end of the 2013–2016 programme cycle, and therefore at the beginning of a new programmatic cycle and strategic plan. The 2017–2021 programme cycle has

been entrusted with: “Reaching New Frontiers in Social Science Research and Knowledge Production for African Transformation and Development.” The new strategic plan builds on the recommendations of major comprehensive

internal reviews aimed at sharpening the council’s mandate to develop the social sciences and humanities in Africa for better transformation and development within the context of continual global changes. These include: review of the intellectual agenda, membership, governance and management. The new strategic plan builds on the achievements of the past strategic cycle, ensuring consolidation and renewal, and ushering innovations in programme delivery and management; deeply emphasising the importance of basic research, and its relevance for policy, as well as community and civil society engagements. The new strategic plan prioritises three key thematic areas: democratic processes, governance, citizenship and security; ecologies, economies and societies; and higher education dynamics in a changing Africa. In addition to these three thematic priorities, a set of six crosscutting themes meant to suffuse all CODESRIA research; training and publications have been set. These include: gender; generations; alternatives and futures; inequality, rurality and urbanity; and memory and history. Most notable is a re-imagination and narrowing of

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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.

research vehicles such as the traditional National Working Groups, Comparative Research Networks, and Multinational Working Groups which have now been collapsed under one vehicle – the Meaning-Making Research Initiative (MRI) to offer researchers the space to carryout and produce deeper empirical but also much more theoretically grounded and policy relevant basic research.

For this issue of the bulletin we put together some of the discussions on emergence held during the CODESRIA day and around which we invited a cross section of diverse researchers to offer reflections on how to build research futures or ‘futuristic’ research agendas for Africa with respect to its place in the world, and how to incorporate the world within the continent. They were asked to address what they consider to be the big issues, key questions and grand debates for the continent, and also what they identified as the next big issues and questions that we need to learn to deal with in order to emerge from our ‘development’ process. It is thus for this reason that some of the articles reflect on the place and role of research in Africa’s ‘emergence’. We set off with poetry, in an attempt to expand our pedagogies of knowledge within a context characterised by intergenerational ruptures around the focus and tools of knowledge production, leading to calls to interrogate, and in some cases, abandon the knowledge production enterprise. This is also to re-iterate CODESRIA’s long work in and commitment for interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary work with the social sciences and humanities.

A change of practice in this particular issue is our experimentation with a methodology to approach the Pan-African experience that underpins CODESRIA as a space for conversations across all regions, genders, generations, disciplines and languages. Since it’s founding, CODESRIA adopted and continues to operate in four official languages: English, French, Portuguese and Arabic, with plans to expand to other African languages. For its forty-five years of existence and since the start of the Publications and Dissemination Programme, CODESRIA publications have provided a space for Pan-African discussions, enabled through simultaneous translation of key publications such as the bulletin. For years the secretariat has struggled with simultaneous publication of the bulletin in the four languages. In the end, the English edition was always printed first, followed thereafter by the French edition, and sometimes by the Portuguese, while there were always regular translations into Arabic. The consequences of these are diverse. Apart from ensuring that at every given moment every member of the community is informed about and participates in particular debates and conversations going on in the council, delayed translations also created delayed participation in debates, given that by the time these were translated into one language, the others would have moved on, meaning that speakers of one language were always in a situation of catching up. It is for this reason that in this special issue, we elected to publish the articles in their original languages, hoping to reactivate critical reflections on how to operationalise Pan-Africanism within a context of multilingualism. We believe this conversation is now absolutely necessary given the resurgence of the decolonisation and decoloniality debates.

The debate over higher education reform and its relationship to knowledge production is one which precedes the current generation of students and scholars, but has resurfaced as a core part of the reenergised struggles against decolonisation. Over the past five years, particularly Black students in South Africa, Ghana, the UK, the US and Brazil have taken issue at the symbols and resilience of colonial structures and institutions, especially in universities which have become the frontiers of this revolution. Characterised by the toppling and dismantling of colonial symbols such as protests against Cecil John Rhodes’ statue at the University of Cape Town and the ensuing anti-imperialist movements which emerged from these protests in Oxford and other universities across the world; there’s a renewed momentum to re-interrogate pedagogies of learning, knowledge production processes and practices and the ways in which they are grounded in local everyday experiences. A critique that has resurfaced is that even after more than fifty years of independence, universities serve as incubators for new strains of the modernising colonial project. Amongst these debates, the meaning, purpose and form of research, especially in the social sciences and humanities particularly with respect to the ethics of being, patriarchy, epistemic violence, hierarchies of research relationships, and appropriateness of tools are at the core of the renewed challenge to scientific authority and the relevance of research. As part of these critiques, calls for the university to be humane and questions about whether the university can be human and if it has the capacity to take the human seriously have exposed major loopholes in the universities and intergeneration’ cleavages about how to reform. Key questions remain what the postcolonial university should do, what it should look like, how should it contribute to the transformation of society, and what should be the role of research institutions such as CODESRIA?

We are told that Africa is rising. That the continent is at the verge of breaking its curse and reputation as the world’s “heart of darkness”. It is the time of ‘emergence’. ‘Emergence’ has dominated discussions and processes of political economy, development, growth and the post-structural adjustment era in Africa. These debates are centred around issues related to how we understand the place from which we emerge, the destination the process of emergence is supposed to take us to, and the process through which emergence is achieved. It is a notion that has come to dominate the political and economic lives of a number of countries on the continent seen to be the frontiers of growth, investment and therefore development. This is best illustrated in the now cliché examples of the covers of *The Economist* magazine between 2000 in which the continent was portrayed as a “The Hopeless Continent”, through to 2011 in which the continent was depicted as “Africa Rising”, and then 2013 in which the continent was represented as “Aspiring Africa”. Reports talk of economies sprouting opportunities, engendered by a growing educated and entrepreneurial class, which is supposedly reducing the poverty rates by creating new business opportunities. This group is said to constitute part of the growing middle class that is redefining the African continent as a place of hope

and investment – a place of the future, or futuristic if you prefer to be cool: a place of emergence. Yet, the resilience of poverty, the stubbornness of diseases such as malaria, the slow pace of progressive reforms on gender and sexuality, a rise in fundamentalist violence, an upsurge in African migrant deaths in the Mediterranean Sea, and civil struggles against tenacious dictatorial regimes are grim reminders of the divergence, contradictions, and, some argue, near false assumptions about an emerging Africa unsubstantiated by empirical research. The austerity programmes which were rolled out to recompose struggling post-independence states continue to entrench many African countries into deeper cycles of chronic credit with no signs of solvency or financial stability. The inequality margin has expanded even further. An Oxfam report released in January 2017 demonstrates that by the end of 2016, eight of the world's richest men owned the same wealth value as 3.6 billion people, that is half of the world, with plans for even greater accumulation. How should research enter these conversations? How should scholars of African tackle a concept that like development starts off by infantilising and contraining the continent within a matrix in which they are coceived of as being entrapped in a never ending permanent dream of coming of age – that is, emerging? How do we as African researchers and research organisations locate ourselves within these debates?

We must recognise and acknowledge the critical context in which we find ourselves – the human is under threat. We are facing extinction. And this is not just about the ecological challenges that are driving the sustainability and Anthropocene movement, but also particularly about the core values that frame and underpin human society and relations such as interdependency and mutual respect. Modernity and its accompanying projects such as development and democracy are no longer as tenable as promised and have not successfully created wealth, stability, harmony and equality. The last several years has seen an increase in right wing political and religious fundamentalism, leading to an increase in overt bigotry and hate-motivated violence worldwide. Our era is characterised by the resilience and further entrenchment of dictatorship, as well as the liberation and democratisation of tyranny. Evidence of this can be seen in the constitutional changes that certain governments are undertaking to eliminate presidential term limits, power hoarding in particular families and elite groups, and the normalisation of precarity as seen in the ‘international communities’ neglect of certain sufferings

and struggles. This has led to the delegitimisation and de facto irrelevance of rights instruments, pertaining to an increase in declarations of states of exceptions, especially in places where people imagine themselves as free of routine precarity. For these people, precarity is now inescapable pertaining to political radicalisation, financial instability, surging unemployment, disease outbreaks, and ecological collapse. To compound this, science is facing obfuscation in a phenomenon that is described by many as ‘the end of truth’, also made possible by the diminution of the academy and the loss of the university as repository of knowledge. In an era of temporality where one hundred and forty characters of a tweet attracts more attention and influences policy more than hundreds of pages of scientific evidence produced through years of laborious research, basic research is under threat, as also demonstrated in the increasing demand amongst funders for direct policy impacting research.

What are the implications for knowledge production, especially for the continent? How should we as an organisation respond to these challenges? How do we remain relevant without seeming maladjusted? How do we uphold our mandate and protect our brand? Is it necessary to and how do we define a longer-term goal for CODESRIA's activities? How do we ensure continuity while renewing? Do we need to and how should we clearly differentiate our future from the past? Do we need to rebrand and how should it happen? What are we, who should we serve and what have we become? What should our product be, how should it be packaged, what is our currency, and what are our terms of engagement? Fortunately, as Ebrima Sall indicated in an interview with Africa Business in January 2017 discussing the reasons for CODESRIA's ranking as Africa's top think tank, the council regularly undertakes wide-ranging processes of self-introspection and reform to leverage, improve and cement its position as the leading social science research organization in Africa, as well as a leading contributor to the broad visions for national, continental and global transformations currently undertaken in the continent. CODESRIA's regular five-year programme cycle provides the opportunity for continues consolidation and renewal through collective reflection.

Divine Fuh

Head of Publications and Dissemination

“I speak, I lie!”

“I speak, I lie!”
whenever he speaks, he also lies

erasing memory, discarding the past
trashing the ancient, constructing brand
new lies

“100 years is enough!”
prior to *Min-yilik*, Ethiopia was not!

[fast forward ...]

here I am!
the sender and the sent –
the apostolate!

anointer, anointed, anointment

I AM ...
the electing (voter),
I AM
the elected (self)!
I AM
the gazing other (the observer)

“no end for my rule”
no boundary of time
for your sake, they shoulder me
“patience!”

before I, ‘Ethiopia proper’ never exist!
i am the maker, the marker, the
inventor.

my weapon is terror, my weapon is media
my weapon is the constitution, the
justice court and the par-lama
my weapon is the LAW
i write, i interpret, i judge

mimicking a colonial narration?
“a continent without history and
civilization...”
prior to the advent of explorers and
‘discoverers’, we were not!

then, in the name of civilizing mission,
now, in the name of developing a nation.

they (the colonizers & the dictators)
made roads
for this, we are obliged to offer homages
but we knew in our hearts, it is for
more exploitations

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tormenting us by fear, ruling us by terror
teary of no tear gas but sniper

under the façade of the colonizer
emerges, the new nation-state’s order
the *balager* is the resident-alien, the stranger
once his umbilical cord buried and
connects him with the land
as a signifier of life
now alienated – cut off from “mother-
earth”, utterly disconnected

let alone feeding family from the fruit
of his tilling the soil
no chance to rest his body for the final
Sabbath
double displacement – both in life and death

‘the wretched of the earth’
the peasant, (85 %),
no heroic father, no ancient history or
no motherland; has he
we are state-orphans
seeking for adoptions.

yay, it is ‘free-market’
yet, the “native” is utterly estranged
the elite and the ex-pat with the dollar
are the ‘*balager*’
the owner, the land grabber – the monger.

resources belong to the rich
“bourgeois”
with the aid of invest-exploiters
with the loaners of the worldly bankers:
World Bank, IMF
for the sake of the “West”
the loaners and donors ... the rest is a “waste”
too generous in giving out lands and its fruits
in slathering lives for senseless wars

uprooting what is indigenous:
the seed, the plant, the forest, the farmer
the crypt, the monasteries, the professor

spirit of the living and the dead,
tormented, tortured, mutilated
he lynched us publicly with insulting tongues
we are fond of gazing at our artificial images

via the deformed mirror
and listening to the power of falsity
always monotonic and violent

millions don’t count
we are just percent
numbers, nameless
colorless, faceless, voiceless
stateless, rootless

i lament not because we are landlocked
but mentally-shackled,
not because we are geographically
dispersed, exiled
but culturally displaced
historically uprooted.

he is our name, our face, our voice
our representation and our
representative as if we are like him or
he is just like us

he (single handedly) colonized us
as if there were no empires and kingdoms
he divided us into “tribes”
in the name of ethnic-federalism/s
we happily perform our “tribal” dances
in ecstasy, our body spins
for the ‘unknown’ spirits
they are awaiting for blood, not
satisfied with ashes

sucked by the empire of the vampire
donating our money-blood

for the sake of his belly
he makes us a-hungry
(angry, hungry and pacify us from both)

he spoke those “wicked” words
of “democracy,” “development” and
“renaissanceeeeeee”
we echo and re-echo
“renaissanceeeeeee”, “renaissanceeeeeee”

again we are just numbers
singing, ‘a resounding gong or a
clanging cymbals’

behold: the demi-god!
re-activating the ... emperor-cult
once more, listen to the lie
to the one who acts as if he is Omni ...
again, listen to his speech-acts;
“i am immortal!”

Who is Setting Africa's intellectual Agenda?

African scholars such as Kwesi Prah (1997), Ifi Amadiume (2005) and Valentin-Yves Mudimbe (1994) have argued that Africa's intellectual agenda has largely been set by Euro-American interests and that this reflects former colonial relationships and geopolitical power. Few would disagree with this. More recently emergent economic powerhouses like China, India and Brazil are also muscling in on the production of knowledge on Africa, for example, commissioning studies that explore long-running and new relationships with the continent. These are sometimes framed as south-south research projects, reflecting historical collaborations and solidarity of developing countries that could be traced to the Bandung conference of 1955.

At the same time, Africans scholars are worried that they are being crowded out of framing their own intellectual agenda, aided by the fact that their state governments do little to support local research and researchers. Also of concern is that little is being done to engage seriously with the production of knowledge falling outside the formal academy and this, Thandika Mkandawire (2000), says has led to a wide distinction between what African scholars know and experience of their worlds and what they learn in the academy and its applicability to their societies. Such disparity has led to the view that formal education orients African scholars to serve the interests of dominant geopolitical powers rather than their own societies.

Calls for decolonised free higher education in South Africa reflect this. As do questions raised by historian, Sishuwa Sishuwa (2015), about the building of Confucian centres in Africa by China, seeing these as another form of cultural and economic imperialism. The silence of much of the African academy, however, on the withdrawal of the state from the provision of education and the relegation of its responsibility to the growing multinational private franchises is unlikely to shift this trend.

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Mahmood Mamdani's (2011) critique on the reliance and pursuit of consultancy work in the African academy, rather than insistence on basic independent research has not as yet significantly shifted and the production of knowledge in the African university remains firmly tethered to corporate and international development aid interests. In the growing student activism around the African university, in addition to calls for a free and affordable education, students are also highlighting the incompleteness of the decolonisation struggle. Political independence they say is not enough; they want economic, cultural and symbolic independence.

Economic relations with old imperial powers continue to dominate. Jean Nanga (2015) actually argues that the continent is at present experiencing another intense wave of neo-imperial and colonial domination. It is in this context that calls for African ownership of resources are not only emerging as a link to the past incomplete decolonisation, but as a contemporary struggle against the 'development' – related dispossession that came with the Africa 'rising' narrative. Calls for African ownership of resources remain, and are unlikely to diminish. For example, in South Africa, one of the largest economies on the continent, one of its most vocal opposition parties, the Economic Freedom Fighters, has been calling for the nationalisation of key resources like land and minerals. Other African countries are considering re-nationalising their key assets.

However, it is not only concern over ownership of what is being mined in the ground, but also what is being cultivated in the minds of young Africans that has spurred a wave of protests on decolonisation. This is symbolic as well as intellectual. Across

the continent, a debate is growing on what it does to a society to valorise the images and symbols of colonial oppressors and persons with racist views. This is reflected in debates on the removal from public view of statues of Cecil Rhodes in South Africa and Mahatma Gandhi in Ghana. There is also concern over what it means to have one's history written through the prism of imperial historiography? Historians are challenging some of the dominant views of the past. For example, Walima Kalusa (2015) questions the 'heroic' status of David Livingstone in British history, highlighting the role of Sekeletu a young African monarch, without whose aid, Livingstone's travels would have been severely curtailed. Taking the dominant account of Africa always having been poor and disenfranchised, Emmanuel Akyeampong and Hippolyte Fofack (2015) challenge this view by taking a longer, 500-year frame of Africa's history. They write on Africa's history of successful trade and commerce and highlight the continent's present predicament to the recent wave of colonialism. African archaeologists also point to the destruction of the continent's rich material culture by colonising forces (for example, the Benin punitive expedition) and to processes of cultural appropriation (see debates on the Great Zimbabwe).

Also, taking a critical eye to the past are scholars contesting the patriarchal account of history. Mutumba Mainga (2010) and Ruth Iyob (2005), for example, in their works on a history of leadership in Barotseland (a kingdom in central Africa) and on Eritrea's independence struggle, respectively, highlight the role of women in leadership and struggle. These works point to intersecting themes of gender, race and power. It is these intersections that African feminist scholars have been struggling to have foregrounded. They argue that any emancipatory politics that does not confront other forms of repression, be it gender, race or economic relations, limits the scope of an encompassing liberation. They are critical of the ways

in which African women, in particular, have been written out of liberation efforts and portrayed as passive subjects to be saved or empowered.

African scholars are also pointing to the dynamics and nuances of African feminism, and masculinity. For example, Ifi Amadiume (2005) and Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí (2002) have challenged the biological determinism that underlies much of the projection of Western feminism in Africa. Divine Fuh (2012), Kopano Ratele (2008) and Robert Morrell (1998) are doing similar for understanding African masculinities. As have Zethu Matebeni (2013) and the late Elaine Salo et al. (2010) done much to foreground queer scholarship in Africa. These works for African scholars pursuing a decolonising intellectual agenda are important, highlighting a nuanced picture of personhood and relations in Africa, and avoiding the narrow stereotypes that have characterised a colonial view of the continent. It is these nuances that African novelists such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2014), Taiye Selasi (2013) and NoViolet Bulawayo (2013) are fleshing out in their works, not only to show the 'multiple stories' of African experience, but also the varied experiences of cosmopolitanism, that calls to thinking of 'Africa' not in isolation, but as part of a wider system of global relations.

This wider view has been part of a pan-Africanist orientation. Influencing this has been Trinidadian, Cyril Lionel Robert James, an internationalist socialist whose works linked African diasporic struggles to those on the continent. More recently the works of African American intellectual, Faye V. Harrison (2008), has been doing this, taking an intersectional approach to decolonising knowledge. Other Africanist scholars such as Maurice Vambe (2010), Bawa Yamba (1997) and Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba (1991) are taking nearer theoretical steps to the continent, looking to local understanding and philosophical thinking before drawing on far-placed analytical frameworks. In addition to this, has also been a sustained critique on the imperial underpinnings of knowledge production. This critique has been driving the point that an emancipatory intellectual agenda will only be realised when the interests and power relations underlying the

dominant forms of knowledge making is made visible. Scholars such as Francis Nyamnjoh (2016) have been sustaining this critique. So too the highly influential works of Steve Biko and Franz Fanon.

On how liberation would re-socialise a colonised people and materialise a new way of life, the prolific writings of national independence struggle leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Abdel Gamal Nasser and Kenneth Kaunda read more as aspirations and unrealised dreams. At the heart of the failure for some post-independence scholars were continued colonial economic dependency and a failure to create truly redistributive economies. For example, Guy Mhone (2000) on the enclave economy in Africa and Samir Amin's (2002) work on imperial capitalism have been influential in critiques of the continent's continued status as an extractive locale. The plans for pan-Africanism as dreamt by Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah waned by the early 1980s with the advent of neoliberalism, a radical liberal agenda that has been reshaping local understandings of personhood, society, state, moral values and exchange relations in Africa. South Africa's former president Thabo Mbeki's dream of an African renaissance ended up being swallowed by the logics of the neoliberal agenda he ended up embracing that, his critics effectively say, expanded the reach of South Africa's white oligarchs across the continent. Other leaders such as Paul Kagame have taken a pragmatic, bureaucratic route for the continent to set its own agenda and run its own affairs, as he seeks to make the African Union independent. How inclusive Kagame's agenda will be, is yet to be seen, as accusations of authoritarian tendencies plague his reputation as one of the continent's most influential leaders.

Beyond an inclusive process of knowledge making, is the critique that the methodologies and analytical frameworks that currently dominate tend to dehumanise African experiences. As such the present debates on the production of knowledge on the continent seek to place humanity and its intersecting experiences at the heart of a decolonising intellectual agenda. They are asking, what it means to study Africa without acknowledgement of the pain of ongoing colonial and racist oppression.

They argue that despite increasing calls for academic collaboration, there is still a dominant tendency to 'think on', rather than 'think with' African scholars. The failings of cooperation, they say, lie in the inability of many Euro-American scholars to break away from Darwinian, Cartesian perspectives that create an 'other' as a subject of inquiry. This, they say, implicates everyone, including African scholars themselves into, at heart, a racially charged intellectual enterprise. How to do away with this?

Rene Devisch and Francis Nyamnjoh (2011) have made a case for the co-production of knowledge, seeing it as important to understanding a shared world. This shared space is made possible, they say, by reconceptualising a notion of personhood that is not characterised, as is presently dominated in liberal thinking, as a dualism of body and mind, but rather as relational – linking persons, environment and their experiences as mutually constituting a shared world. It is a view that starts from the perspective of showing how we are related, rather than how we are different. It goes against the 'us' and 'them' categories that have underpinned the so-called objective science, and the evolutionary perspectives that have made it difficult to see as co-equivalent other forms of conceptualising the world. Taking relationality seriously would mean also examining the economic, social, cultural, political and symbolic ways in which the continent and its peoples are being related to. As a thought experiment, this would mean thinking through whether we would be comfortable with, within the current frame of knowledge production of 'us' and 'them', for our societies and ourselves to be studied with the same thesis, analytical frameworks and methods as is applied to studies of Africa and its people? Would the same policy recommendations and agendas sit comfortably with the places we call our own societies and the people with whom we identify? If not, and if we are to take relationality seriously, then in collaborating with Africans on an intellectual agenda, we should be attentive to impulses that place a lower value on certain bodies and ways of thinking. For then, hopefully, there can be the emergence of solidarity to understand the world we share.

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What if Democracy Itself were the Problem?

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No development policy recommendation is worth the paper it is written on if it does not end with an acknowledgement of the role of democracy in making development happen. This is part of a general belief in the correlation between democracy and development. The belief is held by the most unlikely alliance of individuals:

academics, civil society activists, international development bureaucrats, philanthropists, academic Marxists, neo-liberal denizens of the world of

economics and a gullible global public sphere which invests a lot of emotional energy in the idea that development is a matter of finding the right kinds of algorithms (Macamo 2013).

So it is that conventional wisdom over the past quarter of a century since the end of the Cold War, especially within

the development policy world, has come to cherish the idea that one of the main reasons why the African continent lags behind has to do with the failure of democracy. When the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, the continent got off to a good start with national conferences almost all over the place. It went down the path of democratisation only to spoil everything along the way with the old habits of “African” politics: presidents for life, lack of accountability, liberation movements in power syndrome and, of course, neo-patrimonial politics to name but a few.

While it is true that more and more countries in Africa have embraced democracy and the level of intolerance towards autocracies is very low, we still need to ask, as social scientists, a vitally important question: ‘Is democracy the solution to Africa’s problems?’ The question may seem at first trivial. After all, most of the evidence seems to suggest that most successful economies practise one or another form of liberal democracy. Exceptions here are, of course, Asian autocracies run by benevolent and development-oriented dictators, China in our days, oil-rich oligarchies in the Middle East and, last but not least, Western European countries themselves before they became economically successful and politically stable. It is not uncommon for economists like Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2013) to use Botswana’s economic success and apparent political stability to describe what the continent is lacking.

The social sciences in Africa stand at an analytical crossroads. One road invites us to explore the standard account upon which the narrative of development as it is made relevant to Africa is based. According to this account, democracy was not only prior to development, but also a *sine qua non* condition for it. History, however, tells us a different story, unless, of course, only the time after World War II counts. It is easy to forget that up until just before the First World War only three countries in Europe were republics: France, Switzerland and Portugal, the latter only from 1911 onwards (see Hoppe 2001:ix). Democracy in the modern sense of the

term, i.e. as universal suffrage and citizenship rights and legal protection of social rights is, historically, a very recent phenomenon (Chang 2007). The main problem with this account is that it extols the virtues of an accomplishment, i.e., successful democracy. It does not do the more relevant thing, i.e., look into the process which led to the outcome. If one looks at democracy as process, and not as outcome, one is likely to be less impatient towards Africa, for what the continent experiences as it strives to consolidate democracy is exactly what Europe on its way to democracy also experienced. Seen this way, it makes very little sense to blame Africans for failing to be democratic, for the experience of those who are now successfully democratic tells us that they went through similar difficulties. There is nothing intrinsically ‘African’ about the failure of democracy, just as, by the same token, there is nothing intrinsically ‘Greek’ about the success of democracy in Europe.

The other road from the crossroads would take us down a journey that ironically asks whether the terms of the equation have been adequately stated. Perhaps it is not democracy that leads to development, but rather development which eases the way for democracy. There is nothing new in this insight. The experience of countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Indonesia, not to say much about Western Europe itself, seems to suggest that there is a stronger correlation between economic growth and subsequent demands for democracy. In fact, Charles Tilly (2004) has convincingly shown that democracy in Europe was a contingent outcome of protest and contention which did not necessarily aim at democracy. The difficulties experienced by African countries in securing the approval of colonial powers for their demands for independence underline this point. The arguments used to delay independence to Africans were basically the same as those which were deployed by European political elites to delay universal suffrage, including female suffrage. As a matter of fact, representative democracy was a compromise solution that sought to accommodate popular demands for more

participation and the elites’ fear that the people might not be mature enough to govern themselves (Hoppe 2001).

To be sure, democracy has an intrinsic value and that alone gives us enough reasons to strive for it. What is at issue in this discussion, however, is whether democracy has the instrumental value which it is ascribed in its relationship to African development. My claim is that the pride of place given to the instrumental value of democracy has undermined social scientists’ ability to account for social, political and economic phenomena in Africa. There are two main reasons for this. First, by stressing this instrumental value, researchers have tended to look at democracy as an explanation, rather than as something which needs to be explained. It is easy to claim that countries do not develop because they are not democratic enough, but what that exactly means is a mystery because clearly failure to democratise is what needs to be accounted for. Most attempts at explaining the failure of democracy are tautological in the sense of merely describing the problem. A country or people does not become democratic simply by virtue of wishing to be democratic. It is not automatic and, for this reason, it is analytically unhelpful to say democracy failed because politicians conduct fraudulent elections, do not accept good governance and violate human rights.

Secondly, the instrumental value of democracy blunts interest in the political and social processes unleashed by democratisation and how they may, in turn, undermine democracy itself. Freedom of expression, to take just one example, enhances the potential of public scrutiny. This may be good for governance and accountability. But what freedom of expression does first and foremost is not to enable society to reap its benefits. It poses a problem to be tackled. This right must be protected, also against the reaction of those who may feel to be above it.¹ This right might be misused to insult, slander or simply gain political advantage. The problem here is to think that democracy is only democracy when it is successful. Such an understanding of the notion makes it analytically useless.

Democracy can only be useful as a concept if it not only describes what is positive about it, but also everything else that becomes possible when democracy becomes the only game in town. The analytically interesting problem in this connection is that some, if not most, of the problems confronting African states are the result of the presence of democracy. Our understanding of this notion, therefore, must be sensitive to both sides of the coin.

The sense in which democracy might be the problem in Africa is, therefore, an analytical one. The African(ist) social scientific community needs to free itself from the normative content of concepts brought to Africa on the back of what Mahmood Mamdani once described as ‘history by analogy’ (Mamdani 1996). The crucial question we need to work on is neither whether Africa needs democracy to develop, nor which kind of democracy. Rather, we need to accept that democracy’s positive attributes in themselves are not sufficient to ensure its success. For this reason, the crucial question must concern the conditions under which

democracy yields development gains or fails to do so. These conditions are the pieces of the puzzle still missing in social scientific accounts of political processes in our continent to enable us to begin to develop a truly vernacular conceptual vocabulary that can help us gain a better understanding of our own reality. The assumption that democracy has an instrumental value forces us to take for granted an idealised account of Europe’s own development. Positing the possibility that democracy might be the problem frees us from that idealised account. Moreover, it holds out the promise of a more fruitful engagement with Africa’s problems.

Note

1. There is nothing specifically ‘African’ about intolerance towards such freedoms. Richard Nixon’s impeachment in the USA should serve as useful reminder if any were required in times when ‘fake news’ and ‘alternative facts’ have entered our political vocabulary.

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Africa Rising, Afro-pessimism or Racial Capitalism?

‘Africa Rising’ has emerged as a predominant narrative for the continent in the the twenty-first century. It offers a refreshing perspective from the dark days of the African ‘crisis’ literature, particularly among urbanists. This documented a quarter century of economic and social decline following the failed experiment of structural adjustment that effectively eradicated the pull factors for urban migration but not the push factors of restless ambition for Africa’s village youth, thereby swelling cities with surplus populations devoid of

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opportunities (e.g., Davis 2006). Africa Rising describes a continent with some of the world’s fastest growing economies, a rising middle class and a booming entrepreneurial culture spawning an obscenely rich ‘Afropolitan’ elite (Hassan 2012). As a discursive frame it offers a corrective to the Afro-pessimism that threatens to reproduce what it seeks

to describe: structural exclusion from the global economy.

Unfortunately, the Africa Rising narrative is flawed. Africa Rising reproduces the dominant global discourse that reifies economies, thus perpetuating an economic reductionism that collapses the interests of capital into those of the greater good. Economic growth in Africa, as with the rest of the neoliberalised world – and here I echo the Comaroffs’ (2012) call to begin theorising from the South – is increasingly concentrated, and good jobs

are disappearing. Take for example my research site, Côte d'Ivoire. Following a decade-long war that ended with President Alassane Ouattara's election in 2010, its economy has received international acclaim. In 2016 it was the world's second fastest-growing economy, with 8.5 per cent GDP growth (Myers 2016). However, Côte d'Ivoire's Human Development Index fell to a dismal 171 of 187 ranked countries and 79 per cent of its workers are in vulnerable employment.¹ (UNDP 2016). Drawing on World Bank data, Jacques Morriset (2015) notes that, although Côte d'Ivoire has seen a 50 per cent growth in GDP in the four years since 2012, the majority of job creation is in self-employment and household enterprise, which are 'unlikely to provide decent incomes on a sustainable basis'. He observes: 'Today there are already many unsettled youths in the streets of Ivoirian cities, selling goods and services, mostly in informal or illegal trade. In spite of the rapid economic recovery, the average revenue associated with informal trade has declined by 15 per cent in the last three years.'

A closer look at Africa's expanding middle class – 'a fraught, even political expression' – reveals a classification of incomes US\$2 and higher (Kulish 2014). The unbounded, globetrotting Afropolitan elite, many of whom emerged from the latest economic boom, starkly contrast with the continent's economic refugees who face deadly crossings and closed borders (Hassan 2012). Moreover, a view to all that glitters in the contemporary African city risks celebrating the 'commodity fetish' over 'commodity production' (Watts 2005:189). 73 per cent of sub-Saharan Africa's labour force is involved in informal, non-agricultural work and over 90 per cent in parts of West Africa (Meagher and Lindell 2013). We may invoke Achille Mbembe's (2001:551) ominous prediction for Africa's new century: 'If a neo-liberal way out of the crisis has – so far – led to any renewal of growth, it is growth with unemployment it is quite reasonable to hypothesize an end to a wage-employed African labor force.' No wonder that some of the most theoretically rich work to emerge from twenty-first century urbanism globally is that which explores the strategies of African informal actors, be it to understand their 'fiscal disobedience'

(Roitman 2004), the 'quiet encroachment of the ordinary' (Bayat 2000), or 'people as infrastructure' (Simone 2004). James Ferguson's (2015) latest *tour de force* looks to southern Africa to explore the 'politics of distribution', through which we might reimagine a distributive state in a time when full employment is a dream of the past.

My scholarship on the livelihoods and lifestyles of men in the informal economy of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire has taken me on a journey from colonial conquest to crisis and from Africa to its diaspora and back again. The destination at which I have arrived: *racial capitalism*. Central to this concept are the *co-constitution, and indivisibility, of capitalism and racialism* (Robinson 1983). Following in the black political economy tradition, I recognise the particular, devalued location of blackness in capitalism from its inception (Cox 1948; Fanon [1961] 1963; Rodney 1972, Williams 1944). Racial capitalism has of late emerged as a central frame for describing conditions of marginality and exclusion among African diaspora populations as well as those on the African continent (Clarno 2017; Matlon 2016; Melamed 2011; Pulido 2016).

I have argued that while the black body's integration in the capitalist world economy ever since the twin projects of slavery and colonialism has been characterised by deep exploitation, in the neoliberal economy the black body is overwhelmingly excluded (Matlon 2016). Ours is a world in which more and more bodies are being rendered 'permanent surplus,' vividly described by Yates (2011:1680) as 'human-as-waste, excreted from the capitalist system'. Yet despite the fears and malaise of disproportionately white Trump, Le Pen and Brexit supporters, to name a few of the many autochthonous movements springing up across Euro-America, black bodies first felt the brunt of these exclusions, and continue to feel them at much higher rates.² This is true for both in- and across-country comparisons, so while post-2008 austerity measures and their social consequences are undoubtedly devastating, they pale next to the conditionalities that global finance institutions imposed on sub-Saharan African countries in the 1980s and 1990s. Compare Greece and Spain, Europe's hardest hit economies with 2016 unemployment rates hovering around

23 and 20 per cent, respectively (www.trading-economies.com), to sub-Saharan Africa's aforementioned average of 73 per cent informality – another way to describe unemployment in states lacking social safety nets.

Just as 'colonial projects of conquest commanded "race" into existence, creating worlds for hyper-exploitation', McIntyre and Nast (2011:1473, 1472) argue that 'race has become the final arbiter of waste and wastage'. Proponents of an Africa Rising narrative are certainly correct to emphasise the consequences of framing. But we must also speak truth to power. Perhaps doing so means moving past both Africa Rising and Afro-pessimism narratives to a new framework altogether, one that centralises how race has, since capitalism's inception, placed more or less value on some bodies over others. In so doing it has justified varying levels of exploitation and disregard by imagined hierarchies of human evolution, with dire consequences for opportunity, access, distribution, dignity and well-being. It is an uncomfortable truth, but one that is becoming increasingly urgent in a moment of proliferating dispossessions.

Notes

1. The United Nations derives its definition of vulnerable employment from the International Labor Organization. Similar to informal employment in the lack of regulation and insecurity it entails, vulnerable employment denotes those individuals and their family members who 'hold the type of jobs defined as a self-employment jobs (i.e. remuneration is directly dependent upon the profits derived from the goods and services produced), and have not engaged on a continuous basis any employees to work for them during the reference period' (UN Millennium Development Goals Indicators n.d.).
2. Taking the example of the United States, Desilver (2013) shows that black unemployment is consistently twice that for whites, while Couch and Fairlie (2010) find that black men are the first fired during economic downturns. If prison populations, disproportionately African American, were included, their unemployment figures would certainly be higher.

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La renaissance africaine ? Épître pour redonner son sens à un mot chargé d'histoire et porteur des enseignements du passé¹

Le remplacement du concept de « renaissance africaine » par ceux de « développement » et d'« émergence »

Le concept de « renaissance africaine », je l'ai rencontré pour la première fois sous la plume de Cheikh Anta Diop, dans « Quand pourra-t-on parler d'une renaissance africaine ? », un article publié en novembre 1948 et repris dans le recueil d'articles intitulé *Alerte sous les tropiques* (1990:33-44). Des années après sa mort, le concept a été repris par le président Abdoulaye Wade, panafricaniste convaincu (bien qu'il ait très malencontreusement baptisé la sculpture érigée sur une des collines des Mamelles du nom de « monument de la

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renaissance africaine », un monument du « machisme à ciel ouvert » très éloigné dans l'esprit et la forme de l'art et de la pensée de l'Afrique impériale, à comparer avec la majestueuse et sobre sculpture de la femme et de l'homme, mains jointes et de taille égale, qui trône, place Soweto, en face de l'Assemblée nationale du Sénégal).

Le NEPAD (the *New Partnership for Africa's Development*), un projet développé en 2001 par les présidents

Bouteflika de l'Algérie, Wade du Sénégal et Mbeki de l'Afrique du Sud, est appelé par ses promoteurs « Projet pour la renaissance africaine ». Le lien est ainsi fait entre renaissance et développement, une sorte de transition en douceur, voire en catimini, d'un concept à un autre. Même le président français, Nicolas Sarkozy, après son infamant « discours de Dakar », se trouve obligé d'utiliser le terme de « renaissance africaine » dans son discours du 28 février 2008 en Afrique du Sud.

Abdoulaye Wade et Thabo Mbeki ne sont plus présidents et depuis, comme par hasard, les concepts de « développement » puis, pour faire neuf peut-être, d'« émergence »

l'ont remplacé. Le choix du concept à vulgariser auprès des populations africaines n'est pas innocent. Tandis que l'un des concepts est porteur d'une Afrique prospère, autonome, scientifiquement à la pointe, technologiquement avancée, spirituellement forte, l'autre ou les deux autres nous engluent dans l'obscurantisme meurtrier, les famines dévastatrices, les guerres génocidaires, les épidémies endémiques, et l'illettrisme de masse. Il y a donc bien un concept qui libère et un concept ou des concepts fabriqués pour perpétuer la tragédie africaine.

Le sens, la portée et la valeur du concept de « renaissance »

L'étude et l'exploitation des textes et du savoir anciens

Renaissance est un terme qui a été inventé par des historiens du XIX^e siècle pour décrire la période allant, suivant les auteurs, du XIV^e-XV^e au XVI^e-XVII^e siècles en Europe. L'époque est qualifiée de « renaissance », car elle est caractérisée par l'étude et l'imitation de la littérature et des arts de l'Antiquité grecque et romaine. Le terme renaissance servait ainsi à désigner un renouveau de l'âge d'or européen en opposition à l'obscurantisme qui aurait dominé le Moyen Âge européen (appelé en anglais *the Dark Ages*). Quoique l'on pense de cette opposition faite entre le Moyen Âge et la Renaissance, le fait est que les « hommes de la Renaissance », peintres, sculpteurs, architectes, philosophes, hommes de lettres, juristes, astronomes, mathématiciens, médecins : Érasme, Pétrarque, Dante, Da Vinci, Botticelli, Michel Ange, Le Tintoret, Thomas More, Machiavel, Cervantès, Shakespeare, Rabelais, Ronsard, Montaigne, La Fontaine, Galilée, Copernic, Tycho Brahe, Kepler, Newton, Ambroise Paré, Paracelse, Christophe Colomb... ont eu l'humilité (pas toujours, il y a eu des plagiaires éhontés tels que La Fontaine, qui s'est approprié sans vergogne les fables de l'Africain Ésope) et surtout la sagesse, l'intelligence, d'étudier les œuvres des maîtres de la philosophie, des sciences (mathématiques, astronomie, chimie, médecine), de la technologie et des arts de l'antiquité gréco-latine (eux-mêmes ayant tout appris de leurs maîtres négro-égyptiens, v. Cheikh Anta DIOP, *Civilisation ou Barbarie*, Présence Africaine, Paris). Ils ne se sont pas laissés détourner de cette tâche par le fait que ces maîtres, tels Platon, Aristote,

Euclide, Ptolémée ou Cicéron, étaient des « païens » qui, de plus, avaient vécu plus d'un millier d'années auparavant. Ils ne se sont pas non plus laissés opposer le fameux, pour ne pas dire fumeux, « À quoi sert le retour au passé ? ». Ils ont refusé les dogmes religieux de leur époque (avec des limites ou un certain degré de clandestinité pour s'éviter le bûcher de l'inquisition).

C'est grâce à ces savants tournés vers l'étude du savoir emmagasiné dans les temps passés que l'Europe a maîtrisé les sciences et la technologie qui lui ont permis de se lancer en conquérante à la découverte des continents d'où provenaient les richesses qui lui faisaient tant défaut. Citons le poète José Maria de Heredia qui exprime la réalité dans sa poignante et cruelle vérité :

Comme un vol de gerfauts hors du charnier natal,

Fatigués de porter leurs misères hautaines,

De Palos, de Moguer, routiers et capitaines

Partaient, ivres d'un rêve héroïque et brutal.

Ils allaient conquérir le fabuleux métal
Que Cipango mûrit dans ses mines lointaines,

Et les vents alizés inclinaient leurs antennes

Aux bords mystérieux du monde occidental.

Armée, grâce aux « hommes de la Renaissance », de technologie jusqu'aux dents, l'Europe devient une grande puissance maritime et militaire. Cela lui permet de vaincre et de soumettre tous les peuples et territoires qu'elle découvre et qu'elle exploite sans merci. Là se trouve la source du développement économique, scientifique et technologique de l'Europe. C'est donc la Renaissance qui est à la source de leur développement – vous remarquerez que je n'ai pas mis développement humain dans la liste car, sur le plan humain, ce qui se développe, c'est ce que l'Europe a de pire : la mise en esclavage des êtres humains au nom de la religion, mais aussi de la raison (n'oublions pas tous les discours et études « scientifiques » et « philosophiques » qui ont accompagné la hiérarchisation des races et l'esclavagisation). Ainsi, même lorsque l'on parle de développement, il faut faire attention à ce que l'on y met. S'agit-il

du développement fondé sur la misère et l'exploitation du plus grand nombre, un développement économique insoucieux du développement humain ? S'agit-il plutôt, pour paraphraser le président Senghor, de mettre l'humain au cœur du développement ?

Par conséquent, et pour en revenir au concept de « renaissance », si les Africain-e-s veulent l'utiliser correctement, elles et ils doivent comprendre que cela veut dire aller à la redécouverte des trésors artistiques, philosophiques, technologiques et scientifiques de l'âge d'or africain. Un âge d'or se dit d'un temps associé à une période de paix et de prospérité inégalée dans la mémoire des hommes. Toutefois, même si le concept « d'âge d'or » peut être contesté, il n'en reste pas moins que certaines périodes dans l'histoire d'une région ont été plus prospères que d'autres, moins caractérisées par les guerres, les famines et l'obscurantisme meurtrier. Les Pyramides et les Textes des Pyramides (les plus anciens textes religieux du monde), ainsi que la Charte de Kurukan Fuga, Constitution de l'empire du Mali (1235-1645) sont autant de repères marquant les différents « âges d'or » du continent. Maintes études historiques et maints ouvrages savants fournissent la preuve de l'existence dans le passé africain de telles époques de développement humain et des droits humains, ainsi que des arts, de la science, de la médecine et de la technologie. Pour n'en citer que quelques-uns : *Voyages, III. Inde, Extrême-Orient, Espagne et Soudan*, Ibn Battuta, La Découverte/Poche, Paris 1997, p. 393-442 ; *Histoire universelle*, livre I Diodore ; *La Charte du Mandé et autres traditions du Mali*, Y. T. Cissé & J.-L. Sagot-Dufau-vroux, Albin Michel, Paris, 2003 ; *L'unité culturelle de l'Afrique noire*, Présence africaine, Cheikh Anta DIOP ; *Afrique noire, démographie, sol et histoire*, Louise-Marie Diop-Maes, Présence africaine/Khepera, Paris 1996 ; *Des droits de la femme africaine, d'hier à demain*, Saaliu Saamba Malaado Kanji, Xamal, Saint-Louis, 1997 ; *La philosophie africaine de la période pharaonique, 2780-330 avant notre ère*, Théophile Obenga, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1990.

Citons Diodore, parmi les précurseurs dans cette voie de l'étude de l'Afrique ancienne et les promoteurs de ses bienfaits :

Nous allons placer ici un abrégé des lois et des mœurs des Égyptiens qui

paraîtront sans doute merveilleuses et d'une grande instruction pour le lecteur. Elles n'ont pas été révérees par les Égyptiens seuls, les Grecs mêmes les ont admirées, de sorte que les plus habiles d'entre eux se sont fait honneur de venir jusqu'en Égypte pour y apprendre les maximes et les coutumes de cette fameuse nation. Car bien que l'entrée de l'Égypte fût autrefois difficile aux étrangers, comme nous l'avons dit plus haut, cependant Orphée et le poète Homère entre les plus anciens, Pythagore de Samos et le législateur des Athéniens, Solon, entre plusieurs autres plus récents n'ont pas laissé d'en entreprendre le voyage. (Diodore 1744:L.1er, sec. 2, XXII)

Telle est la voie vers la renaissance africaine, aller puiser à la source du savoir africain, à l'origine du fameux « miracle » grec. Un voyage décomplexé vers les lois et autres « merveilles » de notre passé ancien. Cependant, l'effort vers la connaissance du savoir des sages de l'Afrique ancienne doit aussi tendre à la démocratisation de ce savoir retrouvé, ainsi que de tous les autres savoirs de par le monde.

La démocratisation des savoirs par l'alphabétisation en langues « vulgaires »

La Renaissance n'a pas seulement été nourrie par l'étude des textes et du savoir anciens, elle a aussi été marquée par la démocratisation des savoirs du fait de l'utilisation des langues « vulgaires », ou langues vernaculaires européennes, comme langues d'écriture et de diffusion des textes religieux et profanes.

La renaissance repose ainsi sur la fin de l'hégémonie du latin, la langue léguée par le colonisateur romain. Le latin, langue savante, langue de l'Église et des universités est bousculé par les langues du peuple, les dialectes du français, de l'italien, de l'anglais... La langue est un enjeu de développement humain et d'essor économique. L'imprimerie, introduite en Europe par Gutenberg, rend possible une industrie du livre rentable, offrant des livres à la portée de toutes les bourses. Les livres étant devenus accessibles au plus grand nombre par le fait qu'ils sont

écrits dans les langues parlées par le peuple et vendus à des tarifs abordables, l'alphabétisation dans les langues vernaculaires se développe en même temps que l'édition, chacune nourrissant, ou se nourrissant de l'autre. Joachim du Bellay publie en 1549 un ouvrage au titre éloquent, *Deffense et illustration de la langue françoise* ; moins d'un siècle plus tard, en 1635, l'Académie française est créée par le cardinal de Richelieu.

Les discours et projets relatifs à la renaissance africaine ne sauraient donc occulter la dimension linguistique de l'entreprise. Parler de renaissance africaine implique d'aborder la question de la réhabilitation des langues africaines comme instruments de diffusion du savoir dans tous les domaines, littéraires comme scientifiques.

Pour illustrer la faisabilité de cette entreprise, en 1975, Cheikh Anta DIOP publie dans le *Bulletin de l'IFAN*, un article bilingue de 80 pages intitulé « Comment enraciner la science en Afrique : exemple wolof (Sénégal) »

Louise Marie Diop-Maes publie, en annexe des Actes du Colloque de Bamako, 23 au 25 janvier 2007, *Entre tradition et modernité : quelle gouvernance pour l'Afrique ?*, un texte intitulé « Stratégie pour l'utilisation dans l'enseignement et dans l'administration des principales langues parlées ou comprises par les habitants – instauration d'un système éducatif rationnel et fonctionnel », un article plus tard résumé et rebaptisé « Langues et enseignement. Quelques mesures fondamentales à prendre sans lesquelles la « renaissance africaine » ne pourra se produire ».

Le député Samba Diouldé Thiam a publié dans le quotidien *WalFadjri* du jeudi 25 juin 2009 une importante contribution intitulée « Diversité linguistique et système scolaire : le temps d'agir est venu ».

Les travaux qui prouvent l'importance des langues africaines pour le développement de l'éducation et des sciences en Afrique sont légion, cependant, faute pour la majorité du personnel politique africain d'en prendre connaissance et d'agir en conséquence, la renaissance africaine demeure une illusion et le *développement* – ou *l'émergence* – des chimères.

Conclusion

Il est temps de revenir au concept de renaissance africaine et de ne plus accepter qu'il se fasse encore remplacer par celui de « développement », ou d'« émergence ». L'analyse de la vision qui sous-tend ces concepts est fort bien résumée dans les TDR du CODESRIA Day, 1^{er} février 2017: « Le développement renvoie plus ou moins aux mêmes situations que l'on évoque en parlant d'émergence. Les deux (émergence et développement) impliquent une transformation socio-économique, politique et culturelle, et servent de justification à des stratégies, à des politiques, et à certains types d'interventions dont les effets sur les populations sont loin d'être toujours en concordance avec les objectifs déclarés, encore moins avec les attentes. » Arrêtons donc de parler de développement de l'Afrique. Embrassons le concept de renaissance africaine, ainsi que la méthodologie détaillée par les auteur-e-s panafricanistes qui en ont fait la promotion depuis tant de décennies.

Note

1. Article préalablement publié dans les quotidiens : *Wal Fadjri*, du mardi 5 janvier 2010 ; et *Le Matin*, du mardi 5 janvier 2010, n° 3862, p. 7.
Le concept d'émergence a quelque peu éclipsé celui de « renaissance africaine ». Article relu et réécrit pour les 44 ans du CODESRIA (conférence du 1^{er} février 2017).

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Africa and Industrialisation: What Role for the Research Community?

Introduction

Industrialisation is on the agenda of many African countries. Industrialisation has been defined as ‘the rise of the manufacturing sector’, a means for achieving structural economic change and development which results from the higher productivity growth and per capita incomes that it generates (Naudé, Szirmai and Lavopa 2013:3). In the last few years, it appears that there is more seriousness in terms of implementation of that agenda than ever before. A major reason could be the realisation of the vulnerability associated with overdependence on production and export of commodities. This was particularly so in the wake of the global and financial crisis of 2007–2009 which, in the case of commodity producing countries, led to a significant decline in output, export revenues and employment (Moyo 2016:36–37). Indicators such as Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) share in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Competitive Industrial Performance (CIP) index, among others, show that Africa’s performance on industrialisation has been poor as compared to the rest of the world, according to the United Nations Development Organization (UNIDO 2016) and the World Bank (2017). That is despite the continent’s rich endowment in natural resources such as oil, minerals and land.

Renewed interest in industrialisation

At continental level, the growing importance of the industrialisation agenda seems evident in long-term visions and strategies such as the African Union Commission’s (AUC) Agenda 2063 and the Mining Vision, and also in international development frameworks such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under Agenda 2030. The AUC is also implementing the Accelerated Industrialisation Development for Africa (AIDA). Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have also developed

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frameworks for industrialisation. For example, in 2015, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) approved the SADC Industrialization Framework and Roadmap. The region is currently developing an Action Plan for the implementation of that Roadmap. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has developed a Common Industrial Policy (WACIP 2015–2020). At their meeting in April 2015, leaders of the region agreed on four regional priority sectors, namely, agro-industry and agribusiness, pharmaceutical industry, construction industry and automotive and machinery industries. In its Industrialization Strategy 2012–2032, the East African Community (EAC), has identified as priority, six strategic sectors have been identified for priority development and these are the iron-ore and other mineral processing, fertilisers and agrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, petro-chemicals and gas processing, agro-processing and energy and bio-fuels (TradeMark Southern Africa 2017). The Board of the African Development Bank recently approved the Bank’s Industrialisation Strategy for Africa 2016–2025 (African Development Bank 2017). All these are indicators that show some seriousness in embarking on industrialisation. But clearly, the poor performance in terms of Africa’s Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) relative to other regions in the world, demonstrates that much more has to be accomplished. As most of the ongoing initiatives are fairly recent, there is room for the research community to make a significant contribution in terms of imagining, conceptualising and shaping the policy and strategic direction for a new industrialisation approach for the African continent.

Critical issues for research

Research on Africa’s industrialisation could focus on a number of issues. Firstly, because there is much concern about the failure of past efforts, a number of scholars now speak of ‘new industrialisation’, a term that emphasises that this current wave of industrialisation has to be ideologically, technologically and qualitatively different from past experiments. The history of industrialisation in Africa conjures up memories of transnational capitalist exploitation. These corporations were part of the colonial machinery and became an instrument for the exploitation of Africa’s resources for the benefit of what Walter Rodney and others referred to as the ‘centre’ – the capitalist economies of the North. Even after achievement of political independence, MNCs were associated with payment of low wages and repatriation of most profits to an extent that benefits to local economies were very limited. Amin strongly argues against what he refers to as ‘accumulation by dispossession’ which was and continues to exploit Africa’s natural resources and people. He observes that:

Accumulation by dispossession continues in front of our eyes. In the late modern capitalism of the contemporary oligopolies. In the centres, monopoly rents – the beneficiaries of which are the oligopolistic plutocracies – are synonymous with the dispossession of the entire productive basis of society. In the peripheries, this pauperizing dispossession manifests itself in the expropriation of the peasantry and the plundering of natural resources of the regions in question. These practices constitute essential pillars for the expansion of the late capitalism of the oligopolies (Amin as quoted in Moyo (2016:40)).

A number of research issues can be considered. Firstly, as a resource-rich continent, it almost seems sensible to adopt a resource-based industrialisation approach. Yet critics argue that it is too expensive and would not be feasible for Africa particularly because of the limited technological and skills base. Yet it is also possible to start off with low-cost technology light manufacturing, which a number of countries are already engaged in. In that case, processing may be viable in some lines of production, for example agro-processing, food and beverages, wood and furniture, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, all of which utilise local resources. So research could focus on identifying sectoral priorities that could constitute the basis for industrialisation.

Secondly, given the deficit that faces many countries in regard to technology and the resources required, there appears to be a new wave of mobilising Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) whereby a number of countries have embarked on a drive to attract Chinese and other foreign investors to support them in their efforts. For example, Morocco is reported to have signed an agreement with the Haite Group from China where the company will launch an industrial park near Tangiers. Two hundred Chinese companies are expected to participate and they will create tens of thousands of jobs. Over the next ten years, investments of ten billion US dollars (Channel News Asia 2017) are planned. Tanzania is also reported to have invited Chinese and Singaporean clothing firms. An industrial park is under construction as well as a megaport to facilitate trade with the two countries. The Ethiopian government, under its Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) I and II, has involved Chinese companies in building rail and road infrastructure and also in supporting its agro-based industrialisation, with a focus on the leather and shoe manufacturing industries. South Africa is cited as one of the few African countries to have 'successfully' experimented with participating in Global Value Chains (GVCs). Its auto assembly and auto components manufacturing has seen multinational companies like

Mercedes Benz, Toyota, Hyundai, Ford, Chrysler, to name a few, locate in South Africa and produce for the domestic as well as export market in and out of Africa, with claims that thousands of jobs have been created.

Research has to interrogate the question as to whether or not the FDI-route is the way for Africa to industrialize and if not, what are the feasible options? What lessons could be drawn from all these and other experiences regarding the role of FDI in the new industrialisation? Is it really possible for African countries to enter into win-win agreements in the context of South-South, North-South cooperation, (including MNCs) in their pursuit of GVCs? Who drives the industrialisation agenda? For whose benefit? What is or what should be the role of the state? How do citizens participate? On what terms? What kind of agreements or deals should African governments enter into in order to avoid the exploitation of the past? The academic and research community could contribute towards development of the practical modalities and approaches that can result in 'win-win' partnerships.

Thirdly, issues of inclusivity, equity and economic empowerment are pertinent in this debate. What kind of industrialisation framework will lead to not just structural transformation of African economies but political, economic and social transformation? What approach ensures inclusive and equitable development? How can industrialisation be used as a tool to empower the rural poor, peasant farmers, women, the youth, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and the informal economy where small-scale manufacturing is taking place? Is the African Development Bank's agro-allied industrialisation strategy likely to transform rural economies and to benefit women and the youth?

Finally, how does Africa achieve a skills revolution in the field of Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics (STEM) and in developing the entrepreneurial capacity that is so fundamental to the vision for industrialisation?

Conclusion

The re-emergence of industrialisation as a development priority in Africa is a phenomenon that has become a reality as evidence shows. The research community can play a very important role in contributing to the discourse on what kind of industrialisation framework, how to engage FDI, how to ensure that industrialisation is transformative and inclusive politically, economically and socially.

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The Cheetah Generation: The Birth of the Captains of Industry in Africa?

Introduction

The debates about African entrepreneurs is not new. There have been scholarly efforts in the past to describe and analyse African entrepreneurs. But “much of what has been written about African entrepreneurship views it unfavourably” (Elkan 1988:172). At some point, we got used to the narrative that the reason why Africa has failed to make progress in terms of social and economic development is precisely because the continent lacked a class of entrepreneurs who can play a critical role in driving this process. It was suggested that what emerged in post-colonial Africa was a class of ‘bureaucratic bourgeoisie’ that relied mainly on access to state power, resources and influence to support their private business undertakings (see Arrighi and Saul 1968). While there are questions about whether the people who own food and clothing business ventures on the streets of African towns and cities should be recognised as entrepreneurs or as survivalists, there seem to be a change in the views about entrepreneurship in Africa today. The more recent stories about African entrepreneurs assert that there is a new generation of Africans (The Cheetah Generation) which is doing things differently. In this piece, I would like to reflect on this group of Africans, focusing on whether it is at all different from African entrepreneurs we have seen in the past.

The Cheetah Generation in Africa Rising Narrative

If there is a good thing one can cite from the 2008/09 financial crisis, it is that Africa began to attract the attention of global media, not for the usual stories of starvation, diseases, civil wars, bad governance and despair. In the aftermath of the 2008/09 financial and economic crisis the world woke up to the ‘surprising’ fact that most African economies rebound quickly from the

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crisis, the opposite of what many experts were predicting – a prolonged recession. This caught many ‘conventional’ analysts by surprise, and since then, there have been many narratives offered to explain this. One of the narratives that have become popular in global media houses is the ‘Africa Rising Narrative (ARN)’. The Economist magazine’s story in 2011 that seven of the ten fastest growing economies in the world were in Africa sparked some kind of media hype which popularised ARN. The ARN, for a change, confidently affirms an Africa that is resolutely rising from the ruins of civil wars, poverty, hopelessness, diseases and the ravage of the ‘big men’. While the ARN identifies several factors to have played an important role in this turn of events, it strongly associates the positive momentum to the emergence of a new generation of African entrepreneurs – the ‘Cheetah Generation’. This new generation of African entrepreneurs is said to be an independent class not relying on privileged access to state power and resources (Rotberg 2013); they are ‘making it’ on their own, as it were. There is the view that this generation is different from what we have seen before.

Although in the past the debate was about whether African entrepreneurs existed or not, the current discourse, riding on the Africa Rising hype, has brushed aside doubts about their existence. The debates have focused more on trying to describe and understand the key features of what is sometimes referred to as the ‘new generation of African entrepreneurs’ (McDade and Spring 2005) or more generally, the ‘Cheetah Generation’ (Ayitteh 2005). For example, an online Forbes publication, which profiles young African entrepreneurs, states that,

There has never been a more inspired generation of young Africans. These builders, innovators and risk takers are fervent in their resolve to transform the continent. They are solving critical socio-economic problems, exporting African culture to the world, creating job opportunities for Africans, re-telling Africa’s stories, and writing the future (Nsehe 2014).

The Kenyan Minister of Industrialisation and Enterprise Development, Adam Mohammed, talks about a ‘mind-set’ shift among young Africans who are now increasingly thinking not as prospective employees but as employers (Obonyo 2016:17). Creation of jobs, in the form of self-employment, but also jobs for others in the context where unemployment among the youth in Africa is high is seen as one of the greatest potentials that entrepreneurship offers: ‘Today, entrepreneurship is seen as one of the most sustainable job generation in Africa’ argues Obonyo (ibid 16).

But at this stage, we know very little about this group of Africans, whether it is new and different from the African entrepreneur we have encountered in the past, its size, how this group sees itself in relation to the rest of society and what motivates members of this group. In other words, there is need for a sociology of African entrepreneurs, to understand, not only their role in society, but their potential as an instrument for social, economic and political change on the continent. Just how much hope should Africa place on this group and why now?

Although there have been a number of studies done in the last decade about African entrepreneurs (Brixiova et al. 2013; Baumol 1968 Gelb et al. 2009 Ncube 2005), this area of study remains under-theorised with scarce scholarly literature that provides deep insights into

what constitutes this group, the different sub-groups, and how they operate in the African socioeconomic and political milieu. Most of the studies which have been conducted so far have focused on the role they (can) play in promoting job creation, sustainable and inclusive growth and development in Africa, with less attention given to understanding the social context which shapes what they do and who they are. If the claim is that this class of entrepreneurs is different from the past generations (for sure, Africa has not lacked entrepreneurs in the past), we then need to know what makes this group different.

Further, there is a growing need to study not just the personal traits of entrepreneurs, but also the broader context that shapes their activities and their business orientation. In this regard, there is still a huge gap in the scholarship, especially on the African entrepreneurs as a distinct group shaped by the specific social, political, economic, cultural and religious context on the continent. Given the different context in which the African entrepreneur operates, we should not expect him or her to behave in the same way as a Brazilian, Russian, Japanese or European entrepreneur. As Reivera-Santos and others have observed, 'characteristics of the environment are likely to affect not only the possible emergence of social enterprises, but also many of the characteristics of these ventures' (Rivera-Santos et al. 2015:73). Adrich and Martinez (2007:294) make a similar observation arguing that 'understanding entrepreneurial success requires that we consider the societal context in which entrepreneurs develop their efforts'.

To develop a richer understanding of entrepreneurs, the 'individual, the organisation and the development context need to be studied' (Lighthelm 2010:133). In this sense, entrepreneurship has to be seen as a product of the broader social, political, economic and cultural environment. It is not merely an economic phenomenon to which individuals or group actors are responding; entrepreneurs are

responding to all the different stimuli in the environment where they live. From my recent work among agro-processing enterprises in South Africa and Zambia, it has become apparent that the broader context has an immense impact on shaping the entrepreneur.

In this regard, the African entrepreneurship scholarship urgently needs a reorientation of the research approach to understand this allegedly nascent class of captains of industry in Africa. The resurgence of interest in African entrepreneurs is obviously highlighting the need to develop a 'sociology of African entrepreneurs', which locates this group of Africans in the broader African society. For instance, we have to ask, who is an African entrepreneur? How is he/she different from a European, Asian or American entrepreneur? What characteristics does the African entrepreneur have in common with entrepreneurs from other parts of the world? How does the African entrepreneur relate to African society broadly? What shapes the African entrepreneurs' world view? How does the African society perceive and relate to the African entrepreneur? These are important questions which need to be explored systematically in order to properly understand the African entrepreneurs and what sets them apart from the rest.

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Urban Studies: A View from the Continent's Southern Tip

This is an important moment to engage in urban debate and to reflect on urban studies in Southern Africa and across the continent. African cities are deeply divided, hotbeds of discontent and protest, as well as sites of dynamism and change, contexts in which socio-economic and political inequalities reproduce and shift. For universities, the contemporary moment is fraught and creative, a context of dissent and mobilisation one in which we are challenged, in South African in particular, to become more accessible and democratic, to decolonise. This mix of mobilisation grounds and inspires thinking on knowledge production in urban studies and the substantive readings of cities that we produce (Parnell and Oldfield 2014).

In this short piece, I share some of the contention and excitement that infuses this field and its position in African and global southern debate. Kate Derickson's (2015) thinking is a useful starting point. She delineates the ways we approach cities as 'Urbanisation 1' and 'Urbanisation 2' (borrowing from Chakrabarty's concept of History 1 and History 2). Urbanisation 1 is exemplified by the planetary urbanisation thesis that posits the complete urbanisation of society, a difficult argument to deploy in African contexts. In contrast, Urbanisation 2 research is characterised by diverse interventions, united by a political and epistemological strategy to refuse Eurocentrism and to 'provincialise' urban theory (Derickson:648). In articulating this distinction, her approach makes clear differences in intellectual, political and geographical genealogies that shape these approaches to urban studies. In this schema, African urban studies fits readily into Urbanisation 2, contexts in which many urban stories demand attention and where urban life cannot be reduced to a singular 'urban story' or theory.

Necessarily then, in African urban contexts our work must be diverse, messy even, reflecting modes of

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urbanisation, which are substantively complex and contested. Our theories and positions, and our research strategies and navigations, need to embrace and interrogate the complex ways in which practice, policy, and politics interplay. These contexts shape what and how we know, the methods of our research, as well as with whom we know, the publics and debates which inspire and demand research. Can we embrace this messiness? Can we navigate pathways through it?

These questions and challenges arose in the Southern African City Studies Network conference agenda, a biennial opportunity to share urban studies research, hosted in March 2016 at the Urban Futures Centre at the Durban University of Technology in South Africa. The conference opened with a keynote panel on urban theory and the place and contribution of African scholarship in urban studies. Three panellists kicked off the discussion. The first, Bill Freund, a leading scholar on African cities situated his commentary in the complexities and messiness of African urbanism, pithily suggesting that 'every African city is a *gemors*, a complex mess' (2016). Our need as a field, therefore, is theory and practice that reflects this reality, engages it, unravels and untangles it. Molemo Moiloa, an artist and architect and the second panellist, shared her work on poetics and aesthetics in African public art, practices that cut against the grain of normal languages and assertions on African cities as dysfunctional developmental nightmare. She spoke to the politics of knowledge production and its circulations, describing her frustrations with asserting arguments about African cities and public art in global forums as 'throwing stones at bullet-proof, supposedly transparent-glass cases' (2016). And, Caroline

Wanjiku Kihato, the third panellist and a scholar of urbanism and migration, challenged us conceptually. She suggested that the urban theory produced in our region represents 'models and spare parts scavenged from elsewhere' (2016), found in and referenced from cities elsewhere. She asked: Can we break out of these habitual taken-for-granted ways of knowing that rely on ideas from afar? In asking this question, she challenges us to develop a sensibility that is curious, a form of questioning that seeks new ways to see, new partnerships to know and work together that brings new voices into our urban African conversations. In doing this work, she suggested, our goal should be an epistemological reorientation, a frightening but also freeing objective. This bold agenda is essential I think to grapple with the complexity, contention and creativity found in African cities.

This epistemological and political challenge reflects a drive to open up urban studies to the worlds that inspire and shape our cities, aligning with Derickson's framing of Urbanisation 2. Both assert a critique, and a need to build theory as a motivation and anchor for knowing and engaging our cities. This is the sensibility that I think, in large part, shapes urban studies research in our region. We have a commitment to a scholarly agenda that embraces innovation and experimentation, through, for instance, diverse forms of writing and research practice. Our research partnerships and collaborations bring universities into conversation with the state, and with civil society, and community organisations, with, for instance art projects and theatre producers, with artists and architects, and with colleagues elsewhere on the continent and across the globe. Our work spans micro-scale ways of reading cities and requires large-scale data-driven approaches, both essential to engage the realities of the rapid growth of African cities (see, for instance, Parnell and Pieterse 2014; Parnell and Oldfield 2014).

This mix of questions, scales, imperatives and collaborations, stretches and challenges our expertise and capacities, as well as our theories and our methods. It also inspires us to work boldly, drawing on multiple methods, from large-scale data and its modelling and trends, to the intimacies of ethnography, bringing together a mix of new approaches, with the rigour of more established social scientific approaches. This requires a commitment to and capacity to listen, to democratise our research and scholarship, to collaborate and embrace multiple voices, and expertise in our cities. This is a challenge to mark our location, to challenge what Roy describes as urban theory's 'disembodied voice and unmarked location' (2015:6). Inspired by Adrienne Rich, she suggests that: 'To speak is to speak from a place on the map, which, is also a place in history ... [and] to embody urban theory, to mark its location, to trace its biography, is a crucial step in acknowledging the project of power that is academic knowledge' (Roy 2015:6).

In 'marking our location' and in 'tracing its place in history', the projects of urban studies on the African continent are plural, shaped by multiple thematics and analytical objects, spanning questions of development and infrastructure in cities, art and politics, access to essential services, as well as justice and democracy. This is a collective analytical and political, one that is substantive and urgent. It is also an opportunity to build richer more inclusive conversations that embrace theory and practice, and collaborative work and writing, conversations that can be deepened and enriched in networks and conversations that engage in and across the continent.

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L'Afrique et son potentiel rural mondial

Le continent africain est en train de se diriger au pas de course vers la gestion de ses villes où cinquante pour cent de sa population devraient habiter en 2035. Cet engouement pour les villes reflète notre difficulté à planifier notre gestion d'une population qui continue de s'accroître et qui augmentera de 1,3 milliards de personnes. Cette relation entre nos villes et nos villages ne s'est pas inscrite dans une économie circulaire, laquelle aurait pu non seulement continuer à développer des pôles multiples dans nos pays respectifs, mais aussi aider à imaginer des modes de développements au-delà des frontières respectives.

L'économie circulaire induit la notion de récupération et de régénération. C'est un système économique d'échange et de production visant à optimiser l'utilisation des ressources et réduire notre impact sur l'environnement.

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Nous nous devons de repenser notre espace rural pour créer des mécanismes qui transforment des résidus en intrants pour une autre finalité. Nos zones rurales continuent d'abriter cinquante pour cent de nos citoyens à travers nos pays. Nous ne pouvons imaginer un futur urbain sans intégrer des solutions qui transforment cet exode rural en un flux économique qui ne stagne pas en zone urbaine. L'objectif en lui-même n'est pas de contraindre le mouvement, il est plutôt de maintenir un équilibre entre les villes et les villages pour que le choix des individus ne se limite plus à cette quête d'un eldorado citadin qui n'existe

plus. Et n'a peut-être jamais existé puisqu'il n'est pas fait pour s'inscrire dans la durée.

Nous savons que la croissance de la population mondiale, plus particulièrement dans les villes, est un défi sans précédent. Les 9 milliards d'habitants de la planète en 2050 requièrent un accroissement de la production agricole de 70 pour cent qui devra venir de l'Afrique et des autres pays dits pauvres. Sans une révolution des mentalités qui engendre un meilleur investissement dans l'agriculture africaine, il n'y aura pas de sécurité alimentaire mondiale.

Pour changer notre perception de ce monde que nous devons réinventer, nous nous devons de mettre en place des fondamentaux empruntés à l'idée d'une économie circulaire. Dans ce

modèle, nous intégrons les différentes composantes de l'économie pour que chaque étape tienne compte de nos compétences respectives le long de la chaîne de valeur de nos produits, issus de nos zones rurales. Ainsi, nous nous efforcerons de lier notre quête pour la transformation socio-économique de notre continent aux besoins réels de nos populations, qui ne devront pas juste faire le chemin en sens unique dans l'espoir de trouver une aubaine pour subvenir à leurs besoins ou de vivre, sans pouvoir contribuer au grand chantier de transformation structurelle de nos économies.

Créer une organisation circulaire pour engendrer une plus grande contribution de tous est un défi auquel nous devons apporter des réponses. Si nous voulons rester compétitifs dans la transformation de nos pays, la solution peut venir de l'industrialisation et la création d'emploi, afin de trouver un juste équilibre entre les villes et les campagnes. Trier et traiter les déchets engendrés dans les villes, traiter l'eau usée peut servir de matière première pour de l'engrais. Nous ne pourrions pas résoudre nos problèmes en ne créant pas de mécanismes permettant aux productions agricoles de nos campagnes de fournir des revenus continus et non cycliques. Ainsi, avoir de nouvelles exigences pour répondre aux besoins des individus implique une transformation économique fondée sur une chaîne de valeur inclusive.

Il est possible d'imaginer que la production de cacao de la Côte d'Ivoire et du Ghana se base sur le modèle d'une économie circulaire. Tout le long de la chaîne de valeur de cette fève, nous développerons des mécanismes pour récolter, créer de la valeur ajoutée, recycler et développer les compétences nécessaires pour créer des emplois sur toute la longueur de sa chaîne de valeur en réduisant les déchets tout au long du cycle de vie du produit. La valeur ajoutée et les emplois se trouvent dans le stockage, la vente au détail de chocolat, la production et l'emballage ainsi que la logistique mais pas dans l'exportation pour un continent qui produit 73 pour cent de la production mondiale en zone rurale. Repenser notre mode de fonctionnement et de vie sans intégrer une solution environnementale met à mal la pérennisation de toute transformation

structurelle. La continuité implique la conception de cycles ne s'arrêtant pas brusquement avec le départ des fèves, mais intégrant emplois et opportunités dans une chaîne de valeurs qui n'éjecte pas l'agriculteur une fois sa production vendue.

Le vrai potentiel rural consiste à coupler notre croissance démographique avec des emplois pour les 15 millions de jeunes Africains qui arrivent sur le marché du travail chaque année. Notre promesse de progrès et de changement s'est heurtée à une myopie accentuée par les cours des matières premières. Nous sommes embarqués sur une ligne continue vers l'exportation de nos ressources minières et agricoles sans pour autant mettre un accent particulier sur le pilier qui permettrait de conserver une indépendance alimentaire. Nos campagnes regorgent de millions de petits agriculteurs qui survivent. Les riches terres africaines continuent de produire à la sueur du front des agriculteurs dans un monde qui est passé de la simple mécanique à une croissance technologique exponentielle. La houe devrait être dans nos musées et plus dans nos champs.

Repenser l'intégration de nos zones rurales dans un mode de production circulaire est possible. Aucune alternative n'est viable, car nous concentrons nos ressources dans nos villes. Nous avons le devoir pour nos générations et celles à venir de cesser de faire partie du problème. Une manière de le gérer est de remédier au manque d'investissement dans l'agriculture sur un continent dominé par le secteur informel, ce qui pourrait limiter la migration sans option réelle vers les villes. Cependant, nos politiques ne se sont pas adaptées pour créer des emplois le long de la chaîne de valeur de nos produits nationaux ou régionaux. Ainsi, nous nous sommes cantonnés dans des modèles qui ne donnent pas les moyens financiers aux communautés de sortir de cet engouement pour les villes. La vision du mieux-être et des possibilités accentue l'échec à cause de l'incapacité à gérer un exode ou une démographie galopante concentrée autour de villes inadaptées aux besoins de populations. Leurs compétences inexploitées dans l'agriculture ne peuvent se traduire en métiers potentiels dans nos villes.

Si nous voulons changer cette dynamique pour la transformation de

l'Afrique, nous nous devons de mettre en place des mécanismes pour extraire les iniquités de notre système actuel. Ce clivage sans lendemain entre les pôles complémentaires que sont nos villes et nos villages a favorisé un rejet de la valorisation des ressources mêmes qui ont permis de construire nos villes. Ainsi, nous avons traduit nos politiques dans les termes d'un mouvement marchand, comme ces fèves, fruits, ou légumes qui partent à l'exportation, sans pour autant redistribuer la valeur ajoutée, quasi inexistante en zone rurale. Cet exode humain et financier empêche la majorité d'imaginer ce que nos villes deviendront sans nos villages.

Nous avons investi massivement dans la santé et l'éducation, avec des résultats qui donnent à réfléchir. Que serait devenue l'Afrique rurale et urbaine si nous avions favorisé des investissements massifs pour l'industrialisation de l'Afrique dans une vision régionale, puis continentale ? Les infrastructures auraient suivi cette marche effrénée vers le progrès humain. Il n'est pas trop tard, car nous pouvons insérer notre vision africaine de ce que l'Afrique sera dans le concert harmonieux de ses populations, dans un monde qui a besoin d'une Afrique forte qui utilise ses propres ressources pour bâtir son présent. Nous ne pouvons y arriver sans transformer notre agriculture en permettant à une agricultrice de ne plus utiliser ses mains ou la houe pour atteler la terre quand le processus de mécanisation n'est plus une innovation. Se nourrir convenablement est un investissement de base que nous avons sacrifié aux importations sans résoudre les problèmes de chômage massif qui tuent notre développement. L'Afrique ne peut faillir à la nécessité d'une autosuffisance alimentaire.

L'Afrique n'a pas encore pleinement exploité son potentiel rural. Le continent ne peut plus se résumer en contrastes entre ses villes et ses villages, sa jeunesse et ses vieillards, car nous avons tous une partition à jouer dans cette harmonie. Cependant, il se peut que nous soyons en constante divergence au vu de notre incapacité à générer un dialogue intergénérationnel sur la nécessité de coexister dans un monde qui nous appartient. Il est temps, grand temps de mettre notre énergie au service de notre continent.

African Auxiliaries, Cultural Translation and Vernacularising Missionary Medicine in Colonial North-western Zambia

Most European medical missionaries on the colonial periphery in the twentieth century were convinced that training Africans in scientific medicine was an effective way of transforming them into useful allies in the crusade to annihilate local medical belief systems and knowledge. Missionaries held that once trained in biomedicine with its microbial understandings of disease, African auxiliaries would no less appreciate the efficacy of the Christian version of modern medicine than assist them to disseminate beyond mission enclaves scientific comprehension of disease and medicine. From this perspective, Christian missionaries hoped that local medical auxiliaries would play a pivotal part in converting fellow Africans to microbial explanations of disease and thus in emasculating ‘pagan’ beliefs around disease, medicine and death, which missionaries perceived as a major obstacle to winning Africans souls for Christ.

To transform auxiliaries into effective agents of cultural destruction, British missionaries who had opened a hospital at Kalene Hill in present-day north-western Zambia as early as 1906 began training Africans in modern medicine in 1923, with fiscal support from the colonial state. Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML) missionaries and colonial officials were convinced that auxiliaries trained in allopathic medicine would internalise bacteriological theories of disease causation. As a result, they would come to appreciate the ‘superiority’, ‘rationality’ and ‘objectivity’ of the new medicine. The medical training programme for auxiliaries at Kalene was, therefore, designed to demonstrate to them the power of modern medicine. This programme was intended to church out graduates who were well-steeped in biomedical knowledge without, however, enjoying the medical authority of their employers. CMML

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evangelists hoped that such graduates would come to perceive affliction as a function of microbial invasion of the human body rather than the consequence of disruptions in social relations, as most African societies believed. As missionaries’ allies, auxiliaries were to assist their European masters to persuade patients who sought medicine at mission-controlled hospitals that disease was a function of bacteriological invasion and could thus best be treated in isolation from social relationships within which most Africans located human affliction or managed it.

Clearly, then, European healers at Kalene Hill saw the African auxiliary as indispensable to their crusade to decontextualise African illness from its social space, to undermine local medical knowledge and praxis and to draw Africans to Christianity. In this discourse, therefore, African medical workers at Kalene Hill Hospital were to be active agents of cultural annihilation. In that capacity, they would contribute to the Christian evangelical efforts to obliterate the existing medical practices and beliefs and to supplant them with microbial paradigms of disease and healing.

The notion that indigenous medical employees would serve as agents of cultural suppression in Africa was premised on the assumption that they could practise and, more crucially, translate the new system of healing in ways that conformed and meshed with their employers’ expectations. Yet how auxiliaries were to accomplish this feat was more assumed than proved. At Kalene Hill and elsewhere in imperial Africa, European missionaries themselves lacked a ready-made language

through which their local workers could translate modern medicine. Indeed, as demonstrated at length elsewhere, Lunda-speaking auxiliaries employed at Kalene Hill Hospital between 1923 and 1964 came to draw heavily on local, as opposed to scientific medical terms, to translate medical concepts and terms associated with mission medicine.

Strong evidence suggests that to express biomedical concepts in ways that were meaningful to patients, African auxiliaries at Kalene Hill Hospital appropriated pre-existing secular and ritual terms, idioms and grammar through which ‘traditional’ healers in north-western Zambia practised their own medicine and their patients understood or used it. Two examples will suffice. From the secular and sacred vocabulary through which ‘traditional’ medicine was practised, local auxiliaries appropriated the vernacular terms as *yitumbu* (pl. *nyitumbu*) and *kusolola* to gloss the Western ‘medicine’ and ‘diagnosis’, respectively. The expression of ‘medicine’, ‘diagnosis’ and related terms through these local concepts certainly assisted missionaries to construct a communicative bridge across which they interacted with their African interlocutors. However, the uses and meanings Africans read into *yitumbu*, *kusolola* and other local medical concepts were far from identical to those that CMML evangelists associated with ‘medicine’ and ‘diagnosis’. Thus, whereas missionaries perceived ‘medicine’ as the science of treating or preventing illness through the use of drugs, surgery or diet, *yitumbu* was devoid of the scientific connotations missionaries invested in their medicine. *Yitumbu*, to the contrary, consisted of substances, incantations and any ritualised activity believed to have power (*ngovu*) capable of neutralising physical and spiritual affliction from the patient (*muyeji*).

If the term *yitumbu* carried deeper practical and symbolic meanings than its English counterpart, so did the term *kusolola* which auxiliaries borrowed from local sacred medical vocabulary to translate the English 'diagnosis'. To medical missionaries, 'diagnosis' was no less than an art of tracking down pathogens located in the human body by using such modern technologies as the microscope. But *kusolola* connoted more than identifying disease-causing organisms. Derived from the root 'solola' or 'make visible', *kusolola* was a process of unearthing hidden social tensions, grudges and ill-feelings in which the Lunda and other Africans located the causes of disease (*musongo*, pl. *nyisongu*) and other forms of human suffering.

Though inadequate, these examples of vernacular translations serve to show that in crafting the language through which missionaries plied their trade in Africa, local auxiliaries relied on existing medical terms to translate modern medicine. This had far-reaching

implications. For one thing, auxiliaries' imaginative work of cultural translation infused into Christian medicine the same meanings (and uses) Africans perceived in their own medicine that missionaries sought to suppress. Consequently, African patients came to understand Christian therapeutics not as a superior system of healing but a variation of local healing systems. Thus, through translating mission-based medicine using indigenous terms and concepts, auxiliaries wittingly or unwittingly subverted their employers' dream to wean Africans from pre-existing medical knowledge and praxis. In spite of their training in biomedicine, medical auxiliaries, therefore, refused to be simple agents of cultural suppression.

Notes

1. See Harriet Bell, "Midwifery Training and Female Circumcision in the Inter-War Egyptian Sudan," *Journal of African History* 39 (1998), pp. 293-312; Walima T. Kalusa, "Medical Training, African Auxiliaries, and

Social Healing in Colonial Mwinilunga, Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), 1945-1964," in Ryan Johnson and Amna Khalis (eds.), *Public Health in the British Empire: Intermediaries, Subordinates, and the Practice of Public Health* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 154-170.

2. Walima T. Kalusa, "Language, Medical Auxiliaries, and the Re-interpretation of Missionary Medicine in Colonial Mwinilunga, Zambia, 1922-1951," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 1, 1 (2007), pp. 57-78. For contrary views, see Johannes Fabian, "Mission and the Colonization of African Languages: Developments in the former Belgian Congo," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 17, 2 (1983), pp. 165-187.
3. For fascinating studies on this topic, see Victor Turner, "Lunda Medicine and Treatment," *The Occasional Papers of the Livingstone-Rhodes Museum* 1-16 (1974), pp. 652-719; *Drums of Affliction: A Study of the Religious Process of the Ndembu of Zambia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) and *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 19).

La sociologie africaine : un paradigme de rêve

Introduction

Jusqu'à une période récente, l'Afrique a été considérée comme un continent sans paradigme. Ce qui est un problème phare pour l'Afrique dans la mesure où l'histoire de la sociologie africaine est en rapport avec l'histoire coloniale. L'Afrique, terre d'apparition de l'homme et des premières civilisations étatiques attestées, est mal connue ; d'où l'impérieuse nécessité d'une bonne utilisation des ressources historiques (documents écrits, tradition orale, archéologie, linguistique, anthropologie).

À mon avis, nous sommes à une époque de changement de paradigme : les paradigmes, ce sont les principes des principes, les quelques notions maîtresses, qui contrôlent les esprits, qui commandent les théories, sans qu'on en soit conscient nous-mêmes.

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Les sciences classiques furent partagées entre les deux obsessions, celle de l'unité et celle de la variété, chacune correspondant à un certain type d'esprit, et du reste leur antagonisme fut productif en permettant de développer en même temps la diversification et l'unification du savoir, sans toutefois pouvoir aboutir à la conception de l'unitas multiplex.

Ces citations que j'ai tirées d'un article publié par Mbombog Mbog Bassong, rendant hommage au penseur de la complexité Edgar Morin et intitulé « Paradigme, valeur et communication » m'ont poussé à donner mon opinion

sur le rétablissement d'un paradigme typiquement africain pour correspondre à une sociologie typiquement africaine.

Depuis le temps qu'existe la sociologie, particulièrement en Occident, sa volonté de répandre cette discipline à travers le monde devrait être abordée dans les règles de l'art et sans arbitraire. Il est grand temps que nos chercheurs, nos penseurs décident de rompre avec tous les paradigmes et les démarches scientifiques qu'utilisent les Occidentaux, et tentent d'éviter de faire des recherches mendiantes, c'est-à-dire pour plaire à ces derniers. On ne peut pas accepter que nous puissions faire traîner davantage la naissance d'un enfant qui devrait voir le jour depuis très longtemps. Est-ce que la domination des Occidentaux qui existait dans le temps passé règne jusqu'à présent, ou bien avons-nous peur de nous faire bloquer sur le plan financier ou publicitaire ?

L'Africain néglige toujours ses capacités et son savoir-faire pour adopter le génie européen, on dirait que la bataille de la couleur de la peau n'est pas encore achevée.

Nous ne pouvons pas être totalement parfaits, donc on a toujours besoin de secouristes pour nous épauler, ainsi va la vie. Cependant, si on se laisse dominer par autrui, c'est parce qu'on doute de nos capacités, de nos savoir-faire. Dans une équipe de football, on a toujours des remplaçants pour remplacer ceux qui sont au bout de l'effort ; faisons donc de même pour nos maisons éditoriales ou associations, pour lutter contre la dévalorisation. Comme disait Mbombog Mbog Bassong dans son projet de sociologie africaine : « Cela peut en chagriner beaucoup de reconnaître que s'il existe des sociologues, la sociologie n'existe pas encore. Mais d'autres, dont moi-même, puisent de l'ardeur à l'idée que la sociologie doit naître. »

Mais la question que nous devons nous poser est la suivante : quelle est la stratégie que nous devons adopter pour faire naître une bonne fois cette sociologie africaine tant attendue depuis des siècles ? Le chemin est très long et piquant, avec ses pièges mis en œuvre par autrui. Notre patience devient une arme au profit de l'adversaire et qu'il utilisera pour nous détourner à nouveau du bon chemin. Tout ce dont nous avons besoin pour construire notre AFRIQUE FUTURE est avec nous, donc il ne reste que l'engagement et la détermination. Les prédécesseurs ont entamé le combat et il ne manque qu'une finalisation pour qu'on devienne autonome dans nos démarches scientifiques. Je ne peux comprendre une telle lenteur, car en Afrique nous avons de grands penseurs de renommée internationale et jusqu'ici on a du mal à régler ce problème, est-ce que ce n'est pas de l'« HYPOCRISIE » ?

Est-ce qu'on forme des chercheurs pour qu'ils finissent par avoir tout simplement un diplôme et gagnent de l'argent à n'importe quel prix, ou plutôt pour rendre service à leur pays ?

Ce qu'il faut éviter ce sont les recherches commanditées et financées par les ONG de l'Occident qui veulent rendre la situation favorable pour se faire une place.

Norbert Elias, lorsqu'il s'est posé la question : qu'est-ce que la sociologie ?

démontrait comment la sociologie s'appuie sur le sens commun :

- LES SOCIOLOGUES s'appuient sur les concepts que les individus ont du monde dans lequel ils vivent.
- LES SOCIOLOGUES s'intéressent aux opinions que les individus (ou groupes) émettent sur eux-mêmes et sur la société et aussi aux raisons qu'ils donnent pour expliquer leur parcours social et la société.

La rupture avec l'objet est plus difficile que dans les sciences de la nature :

- Le chercheur qui observe un phénomène intervient avec sa culture, ce qu'il est, ce qui l'influence, ses désirs et ses caractéristiques sociales.
- Il peut être influencé par les financeurs des recherches.
- Il est influencé par l'air du temps et le fait que certaines théories sont plus ou moins dominantes à un moment donné.

Donc, quel intérêt de mener des enquêtes sur des faits et problèmes de société, puisqu'on peut en connaître le sens instantanément ?

Ceci révèle que dans une enquête, il faut toujours opter pour le chemin de la logique et ne pas se laisser influencer par les opinions communes. Le chercheur doit se démarquer du commun pour mieux distinguer et faire la part des choses. Ces bonnes raisons pour faire une bonne recherche peuvent être détournées par un contrat personnel. Je m'explique : un chercheur, après avoir reçu un sujet de recherche, peut, durant sa recherche, faire dévier les normes de la recherche pour ses propres ambitions. Il s'agit pour nous, chercheurs africains, de faire preuve de notre capacité d'arbitrer entre le vrai et le faux, car on ne peut pas condamner toute une population en impliquant les innocents, et ceci peut se traduire aussi au niveau des chercheurs. Lutter contre l'injustice qui règne au niveau de la manipulation de la recherche, c'est valoriser « un travail noble » (Durkheim).

Cette pensée de Durkheim mérite d'être soutenue avec honneur, mais le problème se trouve plutôt au niveau du choix de paradigme. Nous Africains, ce qui nous intéresse le plus, c'est de

trouver notre propre paradigme. Il est aussi important de noter un manque de soutien de la part de nos États. Cette discipline est vue comme « un poison dans un repas » par les gouvernements, car son sens vrai est de révéler toujours l'exacte vérité accompagnée de preuves palpables, après avoir emprunté la bonne démarche scientifique. Il est important de faire un parallèle entre l'histoire de la sociologie dite « africaine » et l'histoire (coloniale) proprement dite de l'Afrique. Nous remarquons ici une coïncidence entre ces deux événements qui ont une trame de passé étroitement reliée. Cette coïncidence devrait susciter des débats au sein de la population et des chercheurs. Elle a fait un jour l'objet d'appellations désobligeantes de la part de l'Occident. Ces derniers considéraient l'Afrique comme un continent sans espoir, c'est-à-dire un continent noir ! Le problème de l'existence d'un paradigme africain a des causes lointaines, ce phénomène de blocage se situe au cœur même de l'histoire coloniale. À vrai dire, le combat ne se focalisera pas sur la recherche de ce paradigme, mais plutôt sur le combat contre le système, installé par les Occidentaux, que nous utilisons pour étudier. Je me demande à quoi sert de trouver un paradigme or qu'il y a toujours un système établi par les colons. Voyez-vous ce paradoxe ? Il y aura toujours une opposition totale entre ces deux systèmes. La réponse peut être renvoyée aux pratiques évoquées plus haut du financement des recherches pour nous imposer de continuer à utiliser leurs systèmes. C'est aux maisons éditoriales de bloquer les recherches commanditées, pour favoriser ceux qui sont motivés par la bonne volonté. On ne peut pas dire que tous les Occidentaux et les ONG sont animés de mauvaise foi, certes il y en a qui travaillent avec loyauté. Il ne s'agit pas seulement des Occidentaux, l'Afrique aussi a sa part de responsabilité, c'est nous-mêmes qui sommes les dirigeants antiévolutionnistes, ce que j'appelle communément « les Européens noirs ». On sent une complexité du social et de l'économie, comme l'a si bien dit Mbombog Mbog Bassong :

Il est bon de rappeler que le système de l'équilibre général cher à l'économie mathématique est abandonné avec la montée en puissance de la complexité

dans les années 1970. Celle-ci a déjà fait le lit d'une longue hibernation de l'approche axiomatique, qui entrevoyait dans une mathématisation avancée de la réalité économique le ressort des vérités toutes faites. Ceux-là mêmes qui avaient fait de l'économie une théorie mathématique dans les années 1959, en commençant par Gérard Debreu, lauréat du prix Nobel en 1983 et Maurice Allais, son maître, lauréat en 1988, ou encore Kenneth Arrow et Franck Hahn, ont fini par entrevoir l'existence d'un principe d'incertitude au cœur de la rationalité économique. Le système de l'équilibre général est alors abandonné.

L'économie joue un rôle très important au sein des populations. C'est un facteur à ne pas négliger. L'économie constitue l'un des pieds qui fondent la stabilité d'un pays. Le revirement de Mbombog Mbog Bassong concernant les enjeux d'une mondialisation libérale et financière, responsable selon lui de l'abaissement du taux de croissance, est connu. Nous n'insisterons pas davantage sur le sujet. Revenons à Edgar Morin qui va plus loin. Le verdict du savant est encore plus sévère, voire cinglant, s'agissant précisément des limites actuelles de la science économique :

Ainsi l'économie, qui est la science sociale mathématiquement

la plus avancée, est la science socialement et humainement la plus arriérée, car elle s'est abstraite des conditions sociales, historiques, politiques, psychologiques, écologiques inséparables des activités économiques. C'est pourquoi ses experts sont de plus en plus incapables de prévoir et de prédire le cours économique même à court terme.

Ce sont juste des éclaircissements sur le fin fond du problème. Il ne s'agit pas tout simplement de chanter chaque jour la même chanson, finalement personne ne vous écouterait et ne prendra vos paroles au sérieux. D'après Jean Copans, l'histoire de l'anthropologie et de la sociologie dont nous disposons est décevante. En effet, elles se limitent à un exposé des doctrines théoriques, de leur succession et de leur critique réciproque. Elles répondent rarement à l'un des principes fondamentaux issus de ces disciplines elles-mêmes, à savoir la possibilité d'une sociologie de la connaissance et d'une explication sociale (au sens large) des productions intellectuelles de l'humanité.

Grosso modo, on trouve deux positions inverses et symétriques : ou bien la théorie scientifique est à elle-même sa propre explication et la situation historique et sociale n'est qu'un arrière-fond, ou bien l'on établit des corrélations mécaniques entre productions intellectuelles et relations sociales, sous le signe d'une analogie de la forme par exemple (Lucien Goldmann).

La restauration tant attendue de l'histoire africaine devrait nous servir de piste. C'est par rapport à cette falsification de l'histoire qu'on peut parler d'un rôle spécifique de l'histoire et de l'historien en Afrique. Ainsi, selon Cheikh Anta Diop, ce rôle consistera à rétablir la vérité historique pour réconcilier l'Africain avec lui-même. Cette réconciliation permettra d'éviter certains détournements spirituels, fonctionnels, financiers. Les auteurs pourront effectuer correctement des recherches sans pression. Il faut aussi impliquer la tradition orale, car elle joue un rôle fondamental dans l'histoire africaine et cela montre que l'Afrique a connu tardivement l'écriture, donc impliquons davantage le savoir ancestral. Comme l'affirmait l'historien malien et homme politique Alpha Oumar Konaré, né en 1946 : « Si l'Afrique perd sa mémoire sonore, elle perd sa mémoire tout court. »

En résumé, l'Afrique ne manque pas d'outil et d'inspiration pour concrétiser l'existence d'un paradigme pour une sociologie africaine. De sociologues on n'en manque pas, de cultures, de transmetteurs idem. Après analyse, nous pouvons dire que c'est plutôt un problème d'engagement, de détermination et de leadership pour nos dirigeants, qui se laissent emporter par le vent qui cherche toujours des failles pour faire tomber les « pieds de l'Afrique ».

Un article écrit par Nfally Diémé, *Un constat choisi*, publié en avril 2016.

Emerging Trends for Psychology in Africa

Over the past few years, universities in South Africa have been grappling with the call to decolonise the university. This is a reoccurring trend for universities in South Africa and across the continent but one that has taken on a particular significance in the context of a free and democratic South Africa in which academic institutions remain predominantly Western in terms of their institutional cultures. Various

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forms of activism have been driving the call for decolonisation with students playing a central role through the Fees Must Fall (FMF) and Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) movements. These movements are advocating free education and

changes in the cultures of our institutions putting into question what type of knowledges and skills are valued, taught and investigated. In doing so, the question of decolonisation highlights the link between the knowledge that emerges from institutions of higher learning and the imperative to transform the contexts in which we live; in other words, how does what we research and write about in university spaces inform the development trajectory of our societies?

Historically, universities have been key sites for the production of intellectuals and knowledge projects that served to institutionalise and legitimise colonial policies and practices (Mazrui 2005). Not much has changed in the post-colonial era. Following nationalist struggles for independence, African states embarked on a developmentalist strategy to re-build their nations dented by the impact of colonialism. The two models that dominated the field of development post-independence were modernisation and dependency/welfarism (Ake 1996; Jomo and Fine 2006; Campbell and Jovchelovitch, 2000). These models present underlying assumptions that arguably contradict our project of decolonisation. First of all, the assumption that less developed contexts are catching up with more developed ones with the state being representative and benevolent (of pluralistic or class interest) (Ake 1996; Jomo and Fine 2006; Campbell and Jovchelovitch 2000; Mkandawire 2004). Secondly, the assumption that macro-economic indicators determine the level of development with associated 'trickle-down' benefits to lower income groups (Jomo and Fine 2000, p. 22). Both these assumptions have created conditions in which people in lower income groups become peripheral to the development project, which is imposed on them by 'more knowledgeable' development experts and institutions, often from the outside and whereby expertise is symbolised by levels of economic wealth (Campbell and Jovchelovitch 2000; Jovchelovitch 2007; Kothari 2006a, 2006b; Escobar 1995; Baaz 2005). The effect of this is to exacerbate social exclusion by undermining the knowledge and capabilities of social groups who are viewed as passive recipients of development interventions.

The discipline of psychology is an important player in this conundrum. Given its dubious past associated with scientific racism, in particular IQ and other psychometric studies that produced ideas about Africans as the least intelligent race (Howitt and Owusu-Bempah 1994), much can be said about the role of psychology in legitimising colonial and apartheid practices across the continent and beyond. Psychologists have also been involved in the pathologisation of women and the pathologisation of LGBT people,

or any person who does not fit into the norm of a white, male, middle-class and heterosexual figure (Shefer, Boonzaier and Kiguwa 2006).

These types of studies have produced knowledge that has far-reaching impacts in people's minds and global perspectives. Ideas about Africans as helpless, passive victims of disease, destitution, violence and corruption are widespread (Dogra 2012) and are coupled with the notion that knowledge and intellectual expertise to solve these problems must come from the West (Jovchelovitch 2007). This has largely been the case in mainstream media and in the discourses of international aid, charitable organisations and many academic projects that trivialise and sanitise complex issues that affect the African continent (Dogra 2012, 2007). We are often told that the problem is money and food rather than structural and cultural oppression and exploitation.

In contemporary psychological work, the brain is still used as an index of difference. The focus on neurological differences between men and women or understanding the mental health or brain types of substance abusers, criminals, homosexuals, obese people, HIV positive people, etc. is problematic when it translates into research findings that link obesity with low intelligence, women with irrationality, young people with deviance, the poor with lack of empathy and so on. When such findings from our research projects come into the public sphere, they can reproduce forms of discrimination and oppression that are most often racialised, classed and gendered. Such research also reproduces ideas about who is considered 'normal' and therefore who requires 'intervention' as well as the type of intervention.

Doing psychological work in this way also makes the assumption that the individual is the central unit of analysis and overlooks the social, economic and political contexts that individuals find themselves in. Such approaches often fall into the trap of simply pathologising individuals and therefore further marginalising certain groups of people who find themselves in particular contexts. A decolonisation project for psychology in Africa means that we have to school ourselves and other psychologists in how broader relations of domination and subjugation

play themselves out in the macro-social, political, economic and historical context. It involves questioning the power effects of psychology and the power dynamics in society. It involves questioning the motivation underlying psychological research and practice: who does it benefit and in what ways? Who does it marginalise and in what ways? Who has the power to assign meaning to people's experiences? Who has the power to represent the lives and the minds of others? What behaviours are considered acceptable and normal and which ones are not?

In a recent article about ethical practices in academia, the author questions how academics use poverty, oppression and pain for their academic pursuits and 'claim to have expertise on the topic of social activism but have never experienced any form of intervention' (Rodriguez 2017). These questions are central to the more recent debates on the role of academia in the decolonisation process and the emergence of African scholarship. How do we make research relevant and ethical in spaces that are inherently saturated by colonial relations of power?

If we are to speak of emerging trends for psychological research in Africa, we must locate ourselves in a national and regional context that centres the African and African knowledges and practices as vital to human relationships and growth. For psychology to have an important role in social change and social justice, in particular in improving the lives of the most oppressed in society, it requires a 'deideologisation' (Freire 1970) or indigenisation (Owusu-Bempah and Howitt 2000; Smith 1999; Long 2014) of the discipline – meaning an acknowledgement that psychologists, like all scientists, work within a political perspective and ideological agenda (Montero and Sonn 2009); and a recognition that what, in contemporary times, has come to be seen as 'the psychological' has been shaped historically, politically and ideologically (Hook et al. 2004).

For psychologists in South Africa, the debate about relevance began in the 1980s. Since then, more politicised forms of psychology have emerged in South Africa and elsewhere, to challenge the fundamental assumptions of the field, such as feminist psychologies,

postcolonial psychology and liberation psychology. These strands of the discipline have a more social and critical focus. They investigate relations of power between groups in society; they treat people's identities as diverse, fluid and intersecting. They view people as historical beings whose minds have been constructed by and through their social, economic and political environment. They also propose new methods that question traditional relationships between researchers and the participants in research projects.

Psychologists cannot deliver solutions to the developmental challenges facing the African continent, but we can point to the manifestations of these problems and assist people in seeking the changes that they wish to achieve. The psychologist should act as a facilitator of social change (Jimenez-Domingue, 1999). This means, for example, making the linkages between people's daily realities and the broader and globalised institutional precepts and ideologies that perpetuate developmental challenges. Psychological research then becomes a dialogical process of consciousness and action in which people participate in imagining and creating solutions to improve their lives, and psychologists use their knowledge to encourage, assist and support that process. It is the daily lives, experiences and activities of people which are contextual that inform researchers on what action can be effective in disrupting oppressive power relations and building healthier futures. New trends in psychology must emerge as an evolving practice of knowledge production that cannot be separated from everyday life and that constantly grow through the contribution

that people make based on their lived experiences.

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African Social Sciences and the Study of the Economy: Building an Independent Pan-African Infrastructure

The African continent is at a critical juncture. In the last three decades, the World Bank, the IMF and Western governments have imposed a regime of aggressive neoliberalism that quashed any possibility for meaningful political and economic independence. The wealth produced in Africa remains squarely in the hands of Western capital – but increasingly also Chinese and other Asian investors – and a small number of African business people and politicians co-opted by the system.

As multinational companies and financial capital have effectively alienated local resources from the people who rightly own them, the development sector routinely crafts narratives that obscure the dynamics of neocolonial exploitation – from “Corporate Social Responsibility” to “inclusive growth”, or more recently the “Sustainable Development Goals”.

But one thing is changing: the veil of respectability that these labels evoke has been lifted. Powerful governments in North America and Europe have been captured by xenophobic and racist populists. Unlike their liberal predecessors, Donald Trump and Theresa May have no qualms telling it like it is. They want to extract anything they can from Africa to feed their declining economies at home. Their politics privileges Northern citizens at the expense of everybody else. The closing of borders disrupts one of the few forms of North-South economic redress available to Africans: international migration.

In recent years, Africa has already been a playground for military intervention from Western powers and regional players. This recent political shift will only increase the ease with which armed conflicts and rapacious trade deals will be used to expedite land grabbing and the extraction of raw materials.

Western academics have also been co-opted in the process. On the whole, our work has contributed to sanitise these trends. We are now even more silent than

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usual, eager to please the new masters or simply scared for our comfortable jobs. Funding for African studies in the West is aligned with the interests of Northern governments and big capital, reflecting their needs to gather information in key strategic areas to fuel the ongoing scramble for Africa.

Discourses of decolonisation and radical transformation of North-South inequalities in knowledge production are spreading to Western universities as well, but so far the structures of academic power seem largely unaffected. Western research projects in Africa have little to no accountability to the host national societies and local communities, and are filled with foreign personnel. Meanwhile, African public universities struggle to get funds from the state to pay for their basic operational expenses, and the lack of research funds pushes many academics to produce consultancy research for big business and the development sector (Mamdani 2011).

The challenge is two-fold. Firstly, African social sciences need to continue the ongoing work of strengthening an independent research infrastructure that is controlled and owned by Africans. We need more critical studies of current trends in the extractive industries and agribusiness, that throw light on the exploitative practices and inequalities at play, and produce knowledge that is framed and consumed by local communities, national societies and governments, and Pan-African institutions, including Africans in the diaspora. Working closely with social movements, community organisations and social justice actors will be helpful in finding synergies and reducing costs.

Digital media and telecommunications offer opportunities for networking and collaboration, and

cheap access to an infrastructure that can grow spontaneously, driven by the passion and motivations of those who use it. We should do more to build participatory networks that bring together communities and people across different scales, and connect various localities horizontally, while scaling up knowledge to influence national and international social movements and policy makers.

As global capitalism enters terminal decline and the fight for dwindling resources intensifies, it is important to focus on alternative economic models that privilege human relations, social value and sustainable engagement with the environment, delinked from the abstract imperative of the profit motive (Nyamnjoh 2015). Action research networks should reflect this ethos, and foster grassroots democracy, egalitarian management structures, healthy interpersonal relations, and decent working and living conditions for all those involved, breaking away from neoliberal hegemony. There are plenty of experiences to learn from, as many informal groups and social movements already work along these lines, from rotating savings schemes to landless movements.

The second area of action concerns the renegotiation of the political and economic relations of knowledge production with the rest of the world. African actors must come together to develop effective ethical and professional guidelines that are binding for all foreign research conducted in the continent. This should not be merely a bureaucratic exercise, as it is often the case with current national regulations.

There is a need for procedures that compel European and American universities doing research in Africa to redistribute a large share of resources to African universities, researchers and local communities, including areas such as project recruitment and research funds.

Even in cases where significant numbers of African scholars are involved in projects funded from overseas, there is a rigid hierarchy that sees foreign researchers almost always in charge. The trend is reminiscent of what Michael Burawoy (1972) refers to as the “upward floating colour bar”, a common situation in post-liberation African economies where the lower and middle management of companies were transformed, but expats retained control of the top tiers. As the late Archie Mafeje (2000) highlighted in his vision of Africanity, the goal is for all research in Africa to be carried out under African supervision.

Redressing North-South inequalities goes beyond the issue of material resources and personnel structures. It is also true that there are differences across African contexts. For instance, West African countries have developed a more independent knowledge base than Southern Africa, where Western

and local white researchers occupy a prominent position.

Most high-quality research across Africa is already produced by Africans. Yet, Western scholars in African studies continue to have a disproportionate amount of visibility and influence, even though the quality of their outputs is often mediocre. They regularly appropriate the work of African scholars, while making them invisible or, worse, turning them into objects of study (Nyamnjoh 2012). These practices too need to end. There should be clear guidelines and sanctions to make sure that African scholars' contributions are properly acknowledged in peer-reviewed publications, public dissemination and university curricula. These forms of invisible violence (Henkeman 2016) continue to characterise contemporary racism in Euro-American academia.

Western academics and funders will not be eager to embrace this agenda, or

collaborate in its implementation. They need to be reminded that they would find it unacceptable if the roles were reversed.

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Rethinking Sexuality from Africa¹

The study of sexuality in Africa has come of age. Although Caldwell's famous but reductive “African sexuality” thesis (cf. Ahlberg 1994) has shaped writing on sex in Africa over the last decade or so, a new interdisciplinary field of scholarship has emerged, incorporating researchers from history, epidemiology, literature, sociology, biomedicine, anthropology and political science. This scholarly literature on African sexual realities and erotic worlds has, to a certain extent, managed to untie itself from the HIV, health and development framework from which it sprang. Not only has this literature become much more diverse – taking on board politics, economy, religion, identity, activism and pleasure – it also exploded, with sex and sexuality becoming increasingly popular topics for research.

There are many reasons for the explosion and diversification of sexuality studies in Africa. Sexual landscapes are profoundly

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changing as economic hardships further transform gender relations and blatant inequalities spark a diverse array of religious programmes for moral renewal. Deviant sexual practices and dissident erotic desires tend to become increasingly politicized on a national and continental level through misogynist and sexist reactions, homophobic legislation and official discourses feeding an imaginary opposition between morally degrading “Western” influences and authentic “African” moralities. Moreover, new processes of erotic identification emerge at the interface of global cultural flows and older matrices of sex, gender and desire. Cosmopolitan aspirations are also expressed through new erotic practices of self-making that feed off neoliberal ideologies of consumer-

ism. And the sexual and reproductive rights discourse, along with its underlying premise of the self as a rights-bearing individual, is being appropriated and transformed by many actors in different settings and with different results.

But not only are African realities on the ground changing, so are scholarly practices. While the interdisciplinary field of sexuality studies has come to “Africa”, African studies and many African scholars have also found their way to sexuality studies. Whereas most feminists have been remarkably silent about sex for a long time (focussing, instead, on gender, female agency, matrifocal cultural logics and the huge debate on so-called “harmful traditional practices”), many are now explicitly preoccupied with erotics and pleasure, taking into account issues of sexuality in ways that are meaningful for African women themselves. Moreover, researchers from all over the continent are courageously confronting the heteronormative regimes of knowledge in their

respective academic settings, unearthing often-hidden queer lives, worlds and stories, and aligning with broader political contestations that question the phallogocentric and heterosexist narratives of the powers that be.

In this brief essay, we argue that African contemporary realities suggest innovative analytical directions that are of global heuristic value for sexuality studies. Whereas, in many Western contexts, “sexuality” is starting to break down under its own conceptual weight (Halberstam 2012), scholars in and from Africa have long recognized its limitations as an analytical frame for understanding various sexual and gendered subject positions. In Douglas Clarke’s words: “Africa has a model for queer theory that is largely unexplored in the Western world” (2013: 175).

The rapprochement between African studies and sexuality studies is, however, in no way consensual. It is generating frictions and tensions of its own, not in the least because both fields mutually question the terms upon which their engagement takes place. In other words, whenever “Africa” and “sexuality” come together – as tropes, constructs, imaginaries, heuristic devices or activist rallying cries – they immediately start to undermine one another’s conceptual reach and trouble one another’s political unconscious. Any study, reflection, report or reading in sexualities in African societies must therefore start from a profound reflection on the terminology we use while writing and thinking sex from Africa.

Sexuality

“Sexuality” is an ambiguous and slippery term. It can be used to refer to a biological drive or a human capacity to be sexually aroused and have erotic experiences. It might also denote conscious or unconscious impulses, desires and fantasies. It often refers to one’s so-called sexual orientation or object choice and, thus, comes in many forms – heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality or asexuality – that might, or might not, give rise to so many sexual identities. Or, it can be a seemingly straightforward way to describe sexual behaviour and/or sexual practices. Alternatively, sexuality can be taken as a particular discourse on sex or, rather, as the *effect* of a set of intersecting discourses: medical, psychological, pedagogical,

moral. As such, sexuality is – as Michel Foucault famously stated – an “especially dense transfer point for relations of power” (1978). In this latter sense, sexuality is not only a specific power/knowledge regime that regulates sex but also its main product or outcome. In other words, it produces subjects for whom “sexuality” constitutes the essential core of their inner self. Sexuality thereby becomes something that one possesses and needs to “know” in order to understand one’s innermost drives and desires. For these reasons, sexuality is a peculiarly sensitive conductor of cultural ideologies, social influences and political divisions.

Many scholars in the humanities and social sciences therefore understand sexuality as a social construction that arose at a particular time and place, and for very specific reasons. Hence, before using “sexuality” as a concept for understanding cultural practices of particular groups in Africa, as much literature on the subject does, we first need to turn our attention to the cultural roots of how the idea of sexuality came into being in the first place.

In its narrow sense, sexuality is nothing but the invention of nineteenth century modern European sexology. It denotes a very specific way of producing and organizing knowledge about sex, which first gave rise to the supposedly deviant category of the “homosexual” and, only later, to its supposedly normal mirror category of the “heterosexual”. According to Foucault, the scientific study of sex thus produced sexuality when it transformed the (sinful) erotic practice of “sodomy” into a sexual identity: while “[t]he sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species” (Foucault, 1978: 43). This distinction between sexual *practices* and *identities* is a necessary – though not always sufficient – condition for a critical study of sex beyond the categorizing drive of early sexology. Indeed, as many studies on diverse erotic realities convincingly demonstrate, sexual practices are usually more fluid and ambiguous than what seemingly fixed sexual identities might suggest. Particularly, the fixed relationship between biological sex – or genitals – and gender in Euro-American discourse is not – or, rather, was not – self-evident in the majority of cultures around the globe. The hegemonic globalization and presence of biomedical knowledge (in tandem with Christian discourse) has, ironically, brought cultures more together

when endorsing certain ideas of gender, body and desire, while at the same time producing a diverse array of erotic dissidences.

This constructivist understanding of sexuality as a modern European invention rather than as a human capacity characterized by a universal or biological essence, raises interesting questions for scholars studying sex outside the recent West. If, indeed, sexuality is a relatively recent and culture-specific form for thinking – and experiencing – desire, how should one study sex in situations where and when “sexuality” does not, or did not, exist as such? The question raises methodological and epistemological challenges for researchers trying to make sense of different erotic realities with conceptual tools that have been forged relatively recently in Western contexts.

Speaking as a historian of sexuality in Africa, Marc Epprecht, for instance, argues that “the word homosexuality, notably, suggests a clarity arising from a specific history of scientific inquiry, social relations, and political struggle that did not historically exist in Africa and still does not very accurately describe the majority of men who have sex with men or women who have sex with women” (2008: 8). Different authors and scholars therefore often prefer other terms as alternatives to the monolithic concept of “sexuality”, in order to avoid its essentializing tendencies and the problems to which it gives rise when used *across* cultures and societies. At the very least, feminist scholar Sylvia Tamale argues, we should “speak of sexualities *in the plural* in recognition of the complex structures within which sexuality is constructed and in recognition of its pluralist articulations” (2011: 2, our emphasis). Furthermore, scholars often try to avoid the ideologically loaded term “homosexuality” by using words like “same-sex sexualities” or “non-normative sexualities”. Or, they shun “sexuality” altogether by taking refuge behind words such as (same-sex) sexual “attractions”, “practices”, “desires”, “intimacies” or “love”. Alternatively, some use rather technical terms like “men who have sex with men” (MSM) or “women who have sex with women” (WSW), which have been coined in HIV prevention discourse to reach out to people who “do” it without identifying as such. For other writers and scholars, still, “queer” is a catchall or political term for all kinds of sexual and

gender dissidence, without therefore denying “the limitations of the terminology in relation to our African neo-colonial realities” (Ekine and Abbas 2013: 3,4).

However, while the proliferation of such terms, words and labels effectively points at the underlying trouble of “sexuality” in cross-cultural studies of sex, the real problem is more than merely a question of terminology. Indeed, as anthropologist Serena Dankwa posits, what is the “it” we indicate with sexuality? Analysing the tacit knowledge that is constitutive of informal circles of women “doing *supi*” in southern Ghana, she states that “[i] is established in context and expressed in a language of allusion. But since those who consider themselves practitioners and originators of this knowledge have no interest in pinning it down, its actual content is in flux and remains elusive: Does ‘it’ allude to the awareness of the actual possibility of sexual activity between two women? Does ‘it’ imply the knowledge of how to approach and seduce a non-knowledgeable lover, given the negative stereotypes attached to *supi* representations, or the capacity of caring for and effectively initiating a woman in such a way that would continually attract her to women and make her an insider herself? Does the ‘it’ denote erotic and sexual competence or the skilful capacity of keeping secrets discreet?” (2009: 2002).

In the introduction to the edited volume *Understanding Global Sexualities* (2012), social anthropologist Henrietta Moore pushes the question and probes sexuality’s “ontological status” as “more [...] than a problem of nominalism [or] the argument that ‘they’ – whoever they are – may not have a word for sexuality (emic category), but that we can still deploy sexuality as a comparative, analytic term (etic category)” (ibid: 11-12). She argues that we cannot understand people’s gendered and sexual experiences by imposing analytic categories that would fundamentally misrepresent what is actually happening in many settings. As social scientists, we therefore “need to rethink the nature of the sexual subject, and resituate that subject within broader regimes of power and affect that are not necessarily captured appropriately by the term sexuality” (ibid: 15). Such a re-conceptualization “involve[s] not only a break with the analytic category of sexuality and the pre-theoretical commitments in which it is founded, but a radical rethinking of sex as

the site of rights, and of sexual identities and categories as the self-evident starting point for policy and programme intervention” (ibid).

Scholars mount different strategies for dealing with these complex methodological and epistemological issues. Although many of them still use the term “sexuality” in one way or another, the current state of the art in the study of sexuality in Africa suggests that a more sustained critique of the concept is needed. In the introduction to her ground-breaking 2004 volume, Signe Arnfred stated that “[t]he time ha[d] come for re-thinking sexualities in Africa” (2004: 7). Today, so we argue, the time seems ripe for a more fundamental *un*-thinking of sexualities *from* Africa. Whether or not we will eventually resort to the concept of sexuality, and in what form, should depend on empirical studies of the manifold erotic realities and worlds that people create (and contest) on an everyday basis. But, at least at the present moment, a more radical *un*-thinking of “sexuality”, as an ethnocentric concept deeply entangled in European cultural logics, seems necessary. Not only to distance ourselves from the African sexuality thesis and its many transformations but also to open up conditions of possibility for thinking sex otherwise, triggered by and dedicated to the many ways people on the African continent themselves live, feel and think sex.

One cannot uncritically impose “sexuality” as a heuristic device on past and present African realities and expect it to do the same analytical work as it supposedly does in many Western contexts.

But a similar critical attitude is also needed towards the second master trope that is invariably present in contemporary sexuality studies on the African continent. “Africa” is, indeed, just like “sexuality”, a loaded term with a specific genealogy that needs to be taken into account if and when one decides to use words like “Africa” or “African” in one’s description or analysis. In fact, both critical moves have to be undertaken *simultaneously*, insofar as a critique of the ethnocentricity of sexuality (from an African perspective) necessitates a parallel critique of Africa (from a sexual perspective). When the deconstruction of sexuality is not combined with a similar deconstruction of Africa, well-founded critiques of ethnocentricity might revive the troublesome divide between “Africa”

and “the West” (Bakare-Yusuf 2004). On the other hand, any critical analysis of the ideological construction of Africa needs to take into account its *sexual* connotations to lay bare how, historically speaking, the sexualisation and racialization of Africa operated together, as well as to unveil how current heterosexist ideologies define supposedly true African subjects (Nyeck 2011).

Africa

While “Africa” might seem to be a merely descriptive term that straightforwardly refers to a particular continent on our planet, it is the outcome of a historical process of construction that resulted in the somewhat arbitrary delineation of a particular landmass and several islands as Africa. As a word of Greco-Roman (and possibly Berber) origins, it initially denoted the Roman province of Africa and only comprised present-day Tunisia and eastern Algeria (Mazrui 2005: 69-70). Later, with the expansion of Islam and the impact of European imperialism and colonization, Africa became the name for the continent that most of us know today. European empire builders, explorers and colonial mapmakers thereby defined Africa as a geographical unit that was artificially cut off from the Arab world, the Middle East and the Asian continent and came to stand for an enormous area of great climatic, geological, political and cultural diversity.

Moreover, as Congolese philosopher Valentin-Yves Mudimbe showed in *The Invention of Africa* (1994), the term “Africa” is the product of a historical process, in which it came to serve as the ultimate “paradigm of difference” for Western imaginations and practices. Long before the colonial conquest, European narratives already created a particular notion of Africa as Europe’s quintessential Other. Africa thereby stood for all against which Europe could define itself: wild, exotic, backwards, traditional, emotional and superstitious, rather than civilized, rational, modern or scientific. “Africa,” so the Nigerian novelist and critic Chinua Achebe argued, “is to Europe as the picture is to Dorian Gray – a carrier onto whom the master unloads his physical and moral deformities so that he may go forward, erect and immaculate” (1977: 792). This ideology of otherness not only justified and enabled imperial expansion and colonial projects of subjection and modernization, but also characterized Western literary

and scientific discourses, which reveal next to nothing about the supposed African Other while telling a great deal about the Africanists' own imaginations and fantasies (Said 1978).

In his analysis of the discursive production of Africa in European and American nineteenth century intellectual life, Ghanaian-American philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah (1992) demonstrates how the modern notion of "race" was also lutely fundamental to Africa's supposed otherness. According to racial ideologies, black skin indeed became a signifier and explanation for dark morals and practices – but also, and very explicitly so, for a dark "sexuality". Stereotypes of black hypersexuality thus affected the libidinal construction of Africa (Gilman 1985; Magubane 2001), which came to function as, what Anne McClintock calls, "a pornotropics for the European imagination [or] a fantastic magic lantern of the mind onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears" (1995: 22). The African was thereby created as a sexual Other, a mirror image for the construction and maintenance of the European self. While, for some, this African was an innocent noble savage, for others (s)he was an uncontrollable lustful primitive. In both cases, "the" African was supposed to be closer to nature and therefore inherently sexual: a racially fetishized object of fear and desire for the white (male) colonizer (Fanon 1952). Unfortunately, such deep-seated stereotypes of inherently excessive black sexuality as are still very much with us today, quietly informing apparently scientific accounts of "African sexuality" (Caldwell, Caldwell, and Quiggin 1989) and present-day politics (Ratele 2004) or explicitly staged and performed in all kinds of interracial pornography (Hendriks 2014).

"Africa" is, however, not only a product of the European imagination. It is also a notion that has been re-appropriated by intellectuals and politicians who came to identify themselves and their peoples as "African", often as a political reaction against Western domination and colonization. Indeed, while the first African intellectuals were often formally educated by Western missionaries and, thus, often Christian converts, "they refused to define themselves in the image of their colonial benefactors. Rather they redefined themselves, combining the best of the two

worlds into what became a modern African identity and a unique contribution to African modernity" (Ndletyana 2008: 5). Debates about African nationalism also evolved in close interaction with notions of Africanity as they were being outlined by Pan-Africanist thinkers in the New World (Falola 2001). In the latter sense, Africa (as a common place of origin) and the notion of being African (as a characteristic one shares with people of similar descent) was a Pan-Africanist product: a transatlantic and diasporic re-invention of "Africa" through the common experiences of slavery and racial violence. "The idea of one Africa uniting the thoughts and ideas of all native people of the dark continent," W.E.B. Du Bois once wrote, indeed seems to "stem naturally from the West Indies and the United States" (1946: 7).

The notion of being African was at the centre of these redefinitions. People of very distinct ethnic origins felt united in their experiences and began to think of Africa as one land, and see themselves as one people. In direct response to colonial discourses on racial inferiority, African intellectuals reclaimed their denied humanity and revalorized the traditions, customs and supposedly specific character of the black "race". African nationalism was thereby thus heavily indebted to racial ideologies that, although explicitly contesting and reversing racial hierarchies, often understood Africa in essentially racial terms (Appiah 1992). While the resulting discourses on Africanity hold great political value in a globalizing world, characterized by old and new racialized inequalities, their postulations of sameness and timelessness can, however, result in their own exclusions. The reification of African culture and tradition, and the identification of "authentic" African moralities and psyches, can lead to the exclusion of people who are, for one reason or another, supposed to be inauthentic or corrupted by outside influences, and therefore not truly African. Basile Ndjio (2012), for instance, shows how the idea of an "African" virility, as a defence against Euro-centrism and colonial emasculation, has violent consequences for those perceived to be insufficiently African, male and thus "heterosexual".

As a trope and political invention, "Africa" is, thus, at least as problematic as "sexuality". First, it imposes a fictional and static unity on an extremely diverse

and dynamic reality. Second, it is often exclusively apprehended through a paradigm of difference, which neglects the many similarities and historical connections with the rest of the world (Mudimbe 1994). Third, being mobilized in partially contradicting discourses, Africa does different things for different people at different times and can, therefore, not be taken for granted (Witte and Spronk 2014). Hence, as Stephan Palmié (2007) has argued, Africa and Africanness are not ontological givens but questions that need to be empirically investigated, with regard to the historical forces and discursive formations that lastingly Africanized the continent and its people, and the various strategies by which actors in Africa and beyond employ specific notions of Africanity.

Creating an "African" field of "sexuality studies", by bringing together the range of scholarship dealing with sexual intimacies and erotic desires originating from a diverse array of African settings, inevitably raises doubts about the heuristic and political value of Africa as its organizing trope. But notwithstanding such valid questions, we believe it remains productive to use terms like "Africa" or "sexualities" as a way to bring together scholars who, in many different ways, speak to each other about topics and issues they seem to have in common. However, rather than assuming the existence of a clearly defined field of African sexuality studies or simply researching sexualities *in* Africa, we propose to study sexualities *from* Africa, introducing a deceptively small lexicological difference that reflects a much broader epistemological and political stance.

Rethinking sexuality from Africa

Despite its many pitfalls and difficulties, Africa is first and foremost a place *from where* to think, read, write, talk and disturb. Taking up recent debates about Southern theory or Theory from the South (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012; Connell 2007, and Rosa's critique on the former two), we propose to explore African contemporary realities as innovative analytical directions of global heuristic value for sexuality studies. As Rosa (2014: 865) postulates, the South is, first and foremost, a project that "forms part of a 'new spirit' in which contemporary social science develops. [O]ne of the features of this new spirit would be 'encounters and

temporary, but reactivatable connections with various groups, operated at potentially considerable social, professional, geographical and cultural distance. The project is the occasion and reason for the connection. [It posits] the need to bring the social processes taking place outside of Euro-America to the core of social theory". In other words, the so-called South is the ground to theorize from.

However, conceiving Africa as a place from where to think immediately begs the question of *who* is doing the thinking. Who, in other words, can think, write or read "from" Africa? First of all, this question directly touches upon the structural financial and institutional inequalities between scholars working on the continent and those working in, usually, more privileged academic contexts. For many scholars in African universities, chronic lack of funding for fundamental research produces a vicious circle of enormous teaching loads and a heavy reliance on consultancy work (which, in turn, requires explicitly framing one's findings in donor language). Moreover, many African researchers do not have sufficient access to academic journals and experience great difficulties in attending international conferences. In addition, scholars on the continent are hindered by editorial gate-keeping and a citation gap that often prevents their work from being published in international journals (Briggs & Weather 2016). This has resulted in a vicious circle of the devaluation of African creativity, agency and value systems, and an internalized sense of inadequacy (Nyamnjoh 2012: 129). Nevertheless, despite such financial obstacles and structural inequalities, many scholars working from African institutional settings today are doing highly original work on sexualities.

Scholars based in the global North and/or white scholars working in Africa have therefore a responsibility to acknowledge their privileged position as researchers. For some of our colleagues, the call for re-thinking (or even *un*-thinking) sexuality from Africa, coming from two well-paid white European-based anthropologists might perhaps sound disingenuous or even politically suspect. Yet, by building on a long tradition of "provincializing" Europe (Chakrabarty 1992), postcolonial critique (Mbembe 2001) and decolonial analysis (Mignolo 2014), we aim to incorporate the North as merely one of many sites in a world of plurality – a world that can be (and must be) read from

Africa as much as it is read from elsewhere. To think "from" Africa implies, therefore, not an (African) origin for its *object* of thought but rather a place for *thinking* itself, as an always already situated process of knowledge production. Refusing to understand "African" as a racialized or otherwise essentialized trait or characteristic indeed implies that – in theory – *everyone* can occupy "Africa" as a place from where to think. One's licence to think from Africa does not, therefore, depend on one's *being* "African" but on a radical openness and willingness to be intimately affected by multiple realities on the African continent today. Rather than analysing African realities by using (and exploring the limitations of) supposedly universal concepts – such as "sexuality" – we therefore need to look for *theory* in the same place where we might, otherwise, merely look for "data": i.e. out there in everyday experiences, understandings and imaginings on the African continent.

Note

1. This essay is based on the research conducted for the introduction written for the Readings in Sexualities from Africa, International African Institute / Indiana University Press, forthcoming.

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Comment renouveler le débat sur le développement en Afrique ? Notes introductives au débat

Nous tenons d'abord à féliciter le CODESRIA et son secrétaire exécutif pour avoir organisé ce débat, mais aussi parce qu'à la veille de son 44e anniversaire, le Conseil vient d'être classé comme « meilleur laboratoire d'idées en Afrique subsaharienne ».

Pour revenir au thème qui nous réunit cet après-midi, nous nous félicitons de l'insistance sur le « COMMENT », car s'il s'agit juste de la nécessité de « repenser le développement de l'Afrique », beaucoup l'ont déjà fait à travers de nombreuses publications de très grande qualité. Le gap existant porte plutôt sur : comment passer des préconisations à l'affirmation concrète de ce désir ?

Concernant ce débat, nous avons identifié au moins trois décalages à opérer de prime abord pour bien appréhender les enjeux pratiques de ce « comment » :

- 1) D'abord, nous devons nous évertuer à élargir le cercle des acteurs et renouveler les « lieux » où l'on débat ;
- 2) Ensuite, nous devons opter sur la base de critères propres et parler librement de notre développement, versus l'habituel alignement (sur les concepts, agendas et modèles d'ailleurs) que l'on découvre toujours derrière de prétendues nouveautés ;

Moussa Mbaye
Enda Tiers-monde
Sénégal

- 3) Enfin, nous devons promouvoir une démarche ascendante de changement plutôt que des velléités toujours avortées de traduire en réalité des théories achevées et systématiques, très souvent en porte-à-faux avec les réalités sociales.

C'est avec cela à l'esprit que nous allons contribuer à ce débat, en nous appuyant sur les acquis Enda Tiers-Monde.

Est-il possible de repenser réellement le développement d'un continent sans que cela se limite à un exercice purement intellectuel et théorique ?

N'est-ce pas le reproche qui est constamment fait aux intellectuels, aux écrivains, aux institutions de recherche, et aux agences de développement ? La transformation de l'Afrique par une véritable décolonisation intellectuelle et politique de ses élites et de ses dirigeants et par une démocratisation populaire est un rêve que quelques-uns de ses leaders politiques ont exprimé et ont tenté d'amener à la réalité ne serait-ce qu'à

l'échelle de leur propre pays : certains l'ont fait au prix de leur vie (Patrice Lumumba, Kwame Nkrumah, Thomas Sankara par exemple).

C'est dire que la discussion sur ce thème ne peut avoir de sens véritablement stratégique que si nous sommes d'accord que la transformation de l'Afrique est un chantier majeur auquel nous devons participer personnellement et institutionnellement. En ne le faisant pas, nous acceptons d'être complices des dérives et des incohérences des modes de gouvernance de nos États et des systèmes d'exclusion, d'étouffement de la pensée et des potentiels des populations de nos pays. En tant qu'organisations, nous sommes appelés à veiller à une production et à une utilisation des savoirs qui consolident un espace public de débat inclusif, sérieux et de qualité. Même si c'est un travail de long terme, grâce à ces processus, le citoyen africain a ici l'occasion de se positionner en tant qu'acteur construisant son devenir et non pas le subissant. Cela permet aux acteurs de faire preuve de proactivité dans la définition des politiques de développement et dans l'agir citoyen. La recherche-action-formation et la prospective populaire se sont imposées à nous comme approches adéquates d'un tel décloisonnement.

Comment repenser le développement de l'Afrique ?

Par quelles stratégies et à quel niveau pouvons-nous réellement impulser des changements profonds, ou au moins participer à ceux qui sont déjà en cours ? (trois niveaux : le niveau personnel, le niveau continental et le niveau national)

Le changement au niveau personnel d'abord

Dans un ouvrage publié en 2005 par Enda Graf Sahel et intitulé « Changement politique et social : éléments pour la pensée et l'action », il est écrit et je cite : « il ressort donc que le changement ne concerne pas que le monde des idées ou que des situations matérielles, le changement interpelle l'homme et la femme dans toutes leurs dimensions, la pensée, l'affectif, le spirituel, le physique, etc. ».

Nous ne pouvons pas être acteurs de changement pour une transformation de l'Afrique si, au niveau personnel, nous ne changeons pas notre propre pensée, nos propres repères, nos valeurs et nos comportements. Nous ne pouvons conduire aucune organisation sociale, aucune entreprise, aucune communauté, encore moins une nation et un continent, vers le changement si nos propres idées et propositions ne sont pas une réalité dans notre propre vie.

Nous ne pouvons pas dire que l'Afrique doit se décoloniser si nos propres choix de vie et nos comportements démontrent le contraire.

Oui, « un autre monde est possible ». Mais alors, est-ce nous qui sommes « impossibles » ? Pour reprendre notre ami Philippe De Leener « devenir un acteur politique, c'est refuser de devenir ce que l'on combat ». Il poursuivait sur le fait que « combattre le capitalisme, c'est d'abord le combattre en nous, c'est avant tout mener la lutte contre une partie de nous-mêmes. Car il (le système capitaliste) est incrusté dans tout ce que nous touchons et consommons, depuis notre assiette jusque dans notre corps et dans notre tête ». Ainsi l'ODD n° 12 « Établir des modes de consommation et de production durable » semble devoir rester une chimère tant les acteurs du Nord refusent de sortir de leurs zones de confort tandis que de larges franges des sociétés du Sud cherchent à leur ressembler.

Ce qui est dit des individus s'applique aussi à nos organisations, qui doivent devenir des modèles de changement dans leur propre gouvernance, leur financement et leur communication, etc.

Le changement à l'échelle du continent

Peut-on repenser le développement de l'Afrique à l'échelle du continent ?

L'Union africaine a tenté l'exercice à travers l'élaboration du NEPAD, qui avait quelques chances d'être nourri des idées d'intellectuels africanistes. Mais avant même d'être achevé, le document du NEPAD perdait déjà toute chance d'être un instrument de changement pour l'Afrique, puisqu'il était devenu un instrument de mobilisation d'aide internationale, comme seule condition de sa mise en œuvre.

Pour repenser le futur de l'Afrique à l'échelle du continent, il faudrait que le parlement de l'Union africaine devienne une véritable Assemblée des peuples à laquelle l'Assemblée des chefs d'État doit soumettre ses idées et ses propositions politiques sur toute question touchant la transformation de l'Afrique. Les mouvements sociaux africains devraient revendiquer ce changement institutionnel au niveau de l'Union africaine.

Le changement à l'échelle d'un pays

Sur quelle base un gouvernement peut-il impulser le changement à l'échelle de son pays ?

La théorie du développement rime avec une certaine conception du progrès et de la modernisation, qui serait le résultat inéluctable de la croissance économique selon le modèle capitaliste. L'Afrique et les autres continents du Sud ont été intégrés de diverses manières au système économique mondial et les schémas de développement qui les sous-tendent sont censés transformer les conditions de vie de leurs populations.

Si les impacts de ces schémas indiquent effectivement une création et une accumulation de richesses sans précédent à l'échelle de la planète, nous avons vu en même temps que ce système a été à l'origine des trois grandes dérives du développement à l'échelle mondiale : la dérive climatique engendrée par l'économie de la surproduction et son corollaire de pollution ; la dérive financière, fruit des

surinvestissements et des spéculations financières ayant pour seul but de récolter le maximum de profit dans le plus court délai pour la minorité ; et la crise alimentaire portée par un milliard de personnes privées du minimum vital.

Nous réalisons donc sans équivoque aucune que le paradigme du progrès défini par les indicateurs internationaux de développement est structurellement inaccessible à tous, ou en d'autres termes, structurellement exclusif de la majorité.

En conséquence, nous devons repenser l'avenir de l'Afrique sur la base d'autres paradigmes que ceux qui structurent depuis plus d'un demi-siècle les politiques de développement de nos pays.

Malgré le sort peu enviable de leaders qui ont véritablement osé aller dans cette direction, engageons-nous courageusement dans la recherche d'un nouveau paradigme et dans l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre volontariste de nouveaux repères visant une transformation profonde des conditions de vie de la majorité, par un changement de la structure du pouvoir et des mentalités, pour faire de chaque citoyen un acteur politique, responsable au niveau personnel et au niveau collectif.

Nous rappelons ci-après huit principes et choix¹ sur la base desquels Thomas Sankara a tenté d'impulser la transformation de son pays :

1. Chercher à construire sa pensée propre, la vision de son futur, ses propres exigences et ses priorités ;
2. Accepter de partir de nos réalités, de notre histoire et de nos échecs pour les assumer et en faire des atouts pour réinventer notre futur (d'où le changement du nom du pays de Haute-Volta en Burkina Faso, pays des hommes intègres) ;
3. Accepter de questionner nos systèmes sociaux pour dénoncer et briser tout ce qui entrave la dignité, la sécurité, la liberté et la prise de parole des jeunes, des femmes et de toute autre catégorie sociale victime de discrimination ou d'exclusion ;
4. Renoncer aux institutions démocratiques imposées de l'extérieur pour construire un système démocratique fondé sur l'implication réelle de la majorité dans les mécanismes

de concertation, de décision, de mobilisation de ressources et de planification (démocratie effective et non pas formaliste ou juste électoraliste) ;

5. Identifier et combattre toutes les stigmatisations qui dénigrent et étouffent le génie, la créativité, les richesses et tous les potentiels des populations, notamment les enfants et les catégories les plus vulnérables ;
6. Informer et éduquer en permanence les différents acteurs à la base, sur tous les concepts, les instruments et les mécanismes en vigueur dans les services publics : le budget, la loi, la dette, les institutions, l'aide internationale, etc. Aucun sujet n'est trop complexe, ni trop important, ou trop éloigné de la réalité quotidienne des peuples pour ne pas en parler avec eux ;
7. Cultiver le sens des responsabilités (chacun est responsable à son propre niveau de ses actes et de ses choix), la transparence et la redevabilité à tous les niveaux (les fonctionnaires, les chefs traditionnels, les élus, les entreprises publiques et privées, etc.) ;
8. Cultiver la confiance en soi et savoir compter d'abord sur ses propres forces : les évaluer, les mobiliser et les utiliser.

Comment une organisation comme la nôtre peut-elle contribuer à faire bouger les esprits et les initiatives vers la construction d'une autre Afrique ?

La dernière partie de ce papier va s'appliquer à Enda. Cette organisation est née dans les années soixante-dix d'un long cheminement d'esprits complices constatant les blocages du développement d'un Sud déjà ancré dans des logiques d'appauvrissement. En mettant en place Enda, Jacques Bugnicourt et ses compagnons posaient clairement le principe selon lequel on ne saurait assurer le développement sans une prise en charge adéquate des questions environnementales et en même temps, réciproquement, qu'on ne saurait réaliser les objectifs de préservation de l'environnement en ignorant les

questions liées au développement, en particulier la pauvreté et les inégalités. Ce faisant, Enda postulait que ce cercle vertueux se constituait en travaillant à la régulation de la société (dans ses volets politique, économique, social, culturel, environnemental, etc.) en y associant pleinement les personnes et groupes concernés. « On ne développe pas, on se développe » (Joseph Ki Zerbo).

La principale vocation d'Enda depuis sa création a donc été d'œuvrer pour la réhabilitation sociale et économique ainsi que l'habilitation politique des populations pauvres et exclues des espaces et des systèmes de gestion et de décision à l'échelle de la communauté, de la nation et de la région.

Pour ce faire, Enda s'engage avec ses partenaires dans la recherche des leviers sociaux, techniques et institutionnels par lesquels il pourra mettre en œuvre les quatre voies stratégiques qu'il s'est choisies, à savoir :

- Promouvoir le protagonisme social : Enda appuie les acteurs sociaux les plus faibles dans leurs dynamiques pour se faire valoir, afin d'impacter le cours des choses aux différents niveaux, et prend parti à leurs côtés dans leurs combats, notamment au niveau international.
- Innover et promouvoir l'innovation dans les domaines techniques, sociaux et politiques, mais également dans la pensée et les comportements ;
- Crédibiliser et diffuser les savoir-faire innovants et les expérimentations populaires : ce faisant, Enda veut assumer une forme de rupture – ou de prise de distance – avec les systèmes dominants de production et de validation des innovations techniques, sociales, et politiques, notamment l'hégémonie du « savoir d'expert ».
- Alimenter la réflexion critique, car seule une distance critique permet de déconstruire les modèles imposés et subis, de repérer les idées et pratiques émergentes, et de reconstruire des alternatives. La capacité de réflexion critique d'Enda se révèle

être une nécessaire condition pour réaliser ses autres missions.

C'est dans cette logique que nous avons voulu tirer les leçons des expériences multiples et multisectorielles conduites par des acteurs au sein d'Enda et extérieurs à Enda pour proposer ce que nous avons appelé le Rapport alternatif sur l'Afrique. Une initiative que nous développons avec le CODESRIA et qui est partagée désormais par des institutions africaines comme l'Institut des futurs africains (IFA), le Forum du tiers-monde (FTM), l'International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

Le RASA est une des réponses au besoin, largement insatisfait, d'une affirmation autonome de notre protagonisme sans complexe, et d'une centralité africaine dans le discours sur l'Afrique. La valeur ajoutée de ce rapport sera de contribuer à renforcer cette autonomie et cette capacité à penser l'avenir des sociétés et pays africains en définissant des principes et des instruments de mesure de leurs progrès, et de contribuer à renverser les paradigmes paralysants ancrés dans les individus, les groupes et les institutions africaines. S'il faut traduire en initiative concrète les préconisations sur la décolonisation complète (de nos esprits, de nos économies...) et recouvrer notre souveraineté en acte, alors le Rapport alternatif sur l'Afrique sera une initiative structurante pour de nouveaux jalons. Alternatif, non par réaction, mais par l'affirmation et l'éclairage d'autres voies de transformation positives déjà à l'œuvre dans les dynamiques réelles ; alternatif aussi parce que conjuguant savoirs experts et savoirs d'expérience et donnant la parole à des acteurs authentiques habituellement « invisibles » et/ou disqualifiés.

Un autre chantier dans lequel nous nous sommes lancés porte sur la promotion de véritables transformations sociales, politiques, économiques, culturelles et environnementales. Enda t-m, qui a voulu « sortir des sentiers battus » du cadre logique et de la gestion du cycle de projet, vient de lancer un processus de recherche-action sur les stratégies et méthodes de suivi-évaluation dites stratégiques. En effet, on peut constater que plusieurs actions présentées comme refondatrices ou de rupture ne font que contribuer à reproduire le système combattu en éliminant les

aspérités les plus insoutenables, tandis que les changements produits restent non significatifs, les effets demeurant marginaux.

Pour clarifier les enjeux d'une démarche orientée sur le changement dans les sociétés, nous avons opéré deux distinctions fondamentales :

- La différence entre *changement de premier ordre* (« la même chose autrement ») d'une part et, d'autre part, *changement de second ordre* (« tout autre chose »). Le premier type de changement manifeste la continuité, mais sous des formes ou dans des modalités différentes qui produisent l'illusion que « ça change ». Le second type signale une véritable rupture (il y a réellement un « avant » et un « après »).

- La différence entre *changement dans les situations vécues* ou les problèmes, d'une part, et d'autre part, *changement dans le fonctionnement de la société* à l'origine des problèmes, c'est-à-dire changement dans la manière dont la société fonctionne pour « fabriquer » les situations et les problèmes dont elle souffre. Dans le premier cas, on agit sur des *symptômes*, dans le second cas on agit sur ce qui génère le mal et ses symptômes.

Si nous voulons sortir des impasses actuelles, nous devons approfondir les réflexions sur les mécanismes qui bloquent les changements à l'intérieur de nos sociétés et institutions et aligner en face des réponses adéquates, pour bâtir des alternatives véritables, endogènes et durables.

Avec les entités du Réseau Enda, nous travaillons à l'échelle de territoires, secteurs ou pays afin que le plus grand nombre maîtrise effectivement les enjeux de l'Agenda 2030 dans sa propre vie et dans ses activités tout comme dans les politiques publiques (aux différentes échelles) ; ceci afin de favoriser une réelle contractualisation entre toutes les parties prenantes des changements visés.

Multiplier les initiatives d'appropriation critique et les innovations, c'est ainsi que nous voyons notre contribution à la concrétisation de l'Agenda 2030 intitulé « Transformer notre monde : le programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 ».

Note

1. Mais la liste n'est pas exhaustive.

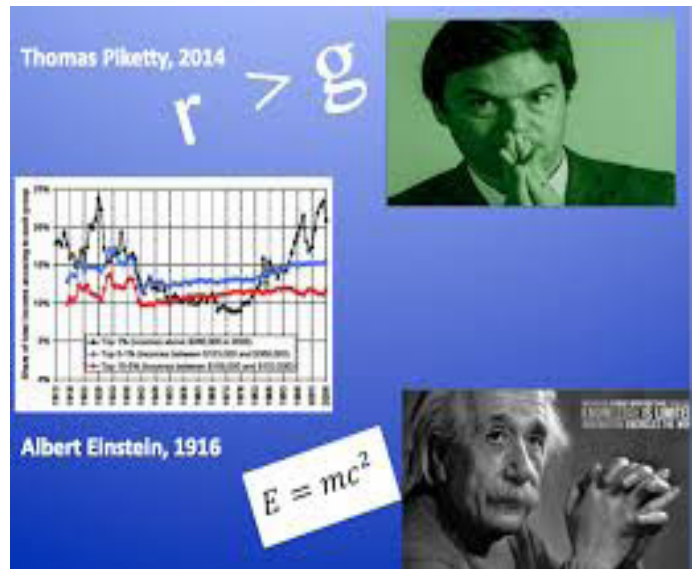
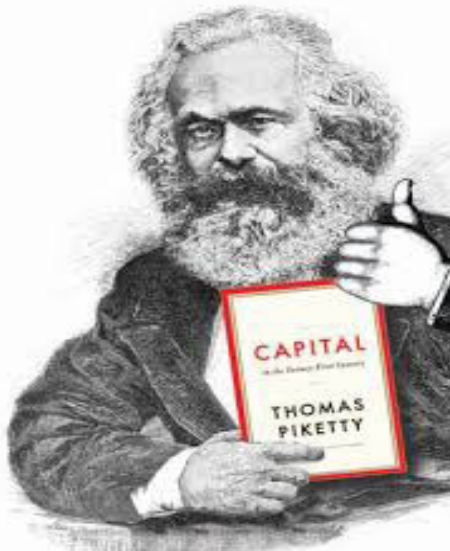
Capital in the Twenty-first Century: A Critical Engagement with Piketty

In 2015, 147 years after Marx wrote his path breaking book “Capital”, a French economist called Thomas Piketty wrote a sensational book with the same title. This book has created a shock wave on what is called neoclassical or neoliberal/ mainstream/ economics or in plain English – the economics that worships a free market economy. This branch of

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economics is the dominant economic discourse and offers justification for the neoliberal ideology which says markets

are nearly perfect and hence governments need not intervene in the economy. This is the kind of economics thought in topnotch universities in the US and Europe, and through their influence, throughout the world. The World Bank, the IMF and WTO as well as the governments’ of the Western economies such as the US and Western Europe have pushed the



policy prescription of such free market economics to Africa. This is done through what is called “Structural Adjustment Pro-grammes (SAPs)” and recently “the Poverty Reduction Programmes/Papers [PRSPS]. I put the latter in the same category as the former because in terms of macro policy the prescription between SAPs and PRSPs are the same. That is, both subscribe to: liberalization of finance, trade, labour market; privatization, devaluation, no government intervention; as well as conservative fiscal and monetary policy – what is called the “Washington Consensus”. The impact of these policies in Africa since the 1980s has been devastating and led the famous Western magazine *The Economist* to declare one of those decades of Africa as “the lost decade”.

I think I have digressed a little from the topic. However, it is a justifiable digression because I am attempting to show the policy implications of economic policies that are the brain child of neoclassical economists and their institutions (such as the IMF, WB) and their dominant owners (the West – or the rich countries). What is striking about this mainstream/neoliberal economics and ideology is that it doesn't talk about distribution of income or inequality at all – thus endorsing the existing distribution of income as justifiable, making income distribution a none-issue – this is a betrayal by neoclassical economists to their claimed intellectual ancestors, the classical economists. For the latter, distribution of income is not an afterthought but rather “the issue” as can be read from the works of Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Thus, we economists in Africa teach that the economy is efficient when the labourer gets wage, the entrepreneur gets profit and the asset owner rent which corresponds to their contribution to production. Thomas Piketty's book, contrary to the received wisdom, has squarely focused on the nature of inequality or distribution of income between capital (the income of capital owners) and wages & salaries (the income of the working class) in the last 300 years. I need to say in passing here that progressive economists had always been concerned about distribution of income – J.M. Keynes, M. Kalecki in the past and Lance Taylor today are cases in point. However, since, research, publication and research funding are dominated by mainstream economists and their institutions and governments,

their call fell on deaf ears. This seems in line with the famous phrase of the Italian political writer Antonio Gramsci who noted [extending the idea of Marx & Engels], long time ago, “the ruling class idea is the ruling idea”. Ironically, when the rich countries were hit by the global financial-cum-economic crisis in 2008/09 it was the policy prescription from the economics of these progressive economists such as the Post-Keynesians (not the neoclassical economists) that offered explanation about and a remedy for the crisis – notice the “stimulus package of the USA”. It is comforting to hear that famous mainstream/neoclassical economists such as Paul Romer whose work and his colleagues book (such as David Romer) everyone is using in economics department across the world and who currently holds the chief economist and vice presidency position of the World Bank is openly and sarcastically ridiculing mainstream economics and their dominant economic models. These models, called Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium Models, DSGE, are the tools of central banks of the rich countries and currently being pushed by IMF into African central banks to espouse the free market ideology.

Be that as it may, I will not attempt to offer either a review or a summary of Thomas Piketty's book in this short article. Lansana Keita has done that by relating it to African condition in CODESRIA Bulletin No 3&4, 2016. Although he noted that the capital-wage gap (I think mistakenly Keita said Capital-Income gap in that article to mean Capital Income and Wage Income gap – assuming he takes capital related income as income) in Africa is not as big as in the West, as I will show at the end of this article, that may not be the case, either. Piketty's book was the number one bestseller in 2015. It is the most talked about book by people: from top entrepreneurs (such as Bill Gates who critically reviewed it recently) to top politicians (obviously the French president, and also Barack Obama, among others). What I will do here is just to point out some points that impressed me most about the book and then sufficiently motivate anyone to get hold of and read it. This is, thus, a rejoinder to Lansana Keita's piece in the last issue of CODESRIA Bulletin.

The first important point that impressed me most is that Piketty knows his

audience and how to skilfully navigate through the profession that is dominated by neoliberal economists. First, he and his colleagues (including their doctoral students) did a meticulous quantitative and qualitative research about distribution of income (inequality) for the last 15 years. Then they presented the basic findings, that later appeared in his book, in top rated professional journals using sophisticated mathematical and related techniques so that they will be accepted by the profession (a profession dominated by the likes of top league US universities). After this acceptance, Piketty wrote the same basic ideas in plain English that can be read by any one, making the book accessible, and also a sensation.

The second important point is the main message of the book: the world is characterized by a shocking level of inequality and in the last 300 years; the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. He has captured this idea by a simple formula which says r is greater than g , $r > g$ (r is the return to capital or the income of capital owners such as the profit from investing; and g is the growth rate of the economy). In fact, the formula is basically r is greater than w , $r > w$ (w is wage/salary or the income of workers). In the rich countries, the worker's income [w] is generally assumed to grow at least by the growth rate of the economy [g] so w and g are equal. In Africa, for instance in Ethiopia, wage, w (for instance my salary at AAU) is not growing by 11 per cent annually for the last 10 years because the economy is officially claimed to be growing by 11 per cent for the last 10 years. In our case, my salary is almost constant during this period – by the way this stagnant wage is in line with Marx's book which differentiate it from Piketty's. Over the 300 years investigated by Piketty r is always greater than g [or w] and the gap between profit and wage is widening (see the graph below). That is, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. Thus, people have begun to compare Piketty's $r > g$ [or w] to Einstein's famous equation of energy $E=MC^2$. As you may see in Figure 1.1, taken from Piketty's book, the top rich 10 per cent of US citizens were controlling about 50 per cent of the US national income in the 1930's and also today. That share dropped to about 33 per cent during the period 1940-1980 when it was the lowest. We can clearly see in Figure 1.1 that inequality has been rising

sharply since 1980. In addition, Figure 1.2 shows that in the rich countries aggregate private wealth was 6 to 7 years of the total national income in each of the countries from 1870 to 1910; 2 to 3 years of the national income in 1950; and 4 to 6 years of the national income in 2010. This takes me to the third interesting point.

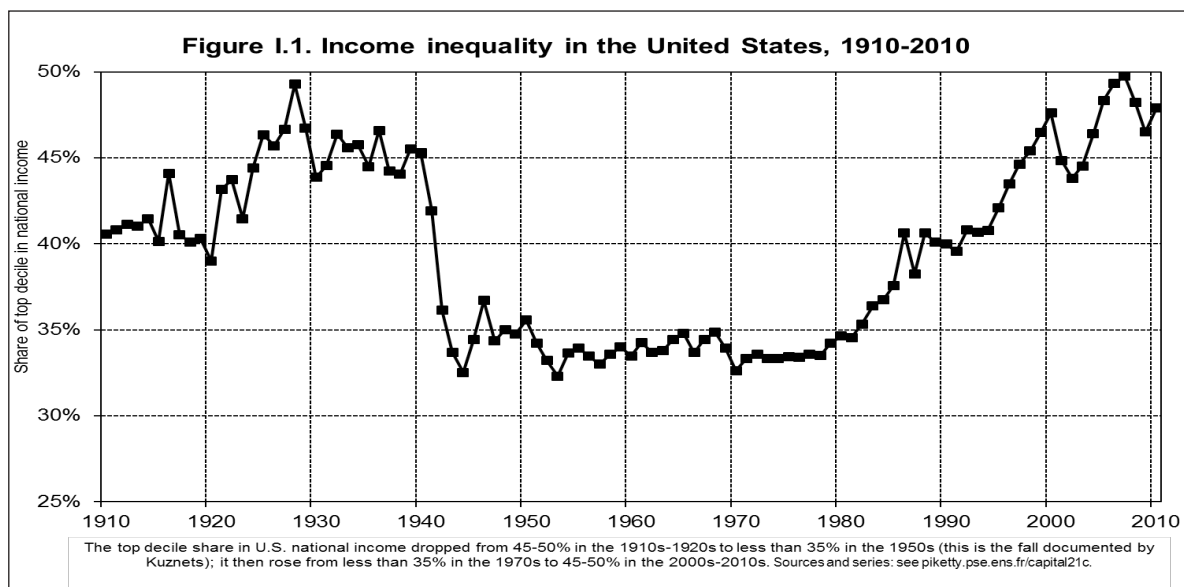
The third point is the so called Kuznet curve, named after a famous American economist named Simon Kuznet who studied the pattern of inequality until the early 1940s. When you see Figure 1.1 this pattern, until 1940s, looked like an inverted U. The optimistic scenario and conclusion Kuznet drew from this pattern is that as a country develops, inequality initially will rise but eventually will decline – has a shape of inverted U (see the coloured picture that mimics the trend of the data line). This has become a Bible/Koran for neoliberal economists and their Western governments. Thus, they began to advise us that “don’t worry if inequality is worsening while you are growing today because it will eventually decline”. In fact, Kuznet even got a Nobel Prize for it and related studies on national income and economic growth (Note who gets the Nobel Prize!). He accepted the award and the prestige that comes with it although he was aware that his thing is a snap shot picture of a post-world war phenomenon. As we can see from figure 1.1 of Piketty’s long-time series data, in fact the pattern of inequality over time has rather U shape (not inverted U shape). This in turn means inequality is getting worst over time. This is one of Piketty’s key contributions. I should note here that

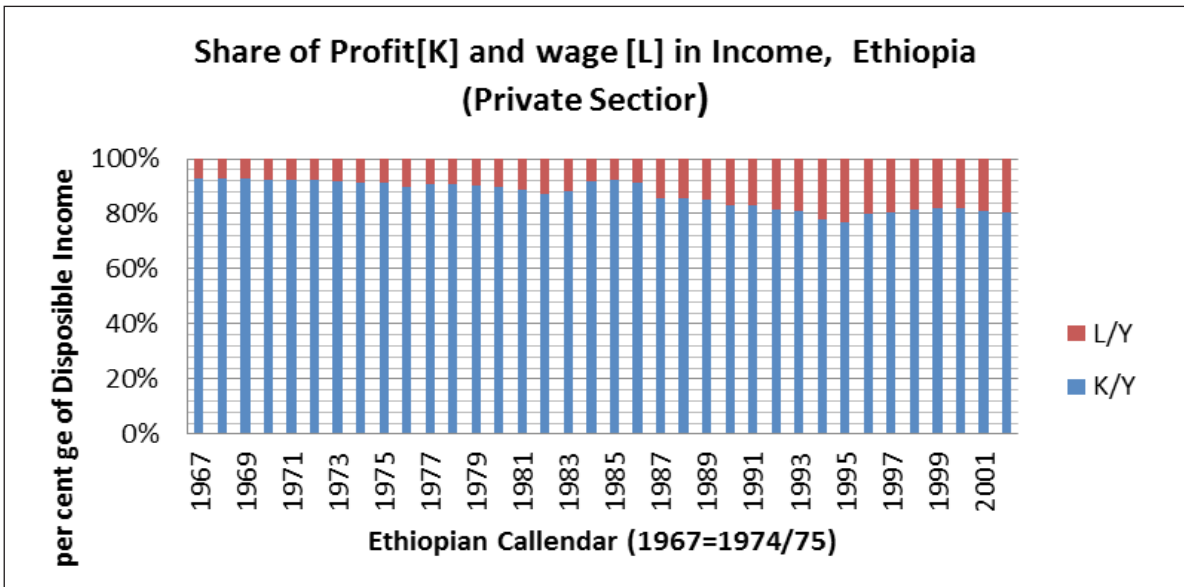
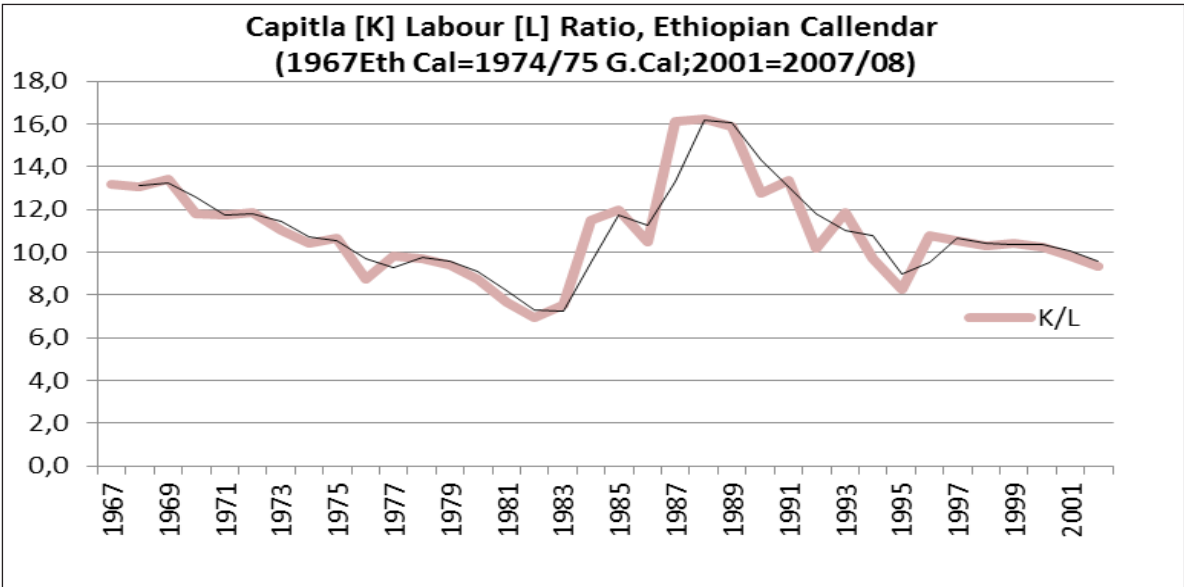
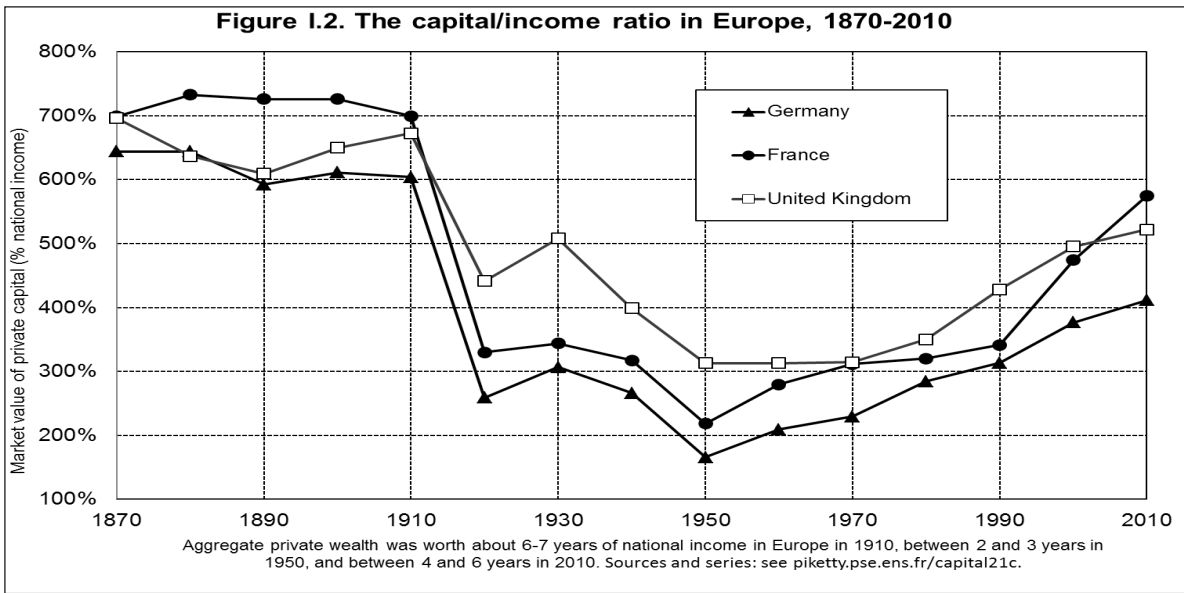
unlike the West’s growth history, Taiwan and South Korea grew with a sensible distribution of income, and hence it is not a universal truth that inequality should get worse as a country grows.

The fourth point relates to the role of “technological diffusion”, and “expansion of quality education for all” to address the problem of inequality which is discussed at length in the book. For this to happen, however, the role of well-informed policy (i.e. policy informed by rigorous research) through conscious government intervention to abate inequality is important. This is the opposite of the policy recommendation of neoliberal economists and their backers who are against the role of state (apart from a night-watch man stature) in development. However, we need to be cautious here that if the government is not well-informed the government failure could be worse than the market failure.

Finally, before I conclude this brief article and advice anyone to get hold of the book and encourage researchers to do similar studies across Africa, see the two figures below that I have attempted to make in line with Piketty’s ideas for Ethiopia. It is an interesting research to do, not only for any other particular country in Africa but also across Africa. As can be read from the first figure the share of capital in Ethiopia is on the average 10 times that of labour. If I had the latest data I am sure the trend would go up even further as the recent growth in Ethiopia is accompanied by an alarming level of inequality that threatens social cohesion. The second figure also

shows the share of profit in national income in Ethiopia. This is about 80 to 90 per cent of the national income, leaving the share of labour to be just 10 to 20 per cent. Household level data also shows that inequality, especially in urban areas in Ethiopia is getting worse and hence the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. Recent studies shows that the poor in urban Ethiopia, who spend over 70 per cent of their income on food, are unable to properly feed themselves because of rent, food and energy price hike - thus coping with this through cutting of meals and through the generosity of friends and relatives. I wouldn’t be surprised if the picture is similar in other African countries. Inequality is a major social problem in Kenya, for instance – a country that I know very closely. The problem of inequality in South Africa is a common knowledge. The implication is that growth by itself is not enough for poverty reduction. It could be anti-poor when it is especially accompanied by inflation as the story in Ethiopia using the 2004-2009 household level data shows. It doesn’t matter for the Ethiopian poor if the economy grows by 10 per cent if food prices increase by more than 10 per cent at the same time (assuming very generously that the poor’s income will growth by the growth rate of the economy – a heroic assumption in Africa). This needs to be addressed squarely because such inequality (especially if it is accompanied by horizontal inequality) invariably leads to poverty of the mass, escalation of crime level and political violence and instability with dire consequences for the economy and the country in question.





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