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Editorial

The articles in this issue of the Bulletin engage with recent trends in politics and development in Africa. They are organised around three thematic concerns and a book symposium. The first theme, addressed in 'Funmi Olonisakin's article, frames the Pan-African context of Africa's recent democratisation, peace and security dynamics. The second focuses generally on African politics, and includes articles by Peter Anyang' Nyong'o and Issa Shivji, the former discussing the role of political parties in democratisation and development and the latter examining the legacy of the just-ended regime of John Pombe Joseph Magufuli in Tanzania. The third, represented by Jìmí O. Adésínà's piece, looks at social policy and the potential transformative lessons that can be learned from the Covid-19 experience in Africa. The final part of this Bulletin, containing four pieces, is made up of essays that form a symposium on Mahmood Mamdani's recent book, *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities*. Each of these concerns deals with a specific theme but collectively they reinforce the key argument about politics, identity and development that is advanced in this issue of the Bulletin.

The articles raise a central question about politics in Africa in relation to the elusive or receding promise of development. The authors engage with the various manifestations of the stalled postcolonial development project, but also frame alternatives to engender sustainable peace and devel-

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CODESRIA

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opment. While the concerns are not new, the contributors interrogate new manifestations of old problems related to the dysfunction of politics in Africa and their consequences for development.

The outsourcing of 'planning' to international actors in the guise of multilateral or bilateral partners, for example, has re-emerged in much of Africa, and is one such concern. Not only does this 'partnership' distort aspects of internal planning, it also undermines existing local capacities and prevents the realisation of the existing state–society social contract. This contract is in fact treated as a relic of the immediate post-independence era whose relevance today is doubted. But we know that development, in the words of Souleymane Bachir Diagne, 'is not … dealing on a daily basis with urgencies' (Diagne 2011: 58).

The tension between long-term planning and the recurrent practice of development as 'dealing on a daily basis with urgencies' continues to plague Africa. The disconnect between the two contributes to a growing loss of hope on the continent. Nothing illustrates the tension better than the unexpected assault by the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic, its ravages and the uncertainty it has created among everyone, including communities of labour, has deepened the sense of hopelessness, especially because in the absence of proper planning communities have had no reliable and effective social safety nets. Matters have been worsened by 'vaccine apartheid' and the attendant 'European Duplicity [that] Undermines Anti-Pandemic Efforts' (Chowdhury and Sundaram 2021). These developments are a cause for worry for two reasons: first, diminishing hope is worsened by a lack of proper follow-up on existing normative frameworks to ensure that development does occur; second, the centrality of African agency in this process continues to be ignored, frowned upon or simply blocked.

The failure to sustain hope in Africa and other developing countries acquires new and alarming dimensions in the context of global challenges to democracy, demonstrated most vividly by the popularity of conservative and nationalist movements in North America and Europe and the ascendence to power of these movements in several countries. The economic policies of these movements frame the development question in minimalist terms, often referring simply to the creation of enabling environments for the private sector while de-emphasising the role of the state in cushioning citizens by providing welfare. The push by 'development' partners in Africa to implement legal frameworks that make its countries attractive for Foreign Direct Investment and 'good for doing business' is but one example of how a disabling environment is constructed. By insisting on a state–society dichotomy, the economic thinking that emanates from neoconservative arguments undermines the very logic of development. The neoclassical economic theory that gives weight to arguments in favour of retrenching the state and limiting its role in social provision has had a fruitful run in the last few decades with limited intellectual challenge. But the pandemic, as Jìmí O. Adésínà argues in this Bulletin and Howard Stein has argued elsewhere, has exposed the vacuous basis upon which the argument against a strong and functional state is based.

This issue of the CODESRIA Bulletin, therefore, while discussing the deepening challenge of hope, is an introspective one. At the core of the various articles is the assertion that prospects for the peace and development agenda in Africa are profoundly insecure—not because of the lack of a normative framework but, as 'Funmi Olonisakin puts it, as 'a result of deep flaws in its leadership infrastructure'. The problem, as Olonisakin diagnoses it in her analysis here, is that:

> There is a dire shortage of the quality of leadership that would secure and develop Africa. Had we proceeded on the trajectory that was planned, we might have managed to secure African peoples and moved significantly in the direction of silencing the guns. Nationally and internationally, the weakness of leadership and the non-rootedness of national leaders, their disconnection from citizens, has severely weakened institutions at all levels.

But the Bulletin also strikes a balance by suggesting a 'prospective' approach, as articulated by many African scholars who argue for African agency in development and insist on 'the indigenous or "organic" character of development' (Diagne 2011: 62). Whatever the successes and failures of the implementation of the existing blueprints to secure Africa's development agenda, these should not detract from the original will to design workable political and economic instruments for Africa's growth and development. This is true for African continental planning broadly and national or regional variations specifically.

However, this Bulletin suggests that an urgent conversation is needed if the existing instruments for political mobilisation are to be re-imagined to facilitate development. Anyang' Nyong'o focuses on political parties but insists that they must secure legitimacy

through electoral processes as the basis of exercising state power and pursuing development. Issa Shivji, on the other hand, reflects on the experience of Tanzania under what he terms the 'Magufuli phenomenon', demonstrating the extent to which the late Magufuli inherited one of the most formidable state-party machines but instituted a form of rule that Shivji characterises as messianic Bonapartism. According to Shivji, the messianic variant of civilian Bonapartism 'rules by fiat of the leader. It legitimises its rule not only by material measures in the interest of the down-trodden or oppressed (called *wanyonge* in Tanzania) but also by metaphysical appeals.' The result of this form of politics, he concludes, is that polities remain 'fragile and masses disorganized' and are 'vulnerable and amenable to the rise of narrow nationalists and populists on the one hand, and rampant neoliberals on the other.'

The issue of the fragility of polities is addressed in the analysis Jìmí O. Adésínà undertakes in his piece. Focusing on the social policy architecture that undergirds the welfare regimes in Nigeria and South Africa, the analysis shows how weak and ineffective this architecture is in a context where the structure of the labour market is dominated by informality. Overall, the article proposes an idea of development 'grounded in a national sovereign project'. By this, Adésínà signals a preference for transformative social policy that can only be the outcome of a notion of development based on autonomous policy-making

This issue of the Bulletin also carries three interventions that engage with Mahmood Mamdani's recent book, *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities*. The book raises significant questions about the history of the nation and makes a powerful case for rethinking political modernity. The interventions by Ibrahim Abdallah, Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Adom Getachew variously engage with Mamdani's critique, locating it in the trilogy of Mamdani's work, in the need for epistemic revolution and indeed as part of identifying the lessons that political modernity might borrow from Africa. As Adom Getachew aptly summarises in her intervention, 'Africa not only offers leverage for analysis of late modern life, but it can also be the grounds of building an alternative normative model to address the impasses of political modernity'.

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Éditorial

Les articles de ce numéro du Bulletin traitent des tendances récentes en matière de politique et de développement en Afrique. Ils sont organisés autour de trois préoccupations thématiques et d'un symposium sur les livres. Le premier thème, abordé dans l'article de 'Funmi Olonisakin, s'inscrit dans le contexte panafricain des dynamiques récentes de démocratisation, de paix et de sécurité en Afrique. Le deuxième se concentre généralement sur la politique africaine et comprend des articles de Peter Anyang' Nyong'o et d'Issa Shivji, le premier aborde le rôle des partis politiques dans la démocratisation et le développement et le second examine l'héritage du régime sortant de John Pombe Joseph Magufuli en Tanzanie. Le troisième thème, représenté par l'article de Jìmí O. Adésínà, se penche sur la politique sociale et les leçons potentiellement transformatrices que l'on peut tirer de l'expérience de Covid-19 en Afrique. La dernière partie de ce Bulletin, contenant quatre articles, est composée d'essais provenant d'un symposium sur le récent livre de Mahmood Mamdani, *Neither Settler nor Native : The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities*. Chacune de ces préoccupations traite d'un thème spécifique mais, collectivement, elles renforcent l'argument clé sur la politique, l'identité et le développement qui est avancé dans ce numéro du Bulletin.

La question centrale de ces articles est la politique en Afrique en relation avec la promesse insaisissable ou en recul du développement. Les auteurs s'intéressent aux diverses manifestations du projet de développement postcolonial qui est dans l'impasse, mais ils proposent également des alternatives pour engendrer une paix et un développement durables. Bien que les préoccupations ne soient pas nouvelles, les auteurs interrogent les nouvelles manifestations de vieux problèmes liés au dysfonctionnement de la politique en Afrique et leurs conséquences sur le développement.

L'externalisation de la « planification » à des acteurs internationaux sous la forme de partenaires multilatéraux ou bilatéraux, par exemple, est réapparue dans une grande partie de l'Afrique et constitue l'une de ces préoccupations. Non seulement ce « partenariat » fausse les aspects de la planification interne, mais il fragilise également les capacités locales existantes et empêche la réalisation du contrat social pouvant exister entre l'État et la société. Ce contrat est en fait traité comme une relique de l'ère post-indépendance immédiate dont la pertinence est aujourd'hui mise en doute. Mais nous savons que le développement, pour reprendre les termes de Souleymane Bachir Diagne, « ce n'est pas [...] gérer au quotidien les urgences » (Diagne 2011 : 58).

La tension entre la planification à long terme et la pratique récurrente du développement, qui consiste à « gérer au quotidien les urgences », continue de peser sur l'Afrique. La déconnexion entre les deux contribue à une perte d'espoir croissante sur le continent. Rien n'illustre mieux cette tension que l'assaut inattendu de la pandémie du Covid-19. La pandémie, ses ravages et l'incertitude qu'elle a créée chez tout le monde, y compris les communautés de travail, ont renforcé le sentiment de désespoir, notamment parce qu'en l'absence d'une planification adéquate, les communautés n'ont pas disposé de filets de sécurité sociale fiables et efficaces. La situation a été aggravée par l'« apartheid vaccinal » et la « duplicité européenne qui ébranle les efforts de lutte contre la pandémie » (Chowdhury et Sundaram 2021). Ces évolutions sont préoccupantes pour deux raisons : premièrement, la diminution de l'espoir est aggravée par l'absence de suivi approprié des cadres normatifs existants pour garantir que le développement a bien lieu ; deuxièmement, la centralité de l'agence africaine dans ce processus continue d'être ignorée, désapprouvée ou simplement bloquée.

L'incapacité à maintenir l'espoir en Afrique et dans d'autres pays en développement acquiert des dimensions nouvelles et alarmantes dans le contexte des défis globaux à la démocratie, comme en témoigne la popularité des mouvements conservateurs et nationalistes en Amérique du Nord et en Europe et l'ascension au pouvoir de ces mouvements dans plusieurs pays. Les politiques économiques de ces mouvements posent la question du développement en termes minimalistes, se référant souvent simplement à la création d'environnements favorables au secteur privé, tout en minimisant le rôle de l'État, qui doit protéger les citoyens en leur fournissant une aide

sociale. La pression exercée par les partenaires du « développement » en Afrique pour mettre en œuvre des cadres juridiques afin de rendre leurs pays attrayants aux investissements directs étrangers et « propices aux affaires » n'est qu'un exemple qui montre comment se construit un environnement défavorable. En insistant sur une dichotomie État-société, la pensée économique émanant des arguments néoconservateurs compromet la logique même du développement. La théorie économique néoclassique qui donne du poids aux arguments en faveur du retrait de l'État et de la limitation de son rôle dans l'offre de services sociaux a connu un parcours fructueux au cours des dernières décennies, avec un défi intellectuel limité. Mais la pandémie, comme l'affirme Jìmí O. Adésínà dans ce Bulletin et Howard Stein ailleurs, a mis en évidence la vacuité de la base sur laquelle repose l'argument contre un État fort et fonctionnel.

Ce numéro du Bulletin du CODESRIA, tout en abordant le défi croissant de l'espoir, est donc un numéro d'introspection. Au cœur des différents articles se trouve l'affirmation selon laquelle les perspectives de l'agenda de la paix et du développement en Afrique sont profondément incertaines, non pas en raison de l'absence d'un cadre normatif mais, comme le dit Funmi Olonisakin, en raison de « profondes failles dans son infrastructure de leadership ». Le problème, tel que le diagnostique Olonisakin dans son analyse ici, est le suivant :

> Il y a une grave pénurie de la qualité de leadership qui permettrait de sécuriser et de développer l'Afrique. Si nous avions suivi la trajectoire prévue, nous serions peut-être parvenus à sécuriser les peuples africains et à faire taire les armes. Au niveau national et international, la faiblesse du leadership et le non-enracinement des dirigeants nationaux, leur déconnexion des citoyens, ont gravement affaibli les institutions à tous les niveaux.

Mais le Bulletin trouve également un équilibre en suggérant une approche « prospective », telle qu'elle est formulée par de nombreux universitaires africains qui plaident en faveur d'une agence africaine du développement et insistent sur « le caractère indigène ou « organique » du développement » (Diagne 2011 : 62). Quels que soient les succès et les échecs de la mise en œuvre des plans existants pour assurer le programme de développement de l'Afrique, ils ne doivent pas faire oublier la volonté initiale de concevoir des instruments politiques et économiques viables pour la croissance et le développement de l'Afrique. Ceci est vrai pour la planification continentale africaine en général et pour les variations nationales ou régionales en particulier.

Cependant, ce Bulletin suggère qu'une conversation urgente est nécessaire si les instruments existants de mobilisation politique doivent être ré-imaginés pour faciliter le développement. Anyang' Nyong'o se concentre sur les partis politiques, mais insiste sur le fait qu'ils doivent s'assurer une légitimité par le biais des processus électoraux pour pouvoir exercer le pouvoir de l'État et poursuivre le développement. Issa Shivji, quant à lui, réfléchit à l'expérience de la Tanzanie dans le cadre de ce qu'il appelle le « phénomène Magufuli », démontrant à quel point le défunt Magufuli a hérité de l'une des plus formidables machines de parti d'État, mais a institué une forme de gouvernement que Shivji qualifie de bonapartisme messianique. Selon Shivji, la variante messianique du bonapartisme civil « gouverne par la volonté du leader. Il légitime son pouvoir non seulement par des mesures matérielles dans l'intérêt des opprimés (appelés *wanyonge* en Tanzanie) mais aussi par des appels métaphysiques ». Le résultat de cette forme de politique, conclut-il, est que les sociétés restent « fragiles et les masses désorganisées » et sont « vulnérables et propices à la montée des nationalistes et populistes étroits d'une part, et des néolibéraux rampants d'autre part ».

La question de la fragilité des politiques est abordée dans l'analyse que Jìmí O. Adésínà entreprend dans son article. En se concentrant sur l'architecture de la politique sociale qui sous-tend les régimes de protection sociale au Nigeria et en Afrique du Sud, l'analyse montre à quel point cette architecture est faible et inefficace dans un contexte où la structure du marché du travail est dominée par l'informel. Dans l'ensemble, l'article propose une idée du développement « fondée sur un projet national souverain ». Par là, Adésínà marque sa préférence pour une politique sociale transformatrice qui ne peut être que le résultat d'une notion de développement basée sur une prise de décision autonome.

Ce numéro du Bulletin contient également trois interventions sur le livre récent de Mahmood Mamdani, *Neither Settler nor Native : The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities*. Ce livre soulève des questions importantes sur l'histoire de la nation et constitue un argument de poids pour repenser la modernité politique. Les interventions d'Ibrahim Abdallah, de Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni et d'Adom Getachew s'engagent diversement dans la critique de Mamdani, la situant dans la trilogie de l'œuvre

de Mamdani, dans la nécessité d'une révolution épistémique et, en fait, dans le cadre de l'identification des leçons que la modernité politique pourrait emprunter à l'Afrique. Comme Adom Getachew le résume bien dans son intervention, « l'Afrique n'offre pas seulement un levier pour l'analyse de la vie moderne tardive, mais elle peut aussi servir de base à la construction d'un modèle normatif alternatif pour répondre aux impasses de la modernité politique ».

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Retrospecting to Prospect : Quo Vadis Africa?

Text of the 11th Thabo Mbeki Africa Day Lecture, delivered on 25th May 2021 with commentary from H.E. Thabo Mbeki, Former President of the Republic of South Africa *(see page 14)*

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Distinguished guests, colleagues, all daughters and sons of Africa, watching and listening today, I send you warm greetings.

Preamble: Tribute to Africa's peoples on Africa Day

I wish to begin on a note of remembrance; remembering those who left us on Africa Day in years past and not least during the pandemic of the past year. I especially remember Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem, a brother, friend and great Pan-African who left us under such tragic circumstances twelve years ago today, on his way to Kigali to celebrate Africa Day.

To echo the text of the 1999 Algiers Declaration:

> I bow to the memory of all the martyrs of Africa whose supreme sacrifice has paved the way for the continent to regain its freedom and dignity. [I] pay tribute to the sons and daughters of our continent who laid down their lives for its political and economic emancipation, and for the restoration of its identity and civilisation, under conditions of extreme adversity. (OAU 35th Assembly of Heads of State and Government, Algiers, 12–14 July 1999)

Introduction

As we mark this year's Africa Day, amid a fight against a pandemic, Covid-19, and against the backdrop of the African Union (AU) Silencing the Guns agenda, the evidence today suggests that the guns are far from being silent. From Mozambique to Tigray and Chad, the guns continue to blaze amid snippets of lighter developments.

The time has come for some honest stocktaking. The theme highlighted in the announcement of this lecture—'Retrospecting to Prospect: Quo Vadis Africa?'—is indeed apt. It is this that led me to frame a central question for this lecture. In looking back to look forward, to ask where Africa may be heading, it is also important to ask the question: 'What will sustain Africa's peace?' One might ask, 'Does Africa have peace?'. What do I mean by Africa's peace? To be sure, Africa is not without its measure of peace. The vast majority of African citizens are peaceful while aspiring to live well, live long and live in dignity. Contrary to what is often claimed, the majority of Africa's young people, average age 19.5 years, are peaceful. Only a tiny proportion are involved in violence, as confirmed by the UN Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security. In the main, the people of Africa are peace-loving.

But more significantly, I speak of Africa's peace because Africa has a peace agenda— a blueprint for peace—which consists of the things we said would sustain peace, nearly a generation ago. Africa has well-developed norms, supported by a well-defined peace and security architecture, as well as an integration agenda. I recall how the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) caught the imagination of many of my colleagues at the United Nations in New York in 2001, and similarly, when the African Union's Constitutive Act broke new ground.

It is therefore sobering for me to convey this key message at the start of this lecture: Africa's peace agenda is profoundly insecure as a result of deep flaws in its leadership infrastructure. The peace agenda is in crisis. The transition from non-intervention to non-indifference, which characterised the move from the OAU to the Afri-

can Union, may be dead. There is a dire shortage of the quality of leadership that would secure and develop Africa. Had we proceeded on the trajectory that was planned, we might have managed to secure African peoples and moved significantly in the direction of silencing the guns. Nationally and internationally, the weakness of leadership and the non-rootedness of national leaders, their disconnection from citizens, has severely weakened institutions at all levels.

With this message in mind, I wish to make five inter-related arguments:

> **First**, Africa is not short of sound norms, many of which remain relevant for today's conditions. As such, we do not need new norms. But the existing norms are under attack and face severe contestation from several sources.
>
> **Second**, many of the situations for which these norms were developed remain unaddressed, and in some cases, we are witnessing a reversal of the progress realised towards securing the norms that were designed to secure Africa's peace—all due to leadership action or inaction.
>
> **Third**, the institutional architecture that supports Africa's blueprint for peace is not underpinned by an appropriate leadership software (which I describe later), and it is severely challenged by new threats that might render the African peace and security architecture unfit for purpose.
>
> **Fourth**, Africa is fast becoming a site in which external vultures (of both state and non-state extraction) feast, sometimes cloaked in the image of messiahs coming to rescue Africa from the scourge of terror. New and old actors add to the complexity.
>
> **Fifth** and last, for Africa's peace to be secure, it must stand on three equal and interconnected pillars in a relationship that places people at the centre of the nation and the supra-nation project for the realisation of Africa's peace and development.

Clarifying concepts

I have used the phrase leadership infrastructure several times already and I think it is important to say what I mean by this. Leadership infrastructure has two key components—the hardware and the software (Olonisakin 2020: 4). The hardware is the tangible aspect of the infrastructure, which can include buildings, laws that confer power to institutions, and staff. It symbolises the existence of those institutions.

While these symbols can exercise powerful influence because they project an image of power and possibly sophistication, it is the way that the power conferred to them is exercised that determines their continued relevance. This is the software element of leadership, which is perhaps more important than the hardware (Olonisakin 2020: 4). It includes the way that power is organised and exercised as well as the kind of relationships that it builds with the broader society over time.

Outside the formal realm, that software is also the shared expectations and interests that form across society at all levels. Uncovering the nature of the software of the leadership infrastructure requires an understanding of the leadership process. A process-based approach to leadership focuses on how leaders and the communities they serve exchange influence within a given context. That interaction is the lifeblood of leadership. This brief conceptual glimpse provides us with the necessary tool to understand the failure of the existing leadership infrastructure and, by the same token, the way forward.

Over-reliance on the hardware elements of the leadership infrastructure at the expense of the software renders governance at national, regional and global levels unfit for purpose when confronted by challenges, such as a political or security crisis, or a health crisis as we have seen with Covid-19. The crucially important software dimensions of leadership must be refitted to the leadership infrastructure at all levels (Olonisakin and Murday 2021).

Evidence of commitments made by African leaders

Normative Frameworks

Let's now look at some of the evidence supporting these arguments. Africa has a sound normative framework for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. We have seen the adoption of important instruments to address the root causes of conflict and promote conflict prevention. This provides important evidence of what African leaders committed to when the transition from the Organisation of African Unity transitioned to the African Union:

- Condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of government
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the establishment of an African Court of Human and People's Rights
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
- Guidelines for African Union Electoral Observation and Monitoring Missions
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

The Constitutive Act of the African Union and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)

It is also worth highlighting several aspects of the AU Constitutive Act and the APSA. It is nearly twenty years since the formation of the African Union. The Constitutive Act establishing the African Union embedded a number of the norms that existed independently. The commitments were clear in the principles articulated under Article 4 of the Act, which include:

(a) participation of the African peoples in the activities of the Union

(b) establishment of a common defence and security policy for the African Continent

(f) prohibition of the use of force or threat to use force among Member States of the Union

(h) the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to the decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity

(j) the right of member states to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security

(p) condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of governments.

And in other articles:

- Article 17: provides for the Pan-African Parliament – ;…to ensure the full participation of African peoples in the development and economic integration of the continent ...
- Article 18: provides for the Court of Justice of the Union
- Article 20: provides for the Commission of the Union, which shall be its Secretariat.
- Article 23: provides for imposition of sanctions for a) Member States that default on payment of their contribution to the Union budget; and b) for failure to comply with policies of the Union.

The Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council in the African Union, ratified in December 2003, led to the establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in 2004 and the rigorous pursuit of its implementation thereafter (AU 2003). Article 2 established the Peace and Security Council as a 'standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts', and as a 'collective security and early warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa.'

The PSC would be supported by:

- The AU Commission
- The Panel of the Wise
- A Continental Early Warning System
- An African Standby Force
- A Special Fund.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are a building block of the APSA, as are Regional Mechanisms (RMs) for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (AU 2008).

Several strategic plans were also developed, among them, the Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP). Some progress was realised at first, but things began to dip as the term of the first Chairperson of the AUC, Alpha Oumar Konaré, was ending. In an article in International Affairs, which sought to assess the progress of APSA after its first ten years, Alex Vines stated:

> the initiators of continental projects such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Peer Review Mechanism, among them Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, are no longer in office as national presidents, and their successors lack the visionary drive for a pan-African project. (Vines 2013; Murithi 2012)

While this was acknowledged in several quarters, it might be said that many of us tend to romanticise the idea of the good old days and might not appreciate the good that is being done in front of us today.

Even if we take such observations at face value, it is important, eight years after this assessment, to take a critical look at the evidence before us and then ask ourselves very frankly, whether the normative framework set up two decades ago remains intact, and whether the architecture that was designed to implement it is credibly still fit for purpose.

In examining the progress made, let us take a sample of situations on the continent in the last year or two, and subject them to a test of norm integrity and architectural safety to see what we will find.

Bringing the evidence to bear (*I*)*: Elections and unconstitutional changes in government*

Let's look at the AU's handling of elections, which are typically seen as the barometer of countries' progress toward democratisation. One of the best-established African norms in this respect is the one relating to unconstitutional changes of government, particularly through military coups. From a time when military coups were the order of the day, we have come to expect that any take-over of government by the force of arms will be met by the suspension of that Member State and by sanctions. Invariably, however, the affected Member State is supported to return to the Union.

Thus far, no Member State that was suspended by the AU for reasons of unconstitutional change in government has resigned from the Union.

The more challenging situation is that of the extension of presidential term limits, either through the 'front door' or 'back door'. Those who have chosen to extend their stay in power are rarely sanctioned. The continent is clearly suffering a reversal in this respect as outlined in the examples below:

Where the African Court of Human and People's Rights makes a judgment that an attempt at extending a presidential term limit is illegal or unconstitutional: On at least three occasions in the last couple of years, some states have defied the ruling of the African Court. Côte d'Ivoire is a case in point (Abebe and Adem 2020). The regime of Alassane Ouattara failed to honour the demands or implement the judgment of the African Court. In essence, the regime committed an illegality by ignoring the judgment of the African Court, which specifically requested that: a) The Ivorian Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) should be reconstituted before the presidential elections; and b) various Ivorian leaders (including the country's former president Laurent Gbagbo) should be permitted to participate in the elections. The African Court made similar rulings in Guinea and Benin. The AU had no say in any of this. Côte d'Ivoire has since sought to 'withdraw its declaration of jurisdiction' arguing that the African Court 'violated Côte d'Ivoire's national sovereignty' (Jeune Afrique 2020).

The action or inaction of the AU Commission has tended to cement a pattern that weakens the integrity of the normative instrument and thus undermine the legitimacy of the African Court: The AU Commission proceeded to monitor the elections in Côte d'Ivoire, when it could have taken other decisions, including making a statement that necessary conditions did not exist for elections in the Member State, and refusing to deploy election monitors as a result. To be clear, the RECs are not without a role. ECOWAS, for example, did not challenge presidents Alpha Condé in Guinea and Alassane Ouatarra in Côte d'Ivoire. This underscores the vital importance of collaboration between the AU and its RECs, at least on the question of implementing the AU norms.

In the recent case of Chad, following the death of Idriss Deby, we are seeing a reversal of even the aspect of unconstitutional changes of government, which the AU has traditionally been better at condemning and rejecting. Failure by the AU to suspend Chad and impose sanctions, even if only symbolically, is further confirmation of a reversal for our Union.

While the Regional Economic Communities are not necessarily faring better overall, the ECOWAS Commission has a better record in terms of resisting unconstitutional change in government. For example, ECOWAS, in 2011, refused to monitor elections in the Gambia, arguing that conditions were not right (BBC Gambia 2011), and following the most recent coup in Mali, sanctions were imposed, notwithstanding external interests to the contrary.

What must we make of these developments? While the AU Commission has many gaps, the task of suspending a Member State or imposing sanctions is not the responsibility of the Commission but of AU Member States. The question of the motivation of Member States will be discussed later. However, regarding the AU Commission, any observer would be justified in drawing any of the following conclusions: a) that the AU Commission lacks confidence and is thus self-censoring in relation to the powers accorded it under AU protocols for fear of offending powerful heads of state even when their actions undermine AU established norms; b) that the AU Commission is, in part, lacking in competence; or c) that there is a deliberate anti-norm behaviour in the Commission.

It is difficult to know which of the above plausible conclusions is the real issue. This notwithstanding, nearly twenty years after the establishment of the African Union, one must raise concerns about why the AU Commission is not playing the critical role that is expected of it. The expected self-confidence of the Commission seems lacking at the moment.

In sum, Africa does not lack normative instruments. The challenge is with their effective implementation and the sheer absence of sanctions for non-compliance. And when sanctions are effected, they are done selectively. The norms of the continental and sub-regional organisations are valid. But the abject lack of enforcement of these norms in addition to leadership gaps are problems that are not easily surmountable.

Bringing the evidence to bear *(II): The Ethiopian-Eritrean military offensive against Tigray*

The Tigrayan war has been instructive. This case stands out. It is the situation in which all the threats to the AU normative framework come together, completing the unravelling of the AU peace architecture. The war, which broke out in November 2020, revealed

an alliance between the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea, the second of which has reportedly deployed thirty-six divisions in the Tigray attack since the outbreak. Eritrean troops have been accused of many atrocities, in effect crimes against humanity, in Tigray (Walsh 2021). There is no official count of just how many Tigrayan lives have been lost, but it is estimated that some 5.2 million people need humanitarian assistance in Tigray (Walsh 2021). If large-scale relief is not forthcoming, that region of Ethiopia might be plunged into famine in another three months' time. Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers are currently blocking aid to the region. Indeed, for much of the nearly six-month war, blockage of humanitarian access and communication blackout have been recurring features.

The scale of the devastation against civilians in Tigray is of great concern and has raised questions from the international community outside Africa. We might be watching, with our arms folded, the largest humanitarian crisis and disaster developing on our continent in a while. It is one thing not to act, but it is another to be indifferent when the world tries to help. Thus far, there is no credible or legitimate African institution dealing with the international community, even informally, on the question of the humanitarian crisis in Tigray.

We also hear very little about the cost of this war to all the people of Ethiopia, or to Eritrea, which has committed so many of its men and women to this war. How many lives have been lost? How many body bags have been taken back to Asmara and how many have been returned to their families in the rest of Ethiopia? Who is counting the costs? All of this needless loss of lives is occurring at a time when the rest of the world is preparing for better development for their people post-pandemic.

The claims of ethnic profiling have also been greeted with silence. One of its manifestations has been in African and UN peacekeeping operations, from Darfur to South Sudan and Somalia, where Ethiopian soldiers of Tigrayan ethnicity have been forcibly withdrawn from the missions and repatriated to Ethiopia often without the knowledge of the missions (Lynch and Gramer 2020). The UN has tried to provide asylum through the UNHCR where possible.

We are therefore seeing a crisis of norms. It is a setback for the move from non-intervention (under the OAU) to non-indifference by the African Union. The foundations of APSA are being short-shrifted. IGAD is side-lined and the principle of subsidiarity seems non-existent in this regard.

In addition, some of the dynamics of the Tigray war confirm new threats to Africa. We are seeing a militarisation of the Horn. We are also witnessing a renegotiation of the African state (I will come to this shortly). The Tigray war broke out on the back of a wounded international system. Actors who do not subscribe to the normative instruments, humanitarian law or conventions, including the AU norms, have gained an upper hand. Non-African powers did a lot of damage, with reports that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) introduced drones to the conflict with devastating effect. Despite initial denials of this external involvement there has been subsequent confirmation of the UAE's involvement (Solomon 2020; DW.com 2021). The backing of actors from the Gulf has contributed to the erosion of AU norms.

What aspects of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) could have responded to Tigray?

The Tigray conflict is an internationalised conflict and not an internal conflict, as has been portrayed. Even if it were an internal conflict, non-interference would not be an excuse. It is an international conflict. One could ask therefore why AMISOM is in Somalia. While this is not about proactively deploying a mission, it is clear that African ownership and leadership is glaringly missing on the question of Tigray. Whatever happened to Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act of the Union? Not even a statement on it or the threat of invoking it is anywhere on the radar! All the normative instruments were not invoked. It is difficult to challenge an argument that says that the AU abdicated its role completely here. The fate of APSA may have been sealed by the conflict in Tigray.

In one of my research interviews several weeks ago, preceding this lecture, I captured this statement from one of my respondents, which I want to repeat verbatim to avoid much being lost in translation:

> The African continent has betrayed the people of Africa—when one people or political community [referring to the people of Tigray] feel so betrayed by Africa. They may not have expected the AU to support or oppose; but they were expecting the AU to cooperate for establishment of a humanitarian corridor. What happened to the African Union and the African media? Africa is silent and indifferent… How can a continental organisation keep silent in the face of the suffering of the very African people it claims to exist for? The African Union is complicit…

The question must be asked, 'Where is African leadership and ownership?', particularly when Africa's representatives at the UN have not projected their voice on this issue. The three African members of the UN Security Council—Kenya, Niger and Tunisia—have not provided clear leadership on the question of Tigray. Rather, they seemed to go along with the position of China and Russia, who delayed the UNSC decision, arguing that Tigray was an internal conflict and that Africa should take the lead on this issue (AFP 2021). Interestingly, it was the new US Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, who organised the first public discussion to draw attention to the humanitarian situation in Tigray, 'to assess conflict-induced starvation …' (Nantulya and Charbonneau 2021). And it took Lisa Thomas-Greenfield to challenge the rest of the UNSC membership on the Council's silence on the situation in Tigray. At the meeting on 22 April 2021, following which the Council eventually issued its first public statement on Tigray, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield asked: 'Do African lives not matter as much as those experiencing conflict in other countries?' (Nichols 2021). Thus, in reality, we must ask, 'Where is African leadership on this Tigray issue?' Why are we hearing only the voices of external actors—the US and the European Union—on this? Can we avoid a repeat of Libya, where Africa was a tad too slow to raise its voice? By the time African political action came in response to Libya, it was too late.

There is more to come in Tigray. It seems the war is far from over. If recent reports are correct, and the balance is shifting in favour of the Tigray People's Liberation Front, the full implications for the Horn must be considered, beyond the humanitarian crisis. There can be no doubt that we are seeing a renegotiation of the African state, and the landscape of the Horn of Africa is likely to change profoundly. The nature of the African state is what this conflict is about. The underlying issue is about the state in the Horn.

This is fundamentally an unfinished ideological conflict between those who seek a centralised unitary system and those who argue for a multinational ethnic federation. Whichever way this war ends, we will see a domino effect in the Horn of Africa. The AU or at least the rest of Africa will be confronted with the question of how to structure the African state. A few decades ago, the leaders of Africa agreed an arrangement to preserve colonially inherited borders as part of an effort to prevent a raft of conflicts by states seeking to return to pre-colonial boundaries. Where are the leaders to lead a new conversation if the current landscape of the Horn faces severe and imminent contestation? Sadly, the militarisation of the Horn has already begun and so this ideological conflict might not be settled without wars of unprecedented proportions unless African leaders take full cognizance of the evolving situation.

Implications for peace and security in the Horn of Africa and role of external actors

If the silence of African leaders in relation to the humanitarian situation in Tigray is this deafening, what hope have we that our leaders will respond in their collective (which is the key strength of the Union) to escalating crisis situations elsewhere, from Mozambique and Cameroon, to Chad and the Sahel? Perhaps it is already too late. African leaders may have already ceded much of the continent to all forms of external actors who have both seemingly benign and harmful intentions. The militarisation of the Horn of Africa is already in process, if not significantly advanced. Imagine the fate of the Somali regions, Djibouti and Somaliland.

Avoiding a situation in which Africa becomes the place where vultures feast certainly requires a kind of collective and strategic leadership that is thus far missing. The geopolitical interests in Africa are not likely to subside anytime soon. The strategic location of the Horn, its abundant natural resources and raw materials, and concerns around terrorism, piracy and migration in a young continent, are all tied to external military presences in Africa. All powers in the world are using hybrid warfare, including private military companies tied to the activities of their establishment. Chad's important role as a country is to be an instrument for hybrid warfare. We are seeing a changing conflict environment due to asymmetric warfare with changing and new technologies.

In addition to the Horn, there is enormous international involvement in the Sahel. It is the threat area for Europe, and the priorities of Europe do not always coincide with those of the people of Sahel, even when their governments align themselves with European priorities. Indeed, there is significant foreign military presence in Africa and it is noteworthy that it is not only the forces of the former colonisers, like France and the UK, who are present in Africa (Neethling 2020). The US and France have the most significant presence. There are also now third-level forces who are building bases in Africa. From China and Russia, to the Qataris and Emiratis, India and Turkey, among others, the scale of foreign military

presence is unprecedented and it is an issue about which the AU has raised concerns (AU 2016).

Clearly, the AU is unable to bring any influence to bear on this matter given the range of bilateral agreements between its members and various foreign powers and actors. A number of leaders and governments have already outsourced their own security to external forces (Smith 2021). In my own country of origin, Nigeria, for example, our president was compelled by the situation of growing insecurity to ask US AFRICOM for help to deal with the security challenges (Reuters 2021). Not only is this a reversal of Nigeria's position on the question of US AFRICOM military presence in Africa, this request is also coming from a country that prided itself as the keeper of peace in the region and the only one that could stand up to foreign powers like France.

So, what are we to make of our continental peace agenda?

One of the key weaknesses is that the AU has not been able to build consistent and stable relationship with the RECs. The tension between the centre and the periphery has never been resolved. There is inconsistency with regard to when to prioritise the concept of subsidiarity and comparative advantage and thus cede action to the regions with support from the centre. In fact, at the level of the AU there is sometimes preference for subordination rather than subsidiarity. The reality, however, is that the AU does not control troops, while regions can mobilise troops. Between the regional organisations, too, there are sometimes tensions and envy. ECOWAS was seen as a model for a long time. This is now not the case.

Interestingly, in contrast, for the first time the AU is now financing most of the political offices for peace and security across the continent. This is a good trend. The Peace Fund has secured more than half of the targeted USD 400 million. The dependence on external funders for project funding remains, even though there is a gap between commitment and actual funding. The new sanctions regime on non-payment of dues has made a difference. The PSC for the first time will have its own funds to allocate to its identified priorities, be they mediation, preventive diplomacy or engagement in Somalia and the Horn. It is an irony that this progress is being realised when the political leadership to address difficult crisis is missing.

Overall, the AU peace architecture is not only facing a problem of implementation and leadership, it is also not dynamic in response to new threats. The AU is neither living up to expectation in relation to new threats nor is it able to deal with the impact of a wounded international system, part of which is manifested in the monetised approach of the Gulf States and involvement of third forces.

Reflecting on the gaps and the reversal

These flaws cannot be overcome if there is no rethink of the leadership infrastructure. There has been overwhelming focus on the leadership hardware at many national levels and at regional and continental levels, without corresponding focus on the software, the relationships with people across African societies represented by organised or associated groups of people in civil society broadly.

It is difficult to get mechanisms to work if we do not build a relationship with societal organisations. The success of the OAU/AU two decades ago cannot be divorced from the growth of vocal civil society networks after the Cold War. We have since seen a gradual co-optation of people's power. The substance has been hollowed out in many contexts with the leadership of civil society organisations co-opted or decapitated.

Looking back, the effectiveness of ECOWAS, AU, SADC, etc., was related to the level of internal pressure from civil society on bad governance. Starting in the early 1990s, this reached a peak in the early 2000s. The ruling elite has in many cases taken a backward step and retreated from liberal democratic practices, where leaders were in tune with civil society organisations that gave rise to some of the interventions. The success of ECOWAS and AU was built on this. The relationship between people and continental leaders that we saw in the 2000s has all but disappeared. ECOWAS connected with people's call for change in West Africa. The AU also moved in this direction, making important pronouncements on its normative instruments, and on more than a dozen occasions the AU deployed sanctions against Member States for non-compliance with its norms. All of this is now under threat.

The flicker of hope

To be certain, Africa is not without hope. Whenever we have seen a flicker of hope in recent times, it has been from ordinary Africans, rising up for the sake of their own fundamental freedoms, for the pursuit of their aspirations to live well and live long. The mass movements—people's protests in Tunisia, Egypt, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and of course Sudan—speak

to the commitment and dedication of the people of Africa to take their destiny into their own hands, when leadership at all levels fails and when their leaders remain disconnected from their realities.

Sudan is worthy of a brief mention in this regard. African leaders rejected the International Criminal Court's indictment of Sudan's President Bashir (and others), accusing the ICC of bias against Africa; but they failed to empower their own justice mechanism. So, the people of Sudan stood up and took to the streets against all odds. Mass movements cannot be discounted. Sudan offers a good example, but with a caveat. Although former president Bashir was removed, the military structures are still intact. There are other experiences to learn from, whereby transitions remain militarised and the civil society valve can be shut—as we saw in Egypt. Citizens in such contexts cannot yet sleep with both eyes closed. One eye must be open and watchful. In Tunisia, for example, the citizen movement has resisted counter-revolutionary actions on several occasions.

We seem to come full circle every generation. Beneficiaries of the mass movements and even liberation movements often end up on the other side. And they do not always remember where they have come from. Now, another generation is confronting its old heroes. Overall, citizens' movements are not in vain, nor must they be regarded as unconstitutional, but they are often prone to being hijacked by the very elite forces that failed them in the first instance. On rare occasions, the elite forces fail. In Senegal, Wade flouted all the norms and the subregions made a noise about it. But the electorate in that country was so powerful that Wade was defeated at the ballot box.

Looking forward

So, where is Africa going? How can we pull back from the slide into a darker place? How can we reverse this trend and rebuild a better regional and continental infrastructure? It is sad to say that on this Africa Day, on the question of peace and leadership at official levels in Africa, there is no fully positive story and no power of example on the continent today. Our continent is crying out for leadership. Its people remain a strong pillar, but they have been neglected for too long.

Recalling President Thabo Mbeki's speech at the United Nations University more than two decades ago, the African Renaissance, in all its parts, can only succeed if its aims and objectives are defined by Africans themselves, if its programmes are designed by us and if we take responsibility for the success or failure of our policies (Mbeki 1998).

It is an important first step that Africa's leaders take responsibility collectively, and that they commit to re-taking ownership of Africa's security and development agenda. The missing pillar of the leadership infrastructure must be brought back and made stronger than ever. This software contains the lifeblood of leadership. And it is based on the relationship between leaders (managers of the hardware) and the rest of society. The experience of the last two decades tells us that we cannot just rely on a hollow leadership hardware. If there is commitment to the African peace agenda and to rebuilding a supporting continental peace architecture, every effort must be made to build a strong relationship with African people continentally.

Some proposals for doing this must include, among others:

1. A peace and security council that has non-state individuals who represent the voice of conscience (the same applies to the UN).

2. People's participation in the election of the members of the Commission, not least the Chairperson of the Commission. It should not be the case that at any point in time we do not have a pool of leaders from across society and government competing to lead the Commission. There is no shortage of expertise among African people and we should not be having candidates left unopposed.

3. The competency and commitment of those who will lead the Commission must be tested.

4. The African Parliament should be empowered to engage office-holders and people across the continent.

5. Ultimately, the question might even be asked whether a group of states committed to rebuilding the continental peace agenda might start on a clean slate and set the standards by which others join, a new form of peer review for continental peace.

Today's Africa Day is a moment of stocktaking—to revisit our common vision and the blueprint for the collective pursuit of prosperity, peace and the development of African peoples. In doing so, it has been necessary to highlight the painful reality of these times, but it is vitally important to look forward to the possibilities that the future holds if we commit to working together to rebuild our continent for the common future of Africa's peoples.

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Response/Intervention from the Patron of the Thabo Mbeki Foundation, President Thabo Mbeki to Africa Day Lecture

I want to say thank you very much to 'Funmi Olonisakin. I am really very moved by the honesty of this presentation, the frankness, the proper understanding of the challenges facing our continent, and the perspective of the presentation, that whatever our reverses, there is still hope for the future of our continent.

I think that 'Funmi has drawn attention to all the critical matters: what are the questions we need to pose, what sort of answers do we need and what kinds of actions do we take in order to make sure that we continue to define our destiny, to define our future and refuse to allow other people who are going to come from outside of the continent and pick on a country, and say, 'No, this country we will deal with it ourselves, we will sort it out without you, the Africans.'

I think that she also has drawn our attention to something critically important, in terms of the future that we need, which is the organisation and activation of the masses of the African people, so that they intervene to determine their own destiny, not delegate this matter to their leaders. It is they who must meet and sit and determine our future. Because I think we have seen the consequences of these negative things that we have been talking about, when you look at the suffering that is taking place, whether it is in the Sahel, in Tigray, in Somalia and the situation in South Sudan, which still continues today after a number of years.

When you look at all of that, it is clear that a very important intervention that is needed in order to sort out these challenges is the involvement of the masses of the African people. That is a principal challenge. What is it that you must do, to follow the examples that 'Funmi gave on engaging the masses, to demand the kind of change that Africa needs? That is the principal focus.

In that context, an assessment of the political formations on the continent also becomes important. What are they? What are they for? Do they relate to the people? If they say they represent our country and our continent, do they, in reality, represent our country and our continent?

In the end, we do indeed need to answer the question 'Funmi has posed—What next? I think what's next is that all of us need to use this extraordinary lecture she has given to engage with this reflection on the continent, so that we are able to pose the question, 'What is to be done?', and hopefully to find the right answers to that question.

As a Foundation, as UNISA and as the TM School, we make a commitment that we will use this lecture as an instrument to mobilise in the directions in which the lecturer has intervened. Thanks a lot to 'Funmi for this excellent intervention!

Rethinking African Politics: The New Age of Political Parties

Keynote address at the African Association of Political Science Re-Founding Congress, 25–26 March 2021

Peter Anyang' Nyong'o
Governor of Kisumu County, Kenya

Introduction

I was recently asked by a group of African political scientists, led by Professor Christopher Isike of the University of Pretoria, intent on reviving the African Association of Political Science (AAPS), which I served as Secretary-General for about five years in the 1980s, to write a 'think piece' on 'Rethinking African Politics'. The request was not accompanied by any conceptual note telling me what to do, but a verbal communication indicated to me that there was a need to find out where we are today with the study and writing of African politics from the point of departure of those who have studied African politics professionally (i.e. academically) and regard themselves as African political scientists capable of making 'scientific sense' of African politics.

The request seemed to me a tall order, and I raised my concern that I might not be the one to do this since I have been more of a day-to-day political practitioner, or 'politician' for that matter, since 1990 in terms of electoral politics aimed at capturing state power. This may actually be a very unfortunate identity to carry, noting especially that the fathers of philosophy—like Socrates—did not think much of politicians. This came out very clearly in a conversation Socrates had with the priestess in the shrine of Delphi, who opined that there was no one wiser than Socrates in the whole of Athens. Unfortunately, this was at a time when Socrates himself was very disillusioned with his own pursuit of philosophy as scientific inquiry and started doubting his own wisdom. He started inquiring, empirically, whether there were any other classes of people in Athens who claimed to possess wisdom. According to Anthony Kenny's rendition of this episode, it soon became clear that politicians and poets possessed no genuine expertise at all, and that craftsmen who were genuine experts in a particular area would pretend to a universal wisdom to which they had no claim. Socrates concluded that the oracle was correct in that he alone realised that his own wisdom was worthless (Kenny 2004: 42).

In the 1980s, after having been disillusioned with the failed attempts by the Bretton Woods institutions to revive African economies and pressurise African governments to respect 'good governance', African social scientists started a serious discourse for an alternative Africa, later captured by the African Social Forum under the slogan 'another Africa is possible'(Baxter 2002), or what Samir Amin called 'a genuinely African political economy' (Lawrence 2018). African institutions of research and critical Social Science reflections were founded, from Dakar in Senegal to Harare in Zimbabwe and Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. Conferences were held focusing on the African condition, discussed largely within the conceptual framework that Samir Amin had laid, not to mimic him *ad nauseam,* but to seek to unmask the African condition without the prevailing theories and assumptions that behavioural and anthropological scholarship had handed down to us.

Intellectuals, civil society organisers and leaders of social movements discussed and published together in journals founded by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) based in Dakar, the Southern Africa Political Economy Series (SAPES) in Harare and the Organization of Social Science Research in East Africa (OSSREA), in Addis Ababa. This renaissance of radical Social Science discourse and praxis produced various individuals who, in their different political settings, joined political movements and parties to struggle for the coming into being of this alternative Africa, during the last two decades of the twentieth century. I was one such individual.

Unlike Socrates, when I left active academics and research to join politics, I had not come to the

conclusion that my own wisdom was worthless, but I realised that I would make better use of this wisdom were I to engage more practically in what we started calling 'the Second Liberation Struggle in Kenya'. After all, this was very much in keeping with Karl Marx's Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach, which noted that 'Philosophers have described the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it' (Engels [1888] 1976).

Very much in keeping as well with Cornel West's understanding of this 'thesis' in its contemporary context in terms of applying Marxist theories to political and social practice (Fuchs 2021), I decided, as a young idealist, that the time had come to go beyond a Marxist critique of African politics to a Marxist attempt to change the situation for a much more humane future for our people[1]—that is, to join the struggle against the post-independence authoritarian regimes in Africa in preference of democratic regimes. Indeed, what distinguishes African politics from 1975 onwards as a period of political defiance is the pronounced involvement of university academics in the daily politics of various African countries, as active party organisers or even as organisers of subversive political movements against authoritarianism and anti-democratic politics (Nyong'o 1987).

Origins of the breakdown in democratic politics in Africa

In an article published in 1989 in *African Affairs,* I argued that the origin of the breakdown of democratic politics in Kenya, and hence the rise of presidential authoritarianism, needs to be traced to the disintegration of the nationalist coalition that ushered in independence in 1963. This could apply to many African countries in various ways. In Kenya, the breakdown occurred in the period 1963 to 1966, and the country has not recovered since (Nyong'o: 1989). My academic interest in authoritarian presidential regimes has persisted, and I do believe that the instability, the fragility, the continuous fractioning and the high tendency towards personalising the leadership of political parties is not simply the outcome, or function, of tribal politics as is popularly narrated (I would hesitate to call it 'explained'). It is more a function of the culture of authoritarian presidential politics that easily survives by weakening political elites so as to institutionalise that authoritarian hegemony. Presidential authoritarianism is antithetical to the institutionalisation of political party politics. Are political parties necessary/essential to the building of a democratic political culture in Africa? Can political parties survive in predominantly authoritarian regimes, particularly of the presidential type, in Africa?

My recent book, *Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy in Kenya? Choices to be Made* (Nyong'o 2019)*,* is a collection of essays I published over time in Kenyan newspapers on this very issue. Faced with a national debate aimed at reviewing our 2010 Constitution, so as to reinforce a democratic political culture, politics of inclusivity and, in short, the nurturing of what Thandika Mkandawire appropriately called a national, democratic and developmental state (Mkandawire 2001), I held the view that the thesis he advanced needs to inform Africa's political praxis in democratic governance, and that this cannot leave out the role of political parties in building any modern democracy, notwithstanding historical, cultural and regional differences. I will advance this thesis in this essay much later. Suffice to say, however, that for quite a long period after independence, political parties in Africa dominated Political Science research. After all, nationalists who were captains of the independent state rode to power on the back of nationalist political parties. The majority of Political Science literature published in the 1960s and 1970s concentrated on two issues: political parties and public administration; and armies, military coups and the politics of insurrection as military rule and palace coups became the order of the day in Africa (Nyong'o 2002).

Democratisation and the re-emergence of multi-party politics

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 changed Western approaches to African politics and the concerns of African social scientists studying our own African reality. By that time, a good number of African intellectuals had moved into active politics, and they remained there, some even becoming heads of state, such as Amos Sawyer in Liberia (1990–1994). With tremendous Western political and donor interest in promoting and defending democracy and good governance in Africa, public scholarly discourse seemed to move towards focusing on good governance rather than on democracy as such. At times, the formulation of the problematique was nuanced as 'democratic good governance', without necessarily distinguishing clearly between the three: good governance, democratic governance and democratic good governance.

Why was this 'conceptual conundrum' so prevalent? Quite often it was due to the way the donors defined or 'conceptualised' conditions for foreign aid or the types

of Social Science research they were ready to fund. Likewise, support for political parties by Western foundations, or 'institutes of democracy', very often emphasised their aim as 'the promotion of good governance' (as defined by them) and not necessarily as building democracy and democratic political systems.

The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), however, sought to depart from this donor/foreign-aid driven agenda for Social Science research, problem formulation and prescription of the political 'what is to be done in Africa'. Hence the shift in focus that I referred to earlier, of Thandika Mkandawire, long-time Executive Secretary of the institution. And that brings us to why studying, thinking about and writing on African politics and African political developments needs to continue focusing not only on democracy and democratisation in the African context, but also on the principal agents for this democracy and democratisation: social movements, political parties and the state.

The thesis

My thesis is very simple. In order to build democracy in Africa, we need political parties that believe in democracy 'in and of itself' as Mkandawire once said (Mkandawire 1988),[2] and in organising citizens politically to capture state power so as to promote social, economic, political and cultural relations for the greater good of society, quite often couched in terms of democracy, freedom, equity, fairness, social justice and so on. The opposite of these values constitutes what amounts to bad governance, oppression, dictatorship and so on. The processes through which people are persuaded to bestow political or state power on political parties in order to pursue these values are democratic elections.

There has always been contention regarding the extent to which elections are or can be democratic in diverse African countries, and even if they were, what measures or indicators would be acceptable as evidence of a democratic election or democratic electoral outcomes. One simple test I have often advocated is that an electoral outcome can be judged as democratic when the winner(s) celebrate(s) victory and the loser(s) accept(s) the outcome as legitimate, in accordance to certain constitutional principles or 'rules of the game', freely consented to before the actual electoral contest.

Modern democracies are largely constitutionally governed. In other words, they are founded on Constitutions that are accepted by the majority of the people through some kind of plebiscite, referendum or convention (see, for example, Sahle 2017). To have a democratic process of producing a democratic government, people (the citizens) must first and foremost struggle over the rules of the game (the Constitution) and accept them either by consensus or through yet another preamble of consensus (through a free and fair vote, or some 'acceptable' choice-making mechanism) that the majority preference takes precedence over the minority dissent.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Constitutions and Constitution-making became a major arena of political struggle in Africa for building democracy. Overnight, political parties were crafted to discuss Constitutions, agree on them or get them imposed on society by some constellation of politicians, and then form governments through democratic elections in which the party or parties with the majority of votes would win.

The majoritarian principle does not always lead to Canaan: Quite often to Nineveh!

But the majoritarian principle in establishing what is assumed to be democratic governments started being put to the test even as early as the making of the US Constitution in the latter quarter of the eighteenth century. James Madison was sceptical about the majoritarian principle when he pointed out the discrepancy between the assumptions that majority parties in government would serve the public good and their tendency to get consumed in factional fights with little regard to the public good. In Federalist Paper No. 10, Madison wrote the following:

> Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith, and of public and personal liberty, that our governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules, or the rights of the minor party, but the superior force of an interested and overwhelming majority. (Madison 1987; Anyang' Nyong'o 2015).

Madison forgot to add that the power of the 'overwhelming majority' can, in certain cases, actually be usurped by an authoritarian presidency. Had Madison lived during the time of Donald Trump, he most likely would have added this particular phenomenon to his observation. We in Africa have had plenty of such usurpations. From Robert Mugabe of Zimba-

bwe (1980–2017) to Gnassingbe Ayadema of Togo (1967–2005), the list is long.

Hence, notwithstanding many well-written Constitutions in Africa—Kenya's 2010 Constitution being one of them—periodic elections seem not to produce legitimate or stable governments. This is a trend that should not be moaned about, let alone ignored, but properly researched so as to understand its genesis as well as evolution in order to chart some durable path towards the consolidation and institutionalisation of the national democratic and developmental states in Africa.

The centrality of political parties

Despite their disappointing records, weaknesses as institutions, deficiencies in values and goals and the tendency towards what Ali Mazrui called 'the politics of hero worship' (Mazrui 1967), political parties will continue to play a central role in the process of democratisation in Africa, in the role of the state in this process, as well as in development. The myth that development can be left to the so-called private sector is, by its very nature, a myth. The private sector itself needs the state to superintend the rules of the game of succeeding in private sectoring!

Vicky Randall and Lars Svasand (2001), and Giovanni M. Carbone (2007), have proposed useful themes of research that could cover key issues so as to understand the dynamics of African political parties, their weaknesses and potentialities, in promoting and consolidating democracy. Whatever the problems we have with 'the political party' as a key player in the political process in Africa, the party is an entity and a key actor in electoral politics that we can hardly do away with if we are to speak about achieving national democratic and developmental states in Africa today.

But there is a dilemma here. We also observe that very often parties are simply creatures that appear at elections and then disappear, while so-called individual strong men stride the political stage like some colossus. What are given as the background weaknesses of African political parties should not be taken at face value—meaning that there is something missing in Africa as a prerequisite to democratic politics. And this thing is civil society. In other words, a society where economic and social relations are so advanced as a result of capitalist development that the very substance of politics is the struggle of such individuals within their economic categories or social classes. But the question is: must we wait for capitalism to develop before we experience democracy? Not really. Things have never happened like that in history anyway. So we come back to dealing with our reality as it is and to consciously building national democratic and development state*s* with the raw material that we have.

We have people still identifying themselves as men and women, young and old, this or that ethnic community, urban and rural dwellers, elites and masses, the educated and the not so educated, the rich and the poor, majorities and minorities, immigrants and non-immigrants, black, white and other coloured peoples as well. These are the interest groups affected by the authoritative allocation of values—the power that the state guards for itself jealously—that democratic politics will of necessity be preoccupied with when these groups come to the fore in a democratic polity. So we cannot really ignore David Easton's *Systems Analysis of Political Life* (Easton: 1965) if we are to analyse the role that political parties play in building and consolidating democracy in Africa.

If indeed these groups are the concrete people, and concrete identities, whose interests matter in politics, how do political parties give them political space democratically? Even if we were to categorise them as social classes, what then are these classes and how do they struggle in politics? When this question is ignored and political power is used to allocate values in society irrespective of these interests, conflicts follow, political instability becomes rampant and we speak of the failure of the democratic experiment in Africa. It is not the failure of the so-called experiment. It is our failure as the potential agents of building democracy from within, because we understand it. The essential enemy is within us. Those who understand but stand by in the arena of politics are partly the cause of this so-called failure of democracy, not its victims.

As Edmund Burke once observed, 'the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing about it'.[3] And in his essay, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontent (1770),*[4] Burke went on to argue for the importance of good men associating with one another and 'concerting' in their thoughts and actions, especially when faced with a dangerous situation in politics or business. Hence the importance of political parties in building and sustaining democratic polities. 'Whilst men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with united strength. Whereas when they lie dispersed, without concert, order

or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable.'

Conclusion

Burke's essay partly quoted above is perhaps the most powerful argument advanced in English political theory as bourgeois political parties were beginning to emerge in England. It is indeed very much akin to Lenin's argument in his political pamphlet *What is to Be Done? Burning Questions of our Movement* (1902), where he argued that the working class in Russia was not going to be able to become political, i.e. promote, achieve and defend their rights simply by fighting economic battles with their employers over wages, working hours and the like. What mattered was to be masters of that instrument that determines and regulates these wages and creates the environment for so-called 'dispute resolution'. And that instrument was the state.

Without dwelling too much on Lenin's theory of the state, or on revolution for that matter, it is important to note that almost all African nationalist political parties were Leninist in many respects. Kwame Nkrumah's 'Seek ye first the political kingdom and all these things shall be added unto you' was very much a Leninist dictum. It was not therefore that most nationalist African political parties, once they achieved state power after independence, became highly centrist, advocating the one-party state à la Lenin. It took Julius Nyerere almost all his life in politics to realise that the one-party state was antithetical to democratic politics.

But after three decades of the second epoch of multi-party politics in Africa, there is a need for African political scientists to 'take time off', examine, reflect on and analyse where we have come from, where we might be going and what we have achieved so far in terms of laying the foundation for, and perhaps building, the national democratic and developmental state that Thandika Mkandawire wrote about so extensively as the more preferable alternative for Africa.

A chorus of how bad things are in Africa will not help much. We need to remember Marx's Eighth Thesis on Feuerbach I quoted earlier. Nor should we sing ten Hail Marys to Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz for cynically telling the world, with some tinge of racial paternalism, that 'Africa Works' even though pre-capitalist socioeconomic relations unproductively lead to the misuse and misallocation of resources—local and imported—for development. According to these two gentlemen, this is a version of African development that needs to be recognised in its own right (Chabal and Daloz 1999). 'It is an illusion,' the authors contend, 'to believe that civil society, opposition parties, or exhortations about better governance can undermine the viability of neopatrimonialism. As a system of maintaining power, however antithetical to the public interest, neopatrimonialism works.' So, according to these two gentlemen, Africa works and implicitly should be left to get on with it.

At least the two authors should have read Edmund Burke to realise that 'what is' is not always 'what ought to be'. Granted that neopatrimonialism is a viable interpretation or observation of the politics of 'what is' that the two observed about Africa. But this is not necessarily coterminous with 'what ought to be', which is the material of which political or class struggle is made of regarding the end to which this neopatrimonial state power is used.

As simple African men and women, and 'in the context of our time' as Amilcar Cabral put it, we should always remember that our people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children…'. Were we to follow Chabal and Daloz, being content that 'Africa works' today, I am a thousand times certain that we would disappoint our people as African political scientists.

Amilcar Cabral goes on to add: 'Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories' (Cabral 1969). This, indeed, is what our task is as political scientists studying the African condition today and advocating certain changes in the context of our time that will help our people live better in national, democratic and developmental states in Africa.

Notes

1. For an analysis and interpretation of Cornel West's writing and thinking on philosophy, Marxism and humanism, see Christian Fuchs, 2021, Cornel West and Marxist Humanism, C*ritical Sociology*.
2. Refer to the 'CODESRIA Debate', which I ignited with my 1988 article on Political Instability and the Prospects for Democracy in Africa, *Africa Development,* Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 71-86. See Thandika Mkandawire's reply, Comments on Democracy and Political Instability, in *Africa Development,* Vol. 13, No. 3.
3. Edmund Burke, in a letter addressed to Thomas Mercer.
4. See 1999, *Select Works of Edmund Burke,* Vol. 1, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, p. 146.

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The Dialectics of Maguphilia and Maguphobia

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Grief and relief

On March 17, 2021, the fifth president of Tanzania John Joseph Pombe Magufuli, aged 61, died a few months after beginning his second term in office. It was a 'dramatic' exit for a person who had almost single-handedly (some would say heavy-handedly) ruled the country for the preceding five years. The reaction of the Tanzanian populace was as dramatic, if not extreme. Large sections of down-trodden ('wanyonge' in Swahili) people in urban and semi-urban areas were struck with disbelief and grief. Among them were motor-bike taxi drivers ('bodaboda'), street hawkers ('machinga'), women food vendors ('mama Ntilie') and small entrepreneurs ('wajasiriamali'). At the other end of the spectrum were sections of civil society elites, leaders and members of opposition parties, and a section of non-partisan intelligentsia who heaved a sigh of relief. Barring a few insensitive opposition political figures in exile, most in the middle-class group did not openly express or exhibit their relief, as African culture dictates, until after the 21-day mourning period had passed. In between the extremes were large sections of politicians and senior functionaries in the state and the ruling party who continued singing the praises of the leader while privately keeping track of the direction of the wind before casting their choice.

Increasingly the division between Maguphiles and Maguphobes is surfacing, particularly among parliamentarians. We may be witnessing a beginning of realignment of forces. Popular perception tends to be cynical, justifiably so, for none of the emerging factions resonates with their interests and daily lives. Street wisdom has it that with the change of wind, opportunist politicians are positioning themselves to be on the right side ('wanajiweka sawa' as the street Swahili goes) of the new president.

Between February 27, 2021 when he was last seen in public and March 17 when Magufuli's passing on was officially announced, President Magufuli disappeared from the public eye. He was not seen at public functions nor did he attend church services on three consecutive Sundays. Magufuli was a practising Catholic and a devout church-goer. He never missed the Sunday Mass nor did he let go the opportunity to make political speeches from the pulpit. This practice distinguished President Magufuli from his predecessors to whom mixing politics with religion was anathema. They had been brought up on the secular doctrine preached and practised by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, who never stopped reiterating that religion was a private matter and the Tanzanian state was secular. During the two weeks Magufuli was not seen in public, the country was awash with rumours, speculation and stories spun by spin doctors on Magufuli's health, the nature of his disease, and whether or not he was alive. Internal detractors and a section of the foreign Western press superficially reported and gleefully reiterated that Covid-19 had finally caught up with President Magufuli who was reputed to be a Covid-denier. The then Vice-President Mama Samia Suluhu Hassan gave heart complications as the cause of the president's death. It was known that the president had a pace-maker. It is not necessary for the purposes of this essay to establish what the cause of death of President Magufuli was. I do not intend to cloud my analysis by that debate.

President Magufuli leaves behind a controversial legacy. It would be intellectually futile to strike a strict balance between Maguphilia and Maguphobia. That is a lazy way of understanding a political phenomenon. Drawing up a balance-sheet of the good and the bad is an accountant's job not that of an intellectual analyst. Rather it is important to understand that Magufuli was a political phenomenon, not an individual. Magufuli was a local variant of populist political leaders who have emerged recently in a number of countries of the South. Brazil and India are obvious examples. Conditions were ripe for the emergence of demagogic politicians, partly as a backlash to neo-liberalism which wreaked havoc with the social fabric of the countries in the periphery and partly because of the resulting

polarisation, inequalities and impoverishment of the working people and middle classes. Disarmed, disillusioned and stripped of all hope, masses yearned for a messiah. Populists presented themselves as such deliverers. The masses in Tanzania found themselves in this state when Magufuli appeared.

Populist rhetoric varies from country to country but invariably it feeds on heightening racial, religious and gender differences and exploits popular prejudices. The Magufuli phenomenon was not a *deus ex machina*. To understand it we must locate it in the history and politics of the country and come up with a correct characterisation. I characterise the Magufuli phenomenon as messianic Bonapartism. Before we dwell further on this, let me say a couple of things about Bonapartism as a political phenomenon.

Bonapartism

When classes are weak or have been disarmed ideologically and organisationally over a generation, politics suffer from Bonapartist effects. Bonapartism can take different forms depending on the concrete situation. Quickly, we may identify the two most relevant to us – militarist and messianic. Tanzania has been saved of the former for reasons which will become clear in the course of this essay. In the late president we witnessed the latter.

Bonapartism is characterised by the unexpected rise of an individual who stands above classes and social struggles. Indeed he even appears to rise above the state. The famous phrase attributed to Louis XIV 'l'etat, c'est moi', 'I'm the state' sums it all. Bonapartism has arisen in historical situations where the struggling classes have either exhausted themselves and there is an apparent vacuum in the body politic or the rein of the previous ruler has been so laissez faire that 'law and order' has broken down. The Bonaparte legitimises his crassly high-handed actions to return the country to order and to rein in fighting factions in which everyone is for themselves and the devil takes the hindmost. Liberal institutions of 'bourgeois' democracy such as parliament and judiciary are either set aside (a fascist option) or emaciated of their content (neo-fascist authoritarianism). They exist in name only, but go through the rituals of elections, law-making and 'judicial decision' making, which means little in practice.

Unlike much of the rest of Africa, Tanzania can justifiably boast of a relatively stable and peaceful polity as well as smooth succession from one administration to another. Julius Nyerere, the founding president, ruled for nearly quarter of a century followed by three presidents, each one of whom was in power for ten years, that is, two terms of five years, the term limit prescribed by the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977. President Magufuli had just entered his second term after the general election of October 2020 when he met his death.

The political antecedents

The driving force during Mwalimu Nyerere's reign was the ideology of nation-building and development. Nation-building called for national unity. Nyerere was preoccupied by national unity and as a result he reigned in centrifugal forces. At the time of independence there were three identifiable centres of power: the army, trade unions and the state. The army mutiny of 1964 and the alleged attempt by some trade unionists to make common cause with the mutineers drew home the point that all was not well and Nyerere's national project was tottering. The mutiny became the occasion to dismantle the colonial army, ban independent trade unions and abolish the multiparty system. Opposition parties then were miniscule without much support but they had the potential to derail the national project, as Nyerere saw it. Tanzania was the first country in this part of Africa to rebuild the army from scratch with soldiers recruited mainly from the ruling party's youth wing.

In 1965 a new one-party constitution providing for a highly centralised executive presidency was passed. From then on, the polity was informed by the centralising tendency, power being concentrated in the state and the party. In 1968, an independent religious organisation of Muslims, the East African Muslim Welfare Society, was banned for fear that it could become an organisational home for disgruntled Muslim politicians. The 1967 Arusha Declaration enshrining the policies of socialism and self-reliance saw the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy. That lay the basis for the rise of parastatals with their own spawning bureaucracy. Over a period of next ten years, relatively independent co-operatives were abolished and replaced by crop authorities. Independent student, youth, and women's organisations were all brought under the wing of the party. Thus the proto-ruling class which could be described as a bureaucratic bourgeoisie or state bourgeoisie established its ideological and organisational hegemony. By the time Nyerere stepped down in 1985, Tanzania had one of the most formidable state-party machines and it was highly bureaucratised.

Four important features of the party-state during Nyerere's time must be highlighted. One, the

Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party *did* function. Its organs had foundations at grassroots level in villages and streets. The party operated through its various organs such as party branches, ten-cell organs and similar organs, at district, regional and national level. At the top was the Central Committee and the all-powerful National Executive Committee (NEC). These organs met regularly and transmitted their resolutions and proceedings to higher levels. Two, the army was integrated in the party structure. It constituted a region which sent delegates to the NEC and the Congress, just as other regions did. Three, the party had a clearly spelt out philosophy and ideology which became the basis for developing its programmes and manifestos. Consequently, there was an ideology and a structure around which members could rally and participate in decision-making. Fourthly, as a result of these factors, political factions with a clear ideology and politics could not easily crystallise in or outside the party. If factions did emerge, they were temporary and issue-oriented. It was difficult for them to have medium- or long-term political ambitions. The only group which did function as a faction and began to flex its muscles in the last five years of Nyerere's rule was from Zanzibar. The succession saga within the party following Nyerere's announcement that he was stepping down was actually led by Zanzibaris to which a few mainlanders aligned. To Nyerere's surprise, the Zanzibari CCM faction proved to be so formidable that it managed to overturn Nyerere's preferred choice to succeed him.

In sum, although state structures of checks and balances were compromised during Nyerere's time, the party did act as a check on top leaders providing a platform for relatively free discussions and debates within the party. Throughout this period, the independence of the judiciary was respected even though the judiciary could not play a very active role because, one, the constitution did not have a bill of rights against which the performance and accountability of the state organs and officials could be measured and, two, the law tended to be very widely worded, giving the bureaucracy unfettered discretion. These powers were often abused but grievous abuses were relatively rare and, if and when discovered, legal action was taken against the perpetrators. While Nyerere's regime could arguably be described as authoritarian it certainly could not be labelled fascist in any sense of the word. When some overzealous youth wingers once described Nyerere as a 'fascist', Nyerere is said to have quipped: 'What would they say if they saw a real one!'

The next ten years under President Ali Hassan Mwinyi saw the first, albeit hesitant, steps on the road to neo-liberalisation. It was during Mwinyi's term that the leadership code which prevented state and party leaders from using their political office to accumulate personal wealth was lifted. There were also signs of factional struggles within the party but interestingly it was once again the coherent Zanzibar faction which mainlander CCM leaders with presidential ambitions had to attach themselves. Nonetheless it was on Zanzibar issues – Zanzibar's membership of the Organisation of Islamic Conference on its own and Parliament adopting a resolution to form a Tanganyika Government thus changing the union structure from two to three governments – that matters came to a head. Nyerere was still around. He managed to salvage the boat. The boat rocked but did not sink.

The next president, Benjamin Mkapa, was the first to be elected in a multi-party election, scoring a majority vote of only 62 per cent, demonstrating that the electorate was getting exhausted with CCM's scandals and over-bearing bureaucracy. Mkapa, who served as president from 1995 to 2005, can easily be described as the father of neo-liberalism in Tanzania. He privatised national assets, including the national state bank, and steamrolled through Parliament the mining law, opening up that important sector to rapacious foreign investment. However, he took a leaf from Nyerere's book by adhering to party protocols and ensuring that the party organs met regularly and that there was a semblance of debate in the top party organs. During his term the judiciary became more active as a bill of rights had been inserted in the constitution in 1984.

By the end of Mkapa rule, Tanzania was a full-blown neo-liberal state. The hardest-hit victims of neo-liberalisation, as elsewhere, were the working people, in both urban and rural areas. As cost-sharing in education and health took hold and various subsidies were removed, the component of social wage from the livelihoods of working people disappeared, exposing them to the full rigour of the so-called free market. Even lower middle classes suffered. If Tanzania was spared of bread riots, it was because of the lingering ideological and organisational hegemony of the state-party over the working people.

Finding a successor to Mkapa proved to be contentious. Jakaya Kikwete and his friend Edward Lowassa, the party's two leading cadres, had built a strong base in the party's youth wing. They had waited in the wings to bid for the presidency at the opportune time. Through fair and foul means, aid-

ed by some manipulation of party rules by the then party chairman Mkapa, the Kikwete-Lowassa duo managed to keep out another strong contender, Salim Ahmed Salim. Kikwete got the party's nomination, subsequently winning the presidency with a handsome majority. He lost no time in making his friend Lowassa his Prime Minister and one of their businessman friends – who was widely believed to play king maker behind the scenes – treasurer of the party. Eventually, the two friends fell out and Lowassa had to resign as Prime Minister. Be that as it may, the party had become fractionalised and mired in factional struggles. With no coherent ideology like the Arusha Declaration, the factions were not held together by any ideology or political programme but by sheer ambition to power and through power the ability to access the state largesse.

The ten years of Kikwete rule were one of the most laissez faire periods in the country's history. The neo-liberal chickens came home to roost. Scandals abounded, there was unchecked embezzlement of public funds, some politicians in collusion with businessmen went on an accumulation spree, corruption mounted. The party was sidelined. Kikwete did not have purchase on party meetings. The party and the government lost any semblance of coherence. The check-and-balance machinery broke down. Policy making was erratic. Donors ruled the roost. To be sure, in this climate civil society elite and opposition parties enjoyed a measure of freedom which they had not experienced before but all that was at the expense of the masses who continued to sink deeper and deeper into poverty and hopelessness. The party lost credibility, so much so that when the time came for general elections it could not be sure of getting elected. Day by day, the opposition gained in popularity as it exposed the scandals and corruption of CCM politicians.

Within the party, the person believed to be the strongest contender for presidency was Edward Lowassa. He had both political and financial clout but no purchase on political probity. He had cleverly put in place his people in vital party organs. Succession to Kikwete was ridden with factional struggles, so much so that when finally Lowassa lost out on nomination in the Central Committee, his faction in the Committee came out openly questioning the Central Committee's decision.

As we have seen, the ruling party and its leaders had been so much maligned and marred by allegations of corruption that it had to nominate for the presidency a person who was not identifiable with the party and its heavy weights, a relatively clean person. That person was John Magufuli, until then a non-entity. In the elections, Magufuli got the lowest vote ever (58 per cent). Lowassa, having moved to the opposition, scored nearly 40 per cent. The opposition also won a significant number of seats in Parliament. As we shall see, Magufuli never forgave the opposition for their relative success.

The rise of a messianic Bonaparte

Thus were created almost textbook conditions for the rise of a Bonaparte, in this case, a messianic Bonaparte. By the time of the fifth president, the post-Nyerere presidents had abandoned the country's cementing ideology, the Arusha Declaration. What was left of it was smashed to smithereens by the onslaught of neo-liberalism. The ideological vacuum thus created was filled with narrow nationalism and religious dogmas including religious salutations at political meetings and rallies in what was constitutionally a secular state.

The messianic variant of civilian Bonapartism best describes the Magufuli phenomenon. Messianic Bonapartism rules by fiat of the leader. It legitimises its rule not only by material measures in the interest of the down-trodden or oppressed (called *wanyonge* in Tanzania) but also by metaphysical appeals. The late President Magufuli used both in good measure. One of the most significant collateral damages of messianism is that accountability of the top leader disappears while their subordinates become, if at all, accountable to one person at the top. Politics are submerged in the personality of the president. Patriotism is defined and measured by one's loyalty to the president. Any critique of the president is labelled unpatriotic or anti-national, the term widely used by Hindutva BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) in India. Messianic Bonapartism shares some characteristics of the absolute monarchies of Europe. Absolute monarchs derived their legitimacy and authority from God, not from the people. And so-called good absolute monarchs were those who bestowed their largesse on their subjects. President Magufuli did not flinch in giving cash gifts to well-performing functionaries or leading an on-the-spot collection of funds for a complaining widow or a mama Ntilie. Such publicity stunts no doubt endeared the president to the masses, notwithstanding the fact that the impact of these acts was fleeting.

On many levels Magufuli scored a first in the political history of the country. He was the first president of the country since independence

50 years ago who was not a party veteran or a cadre. Unlike his predecessors, he was not brought up in the party. He was nowhere close to the first- or second-generation nationalists. In his ministerial portfolios under the third president, Mkapa, and later under the fourth president, Kikwete, he was better known for his close supervision of infrastructure projects than for his political acumen or ideological leanings. He got things done, which earned him the nickname 'bulldozer'. He was more of a supervisor than a leader. As a president, he never travelled outside the country except to nearby African countries. He did not attend a single United Nations General Assembly or an African Union Summit. He had little appreciation of international geo-politics. Although described as a Pan-Africanist after his death, he showed little understanding of the history or politics of Pan-Africanism. He saw regional organisations like the East African Community (EAC) or Southern African Development Community (SADC) as vehicles to enhance Tanzania's trade and economic benefits rather than as the political building blocks of Pan-Africanism. Although he rhetorically used the term ubeberu (imperialism), it is doubtful if he ever understood it as a system. He hardly ever talked about ubepari (capitalism) or for that matter ujamaa, socialism. His refrain and rhetoric was maendeleo (development), kutanguliza Mungu (putting God first) and uzalendo (patriotism). For him, 'development' was non-partisan; 'development' was above politics, above ideology and above all -isms.

He was the first president who was able, in five years, to accomplish major undertakings which his predecessors had failed to do over decades. He moved the capital to Dodoma, a project that had been conceived and planned by Nyerere. He embarked on a gigantic hydroelectric project across Stigler's Gorge. He initiated the building of the over-2000km-long Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) from Dar es Salaam to Mwanza and further west. He built many miles of tarmac roads across the country. He would invariably quote a string of statistics from memory of the length of roads built, the number of dispensaries, hospitals, schools and factories constructed under him. Whether these figures represented the whole truth on the ground, no one could tell, and those who could kept quiet for fear of contradicting the all-powerful and unpredictable leader. As a matter of fact, during Magufuli's time the Statistics Act of 2015 was amended to make it a crime punishable by a fine of ten million shillings or three years imprisonment or both 'to disseminate or otherwise communicate to the public any statistical information which is intended to invalidate, distort or discredit official statistics' (section 24B). A year later the amendment was repealed following pressure from local NGOs but not until the World Bank issued a statement showing its concern with the amendments and ending with a threat to withdraw its financial support to the strengthening of the national statistics system.[1]

While some of the mega-projects (like the SGR) undoubtedly made developmental sense, others were controversial given their possible medium- and long-term ecological effects. The Stigler's Gorge project and others (like buying eight airbuses and the Tanzanite bridge across the sea) could very well prove to be white elephants. While Magufuli lived, no one dared to challenge or contradict him. One consulting geologist from the University of Dar es Salaam who gave an adverse report on the feasibility of the Stigler's Gorge project was roundly condemned by the president in public before his peers for being unpatriotic.

He was the first president who made meaningful and far-reaching decisions like abolishing primary and secondary school fees, ordering the building of classrooms and buying of desks, extending health insurance coverage at a cheap premium to almost one-third of the population, issuing street vendors and kiosk-owners with identity cards at twenty thousand Tanzanian shillings which would legitimise their occupation and free them from constant harassment by city police and militia. A number of times he cancelled state celebrations like independence-day and redirected the money thus saved to infrastructural and health projects. These and other populist moves, some impactful and others inflated out of proportion, endeared him to *wanyonge* and earned him the title 'people's president', 'man of the people' and many other accolades generously bestowed on him by courtiers and praise-singers.

Magufuli's populist measures were not without contradictions. For instance, he barred pregnant school girls from education on the grounds of patriarchal morality which typically blames the victim. Use of misogynistic language was legendary with him. He unabashedly made remarks on the skin colour and figures of young female functionaries in his government. Yet hardly any local gender lobby could dare call him out. While he made primary and secondary education 'free', the loan instalment payments by university graduates was doubled, leaving little from their salaries for their upkeep.

He had little respect for the constitution or law. He did not even pay lip service to the rule of law and breached law and the constitution at will. He fired and humiliated senior civil servants in public meetings contrary to public service regulations and without proper investigation of their alleged misdeeds. While this to some extent restored discipline in the civil service, it was a discipline born of fear resulting in his ministers and civil servants shying away from making decisions.

During President Magufuli's reign some of the most draconian pieces of legislation were passed, propelled by his compliant Attorney General. Public interest litigation (founded on article 26 of the country's Constitution), under which a number of constitutional petitions were filed challenging some laws and Magufuli's public appointments, was abolished. A few vocal lawyers conducting such cases were taken before the Advocates Committee for disciplinary action. One of them, who had appeared in a case in which the credentials of the Attorney General himself were questioned, was struck off the roll of advocates. At the time of writing her appeal is pending before the High Court.

The list of unbailable offences under the notorious Money Laundering Act was extended to cover even such offences as tax evasion and use of illegal fishing nets. The law was generously used by the prosecution to incarcerate critical journalists and commentators. A few such cases were sufficient to strike fear in the rest, including critical intellectuals and academics. Once famous as a site of critical debates and discussions, the University of Dar es Salaam became an intellectual desert with its faculty tight lipped in the face of momentous happenings outside the campus. To be fair, Magufuli could not be solely blamed for this as the trend had already set in in the previous decade. One of the major collateral damages of neo-liberalisation of the university and marketisation of its scholars was the emaciation of the critical intellectual content of university life. But that is a subject on its own and is best left for another day.

Under Magufuli's presidency, the executive branch of the government became predominant riding roughshod over other branches. During his presidency, it would require a leap of imagination to believe that the country had separation of powers. Mundane state functions like swearing in ceremonies became grand functions at the state house with live TV coverage. Invariably, the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Chief Justice, commanders of the army and the police would be present seated in the front row with all their regalia. During such functions, which were essentially executive functions, the Speaker and Chief Justice would be invited to speak assuring the president of their loyalty and reiterating their admiration for him. His speech would come at the end. In a long-winded rambling monologue, he would harangue, humiliate and even reprimand his ministers and other public officials. The president would often give thinly veiled instructions to the head of the judiciary and the legislature. The speech would end with his oft-repeated refrain that he would not flinch from speaking the truth for those who tell the truth are the beloved of God.

Under President Magufuli's watch the country for the first time witnessed disappearances and kidnappings whose perpetrators remain unknown to this day. The perpetrators, we are told, were 'watu wasiojulikana' (unknown people). During his reign a wealthy businessman was mysteriously kidnapped and as mysteriously reappeared after 10 days. To this day it is not known what the motive was, who did it and what was the deal between the perpetrators and the victim's wealthy family that led to his release. The businessman incredibly claimed a year later that no ransom money had been paid (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-50235322). An outspoken, high-profile, if somewhat erratic, leader of the opposition party was shot at in broad day light by the occupants of a trailing land cruiser. Sixteen bullets were pumped into his body. Thankfully he survived, after dozens of surgeries performed on him in a foreign country, but the agony and the traumatic experience that he and his family and his admirers went through was inhuman and immeasurable. To date the perpetrators have not been arrested or sent before a court of law, nor does any one know if the police are continuing the investigation or if the file has been conveniently closed.

Soon after coming to power on a slim majority, by Tanzanian standards, of 58 per cent President Magufuli lost no time in coming down heavily on opposition parties. Political rallies were banned, opposition leaders were harassed, and slapped with all kinds of charges which kept them in court or prisons most of the time. Civil society organisations and NGOs fared no better. Funded by foreign agencies, some of them dubious, and having no constituency or agenda of their own, NGOs were most vulnerable. Extreme controls were imposed on them. Some of them found their bank accounts closed while others were subjected to all kinds of demands from revenue authorities.

As might be expected, print and electronic media bore the brunt of repression. While public media

joined the praise-singing choir, private media too fell in line to protect their businesses and profits. Fearing closure or being slapped with heavy fines by the regulatory agency (TCRA) for smallest of infractions (which were not unknown), the media avoided controversial stories and investigative reporting. A couple of critical newspapers and online TV channels were either banned or starved of advertisements. They went under.

Ironically while the mainstream media was undergoing censure, a mysterious media mini-tycoon emerged on the scene like a phoenix. He owned a couple of newspapers and TV Online (an Online TV channel). His newspapers defamed prominent people, even party stalwarts, without let or hindrance. He abused and poured verbal venom on Magufuli's critics and perceived opponents and enemies. He had no respect for professionalism or ethics. No disciplinary action has ever been taken against him either by regulatory bodies or media watchdogs.

Arguably the measure which was most important in making Magufuli known on the continent was his bold taking on of the multinational gold company Barrick Gold. And he did it in his own spectacular fashion. He stopped containers full of mineral sand to be exported by Acacia, a subsidiary of Barrick, for smelting. He formed a local team of experts to investigate the mineral content of the sand. Simultaneously, the Tanzania Revenue Authority slapped on it a huge bill of unpaid taxes amounting to USD190 billion. As expected, the expert team found that the sand contained a variety of minerals costing billions of shillings. The long and short of the story is that Barrick Gold had to send its chief executives to Tanzania to negotiate with the government, bypassing the Acacia management. Eventually the parties struck a deal under which Barrick would pay USD300 million in settlement of the tax dispute and give Tanzania a 16 per cent stake in a new company, Twiga Minerals, which would operate Barrick's three mines. Meanwhile, the ban on export of mineral sand was lifted. Details and the small print of the agreement were never made public. It is not clear if the promises made have been fulfilled.

In the same vein, a progressive piece of legislation called Natural Wealth and Resources (Permanent Sovereignty) Act was passed in 2017. While the law recognises the sovereign ownership of the people of natural resources, they are legally vested in the president who holds the same in trust. Most of its provisions, including this one, are really hortatory in that they cannot be easily enforced in a court of law. Nonetheless, the law did send a strong message that at least in theory the Tanzanian government would not tolerate any exploitation of its natural resources which had no benefit to the people of Tanzania. One provision which forbade any international agreement from providing for dispute settlement by outside bodies could be considered a great advance since most of these agreements invariably provide for international arbitration of disputes. Research has to be done to establish if this provision has been observed in practice. My hunch is that it has not.

The president also boldly moved against grand corruption. A number of high-profile, and hitherto untouchable, business people perceived to be corrupt were charged with unbailable offences. A few bought back their freedom through plea-bargaining; some are still rotting in jail. The former Vice-President of Acacia Deo Mwanyika was charged with money laundering for alleged tax evasion soon after retirement from the company. Eventually he bought his freedom by way of a plea-bargaining agreement coughing up millions of shillings. (indeed many others charged similarly had to agree to pay handsome sums of money to get back their freedom.) Ironically, he was nominated by Magufuli's party to stand for Parliament in the 2020 elections which he duly won. A well-known businessmen who had been charged under the money laundering law for allegedly avoiding taxes died in remand custody.

In the 2020 general election Magufuli won by a landslide, getting an unprecedented 84 per cent while the ruling party won all parliamentary seats except a couple. Opposition parties cried foul but theirs was a voice in the wilderness. For the first time since the general elections began in the country in 1965, no election petitions were filed. It was a telling comment on the 2020 General Elections under President Magufuli's watch. It was also a veiled pointer to the loss of people's trust in the impartiality of the judiciary.

Within two or so years of Magufuli's rule the civil and political space virtually disappeared. Selected disappearances, court cases against perceived opponents and closure or fining of media – both print and electronic – instilled fear, uncertainty and hopelessness even in outspoken academic critics. Magufuli shrewdly dangled carrots in front of academics by appointing a significant number of professors and PhDs to his cabinet and top public service positions thus denuding the university of its most senior faculty. The remaining joined the queue hoping to be picked up in the next round of presidential appointments.

The country had never before experienced such an intense perception of repression. Critics were subdued. Some leading opposition politicians were 'bought' off with political positions. Overnight they crossed the aisle becoming flag-waving members of the ruling party. Meanwhile, the populist rhetoric coupled with promises of beneficial material improvement for the wanyonge – free education, health insurance, relative discipline in delivery of public services and well-publicised action against notorious businesspeople for corruption, tax evasion, drug business etc – garnered support of the masses behind the president. The president's unrelenting industrialisation drive, albeit unplanned and incoherent, gave jobless youth the hope of employment. In the event, whatever new industrial plants were put up they made little dent on unemployment figures. In itself the idea of industrialisation had a lot to commend it but for it to make developmental sense it had to be coherent and consistent with a broad vision of building a nationally integrated economy in which industry and agriculture would be mutually reinforcing. The president had no such vision and it is doubtful if he sought any advice or accepted it if given.

The president also became the chairman of the party, in terms of the convention established by the first phase government. Nyerere believed, not without reason, that the Tanzanian polity was not ready for the separation of the state president and the party chairman. The party was brought up and bred on centralisation of power. Under Magufuli's chairmanship, party organs like the Central Committee and NEC were slimmed down in terms of numbers and filled with loyalists. The old guard of the party was weeded out. Two former Secretary Generals of the party and the foreign minister in Kikwete's government with presidential ambitions were hounded, defamed and relentlessly humiliated in the media owned by the new kid on the block (see above). No action was taken against the mini media tycoon. Instead, the victims of his defamation campaign were subjected to disciplinary measures. One was reprimanded, another was suspended and put under watch while the former foreign minister was expelled. Eventually, all but the latter asked for forgiveness and were duly forgiven. A similar dose of medicine was administered on one of the very vocal cadres of CCM who had campaigned vigorously for Magufuli in the 2015 election. He was appointed minister for information in the Magufuli cabinet. He dared to cross swords with one of Magufuli's favourite regional commissioners which earned him a revocation of his appointment as a minister. When he tried to hold a press conference to explain his side of the story at a city hotel, he was confronted by a plain-clothes pistol-wielding person who forced him back into his car. To this day no one has been held accountable for that roguish behaviour. Eventually he too asked for forgiveness and was duly forgiven.

The new chairman of the party appointed a young person from the University of Dar es Salaam with progressive credentials as Secretary General of the party. Another young person with no political or ideological credentials to speak of except vituperous outpourings became the ideology and publicity secretary of the party. None of them had an independent base either in the party or outside. They became the public image of the party in the shadow of the chairman to whom they were eternally beholden.

The passing of the president

The framers of 1977 Constitution (as amended) wisely provided for the contingency of the death of an incumbent president. In case of such eventuality the vice-president would take over for the remaining the term of the deceased president. This provision was not well known even to constitutional lawyers and had certainly not featured in public discussions on the constitution. This was so partly because there had never been such an occurrence but mainly because this provision was new, having been introduced in one of a spate of constitutional amendments following the introduction of multi-party in 1992. In the Eighth Constitutional Amendment, the framers borrowed the system of a running-mate from the United States. Together with this, the framers took over almost lock, stock and barrel the American provision on succession in case of the death of an incumbent president (25th Amendment to the US Constitution). Article 37(5) of the 1977 Constitution stipulated that in case of, among other things, the death of the incumbent, the vice-president should be sworn in to be the president.

After the announcement of the death of the president it took almost 60 hours before the vice-president was sworn in.[2] A few legal commentators opined that there was a lacuna (gap) in the constitution which did not provide the timeframe within which the vice-president had to be sworn in. One legal expert who has attained a kind of celebrity status for conducting public interest litigation even opined that it would be imprudent to swear in the succeeding president while the body of the late president had not yet been interred. One does not have to be a constitutional expert to read the constitution in context

to conclude that the successor has to be sworn in immediately, that in fact there is no lacuna in the constitution. Under Tanzania's Constitution the president is the commander in chief of the armed forces with powers to declare war and make peace, with powers to declare state of emergency etc. The presidency therefore cannot remain vacant for any length of time. The practice in the US, from where article 37(5) of the Tanzanian Constitution was lifted, has been to swear in the vice-president to become president immediately on the confirmation of the death of the incumbent president. When John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963 in the city of Dallas, Lyndon B. Johnson, his vice-president, was sworn in within two hours on board Air Force One while it was still parked on the runway. In the event, to the relief of many, the constitution prevailed. It is not clear which superior force intervened in favour of the constitution. So far, the transition has gone smoothly.

Glimpses into the future

It is too early to say the direction that the new regime will take under president Samia Suluhu Hassan. To be sure, it is likely to be a little more liberal politically and economically and a little less heavy on invoking rhetorical invectives against western governments. In changing the symbolic salutation from religious to secular, the president will probably adhere to the secular tradition of the country. She is likely to open up to the outside world. The extent of opening up will determine whether her government draws in the laissez faire elements of the fourth phase government or remains within the parameters of national interest. All in all, the party and the government which she now heads is likely to continue on the path of neo-liberalism. Thus the stark choice in the immediate and medium-term future is not so much between nationalism and neo-liberalism but rather between rampant and regulated neo-liberalism.

Whether or not and how far the new president opens up the civil space will also determine how far the working people are able to organise themselves openly to defend their interests. There are disturbing signs that opportunist politicians, businessmen and IFIs (International Financial Institutions) are getting too close to the president. If they prevail, the neo-liberal path will consolidate itself. There is a fear among more conscious elements that some of the worst features of neo-liberalism – rampant pillage of natural resources, reaping of monopoly super profits at the expense of the working people, land grabbing resulting in eviction of small holders, further exacerbation of social inequalities and mass misery– may once again reappear with a vengeance. In which case, whatever goodwill the president may have generated will quickly evaporate.

One major lesson to draw from the Magufuli phenomenon is that our polities in the periphery remain fragile and masses disorganised. Therefore our polities are vulnerable and amenable to the rise of narrow nationalists and populists on the one hand, and rampant neo-liberals on the other. Under the circumstances, organisation-building remains foremost on the working peoples' agenda. The politics of class struggle have to transit from spontaneity to organisation just as committed left intellectuals have to transit from being public to organic intellectuals.

Ultimately the working people have to depend on themselves rather than wait for a messiah to deliver them. Hopefully the Magufuli phenomenon would have taught progressive African intellectuals to distinguish between rhetorical anti-imperialism and systemic understanding of the global capitalist-imperialist system; between populist demagogues and popular democrats; between mass political line and mass evangelism; and between a protracted struggle of the working people for liberation and emancipation from below and short-cut measures to development and promises of deliverance from above.

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Notes

1. 'The Bank has over the years supported Tanzania to develop a national statistical system that effectively and efficiently delivers reliable and timely statistics. Given the recent Amendments to the 2015 Statistics Act, the Bank is in discussions with the Government on whether further support to building sustainable statistical systems is appropriate at this time.' (https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/statement/2018/10/02/world-bank-statement-on-amendments-to-tanzanias-2015-statistics-act)
2. There are pointers that there was some factional struggle on succession. In absence of further research and evidence, it would be speculative to identify the factions involved. That there was indeed some force obstructing the immediate swearing in can be reasonably inferred from the delay.

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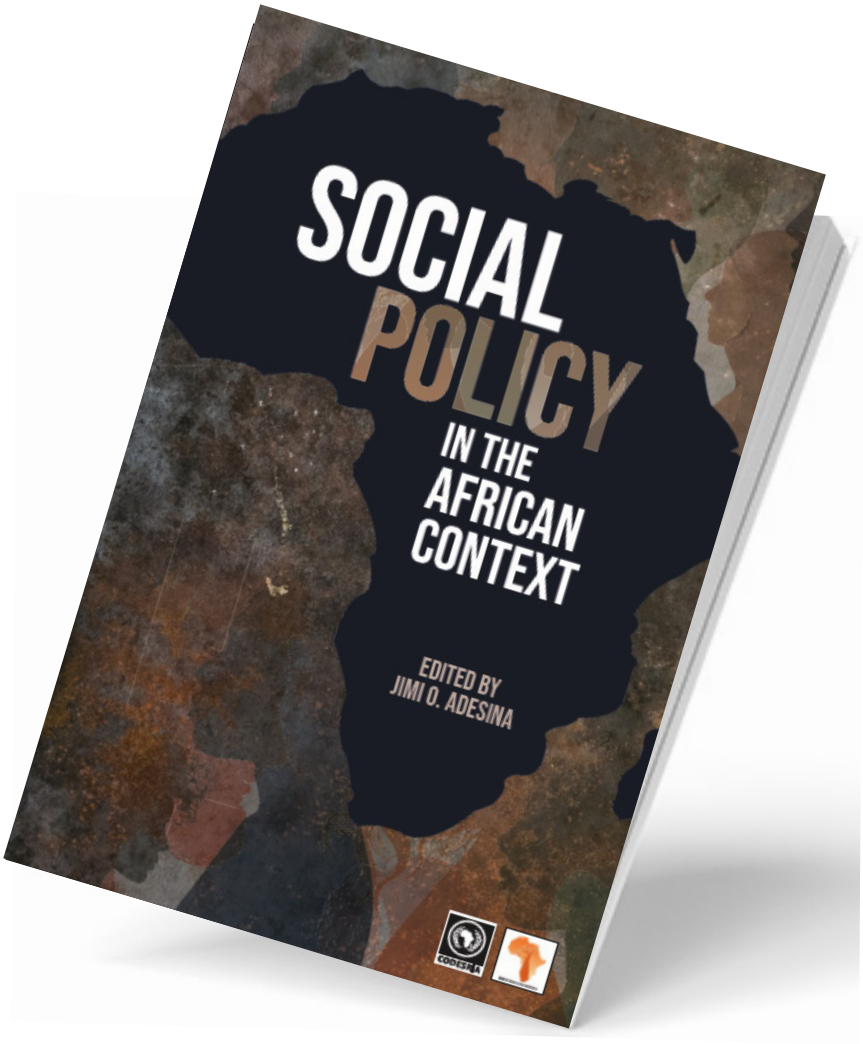

The 'counter-revolution' in Development Economics in the 1980s fundamentally altered the way the state 'thinks', which is evident in the state's retrenchment and reconstitution of the state's relationship to its citizens. The combination of deflationary macroeconomic policies and a residual approach to social policy, broadly, and social provisioning, more specifically, fundamentally altered the post-colonial trajectory of public policy in Africa. Despite the neoliberal ascendance that nurtured the more residual direction of social policy, the contention for an alternative vision of social policy remained and advanced with vigour. Specific contributions range from the deployment of social policy in framing the nation-building project, endogenous mutual support institutions, land and agrarian reform as a social policy instrument, the gender dynamics of social policy, and the mechanism enabling the spread of cash transfer schemes on the continent.

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Jomo Kwame Sundaram,
former UN Assistant Secretary-General and emeritus professor

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A Rejoinder to Shivji's 'Dialectics of Maguphilia and Maguphobia'

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The late, renowned Kenyan scholar Ali Mazrui wrote in his famous article on Tanzania, *Tanzaphilia*, that '(i)ntellectuals everywhere in the world have a weakness for fellow intellectuals'. This maxim is vivid in Issa Shivji's recent essay, 'The Dialectics of Maguphilia and Maguphobia'. The author, in his wide-ranging historical account of the actions that laid the foundation for the rise of a person that he has described as a 'messianic' Bonaparte, highlights a range of controversial measures that were taken by the country's first president Julius Kambarage Nyerere as he sought to consolidate power and pursue a nation-building agenda.

These measures included the abolition of the multi-party system; the dissolution and re-establishment of the army, and its integration into the party; and the evisceration of trade unions, as well as other civil society bodies. Yet, Shivji exudes compassion towards these measures by subtly expressing doubt as to whether Nyerere's actions were authoritarian. It is as if grand ambitions such as nation-building and the pursuit of national unity have an inherent value that casts doubt on the definition of authoritarianism.

As a critical, leftist scholar who came of age during Nyerere's long tenure of office, a time when the nation experimented with the ideals of socialism, the author's compassion is understandable. Shivji was able to choose his career trajectory and publish his notable book during this period without any significant (negative) consequences. Also, as the co-author of one of Nyerere's biographies and former holder of a professorial chair in Nyerere's name, he definitely has a stake in Nyerere's legacy. This is to say that, when reading the author, one has to understand that his background and intellectual orientation have had the effect of moderating his views on first-phase government.

Shivji's description of the fifth-phase president – John Pombe Magufuli – as a messianic Bonaparte is based on the circumstances underpinning Magufuli's ascent to power. In his essay, the author writes: 'When classes are weak, or have been disarmed ideologically and organisationally over a generation, politics suffer from Bonapartist effects.' He notes elsewhere that 'Bonapartism has arisen in historical situations where the struggling classes have either exhausted themselves and there is an apparent vacuum in the body politic or reign of the previous ruler has been so laissez faire that "law and order" has broken down'.

These two quotations shed some light on what, according to the author, constitutes Bonapartism. The problem is that Shivji presents Bonapartism as if it is an influential framework that has a unified theory behind it, ignoring all contestations in literature, and assuming its full applicability to the Tanzanian context. A reader wonders what value the framework brings to the essay, given its narrow origin. The author's constant efforts, throughout the essay, to anchor it to populism point to a sense of awareness as to its superficiality.

The author's core argument is that the state's weakening of other centres of power, which started during the first-phase government, and the subsequent organisational and ideological deterioration of the ruling party, created the conditions necessary for the rise of a Bonapartist leader. This was especially due to the establishment's failure to mitigate the effects of neoliberalism on the 'struggling' classes. He contends that Benjamin William Mkapa, the third-phase president, 'can easily be described as the father of neo-liberalism in Tanzania' and that, by the end of his rule, it 'was a full-blown neo-liberal state.' Shivji also observes that the regime of the fourth-phase president – Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete– was the most laissez faire in the country's history, but does not explain why the tenure of the second-phase president Ali Hassan Mwi-

nyi, which was fairly laissez faire, did not produce a similar outcome. As for sixth-phase president Samia Suluhu Hassan he cautiously asserts: 'It is too early to say the direction that the new regime will take' though 'it is likely to be a little more liberal politically and economically and a little less heavy on invoking rhetorical invectives against western governments'.

In my view, the emboldened opposition under Kikwete, especially as it benefited from the growing support of the struggling classes, and the alignment of forces with the civil society (especially NGOs), explains the difference between the Kikwete presidency and that of Mwinyi. But Shivji writes dismissively about NGOs, regurgitating his old, standard argument that they lack both constituency, and an agenda of their own, mainly due to the predominant nature of their foreign funding. The uncertainty surrounding the sustainability, and even the legitimacy of NGO operations is a well-known issue. However, the author's consistent failure to acknowledge a sense of agency among those that take part in NGO operations amounts to a form of intellectual rigidity. If the unqualified funding logic is extended to Shivji's own activities, one would be justified in questioning whether *Kavazi*[1] (Nyerere Resource Centre), which is now defunct, came close to having its own agenda, given that a significant portion of its funding came from foreign benefactors.

The author indicates that President Magufuli had many firsts and suggests the country experienced kidnappings and disappearances for the first time during his administration. To be fair, the country saw extreme violations of rights, and disappearances in Zanzibar during Abeid Amani Karume's tenure as the first President of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar and First Vice-President of the United Republic of Tanzania, to the extent of attracting protest from the international community. Nyerere is on record as arguing that it would take a while for Zanzibar to be brought fully under the union, indicating that he wasn't comfortably in charge of the situation. In the mainland, lengthy detentions without trial weren't unheard of under Nyerere. I personally remember a neighbour's son who 'disappeared' in the early 1970s, and only re-appeared many years later – sometime in the late 1990s. Disappearance, both actual and figurative, did not start with Magufuli.

Of initiatives that were undertaken by President Magufuli, the author writes quite positively about reforms in the extractives sector. He describes the Permanent Sovereignty Act (2017) as a progressive piece of legislation, and commends the (initial) ban on international arbitration (which has been technically rescinded) as a great 'advance'. As a person who has spent nearly a decade specialising in extractives sector governance, I understand that ownership is often not a matter of contention. After all, it is a norm that the state owns the resources on behalf of its populace. What is of paramount importance is the state's capacity to manage concessions granted to multi-national corporations (MNCs). Tanzania's problem has not been ownership, but limited capacity. The ownership question is an agenda that has been popularised by politicians, for it is easy to sell.

In terms of international arbitration, Shivji must be aware, as a qualified lawyer, that MNCs avoid seeking adjudication in local (especially Third World) courts due to the judiciary's lack of independence, and competence challenges. The author's essay points to this phenomenon when he describes a situation where the head of the judiciary would receive orders, in public, from the president. In short, the provision for local arbitration wasn't in line with industry standards, and was bound to fail.

The author's reflection on the legacy of the previous regime in Tanzania is detailed, provocative, and fascinating. My rejoinder has only focused on a few angles that stood out for me, but the essay will remain a key reference document for years to come. One wonders whether there is a memoir, full of personal anecdotes, from Shivji's 'progressive' former student and the late Magufuli's 'last' Chief Secretary Bashiru Ally Kakurwa on the way!

Note

1. This term was coined from the standard Swahili term Makavazi to symbolize the uniqueness of Nyerere's place in Tanzania's history, and thus his records as preserved by the resource centre.

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Why Development and Transformative Social Policy Matter: Lessons of COVID-19 in Africa

A lecture in honour of Thandika Mkandawire, delivered at the London School of Economics, 20 November 2020

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Introduction

I would like to start by expressing my appreciation to Prof. James Putzel, Prof. Duncan Green and the Department of International Development here at the LSE for the honour of this invitation. The department is home to several friends, and it was the academic home of a person to whom I owe a lot, Professor Thandika Mkandawire. Thandika would have been eighty years old on 10 October this year. He passed away on the 27 March 2020.

Three people have been most influential in my academic journey. Omafume Onoge and John Ohiorhenuan were influential teachers and *ndugu* during my time as a student at the University of Ibadan. And then there was Thandika, whom I first met shortly after completing my doctoral studies. 'He to me, was everything.' Thandika was a veritable *Mwalimu.* Every encounter, every moment of breaking bread, was a time to behold the musing of a mind with immense capacity for observation and cutting through intellectual bull. From Thandika one learnt never to shirk from the cause of Africa. From him, we learnt how to be human. I present this lecture in his honour.

The lecture is concerned with some of the lessons that we can learn from Africa's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. A public lecture imposes time constraint. For this reason, I have limited my focus to two sets of lessons: those concerned with the national responses to the livelihood impacts of the pandemic, and what the pandemic reveals about the crisis of structural transformation, research and the innovation ecosystem, and manufacturing capacity. I use these lessons to address why Development and Transformative Social Policy matter for Africa.

The constraint of time also imposes a limit of country cases that can be used. In large part (though not exclusively), I have drawn on the cases of Nigeria and South Africa. The choice is not accidental. These are the two largest economies in Africa. The choice is also personal: I am Nigerian by birth and South African by domicile.

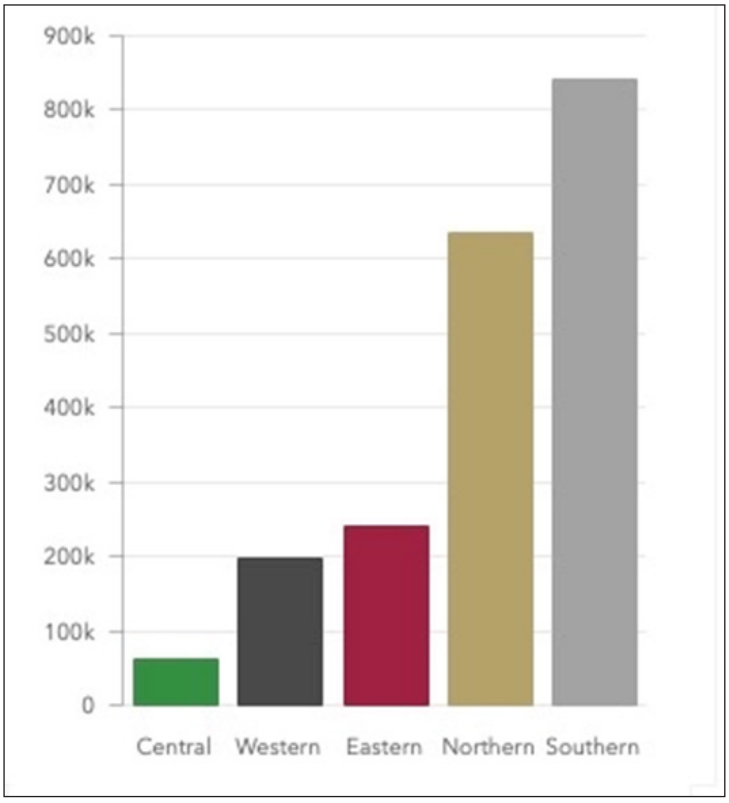

Figure 1: Regional Distribution of Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Cases (14 November 2020)

Source: Africa CDC

COVID-19 Pandemic and Africa: some lessons

According to the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, as of 14 November 2020, there were 1,965,485 reported cases of SARS-COV-2 infection across the continent, and 47,134 confirmed COVID-19 deaths (Africa CDC 2020). Africa accounted for 3.65 per cent of the global ***reported*** cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection, and 3.6 per cent of ***reported*** COVID-19 deaths.

The southern Africa region accounted for 42.75 per cent of total reported cases, North Africa accounted for 32.32 per cent and West Africa 10.06 per cent. South Africa accounted for 89.15 per cent of the total reported cases in southern Africa, while Morocco and Egypt accounted for 62.76 per cent of the total confirmed cases in North Africa. In West Africa, Nigeria accounted for 32.85 per cent of the total ***confirmed*** cases.

Case Illustration: Nigeria and South Africa

On 27 February 2020, Nigeria reported its first SARS-CoV-2 case. The index case was an Italian national who, two days earlier, flew into the country from Milan. At the time only Egypt and Algeria had reported cases of the new coronavirus infection. On Thursday 5 March 2020, South Africa reported its index case—a 38-year-old male who had travelled to Italy and had returned to South Africa on 1 March 2020 (NICD 2020).

Figure 2 shows the trend in the confirmed cases (on a seven-day moving average) of confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, with South Africa reaching a peak of 12,587 cases on 20 July 2020 and Nigeria a peak of 642 confirmed cases on 3 July 2020.

While the quantitative trend in the two cases differs significantly, both countries—like most other African countries—responded very quickly to the initial pronouncements of the WHO in January 2020 about the new coronavirus and moved rapidly to respond with the reporting of their index cases.

Note that I refer to '***confirmed cases'*** because we can only talk in terms of the confirmed reported cases rather than actual prevalence rates or case fatality in a country. The testing rate is important in reported confirmed cases. In the second week of November 2020, SARS-COV-2 tests per thousand of the population stood at 3.42 in Nigeria (14 November). This was against 86.5 tests per thousand of the population in South Africa (15 November), 13.44 tests per thousand in Senegal (15 November) and 44.38 tests per thousand of the population in Rwanda (11 November) and Senegal (21 October). The test rate for Singapore was 695.15 per thousand of the population (Our World in Data 2020b). The test rate reflects a combination of testing capacity and institutional commitment to confront the pandemic, among other factors .

While much has been made about the unreliability of case and fatality data from Africa, there is consensus that the pandemic has hit the continent much less than the initial projections suggested. And there has been the scramble, again, to explain the Africa Dummy. Some of these explanations have been gentle. The early response to the pandemic by several African countries, drawing on the previous experiences of dealing with epidemics—the most recent being the Ebola outbreak—has been used to explain the less than predicted infection and fatality rates of Covid-19. And there is the story of Africa's youthful population as an explanation. But there have been more bizarre ideas. The high poverty rate and overcrowded shanty towns have been offered to explain the relatively low case and fatality rates (Harding 2020). It is a curious one. So, what might the policy advice to the UK government be from this proposition? If you want to deal with a raging pandemic, you should let poverty rise precipitously in your country and encourage the growth of slums and shanty towns?

If the case and fatality impact might have been much less than predict-

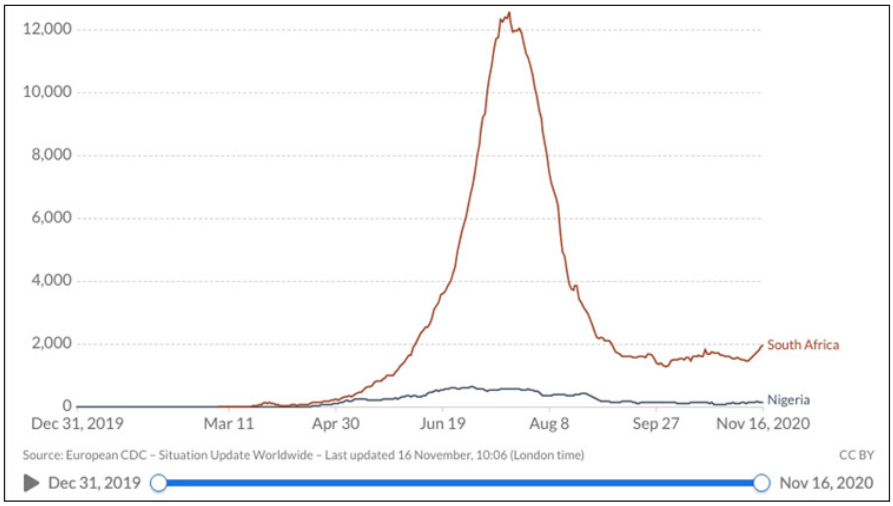

Figure 2: Daily confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection (South Africa and Nigeria).
Source: Our World In Data 2020a, https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus-testing#world-map-total-tests-performed-relative-to-the-size-of-population.

ed, the livelihood impact of partial or total lockdowns would have been more severe. I say 'would have' because we have little, in the way of firm and solid data, to make a precise determination.

In a continent where micro enterprises (and the informal economy) represent a substantial share of the labour market, not being able to trade on a daily basis would impact, adversely, the livelihood of people who depend on daily receipts. With the adverse impact of lockdowns in sending countries, migrants' remittances are projected to be affected. The World Bank claimed that 'remittance flows to low and middle-income countries (LMICs) are projected to fall by 7 percent, to $508 billion in 2020, followed by a further decline of 7.5 percent, to $470 billion in 2021' (World Bank 2020).

The social policy architecture in place before the pandemic matters in the capacity of a country to respond to the livelihood challenges of the contraction of economic activities. Here, the limited available evidence suggests that the degree of informality within the economy, and the labour market in particular, will affect the exposure to the livelihood impact of public health mitigation measures and downturn in economic activity. Even if public authorities are inclined to roll out livelihood mitigation measures, against the loss of income, the institutions may simply not be there to ensure the reach. Much of this, we would argue, has a lot to do with the model of social protection that the dominant international actors have actively pushed and merchandised over the past two decades: the residual, segregated, social assistance model.

The COVID-19 pandemic also shows why inequality matters. The capacity of individuals to cope with restrictions on economic and social activities reflects the inequality of wealth and asset-holding, and labour market locations. It is easy to self-isolate when you live in a mansion; not so much when you are part of a family of five living in a single-room shack. It is easy to ride the short-term loss of income when you have significant discretionary resources stashed away in bank accounts; less so if you are an informal sector vendor who depends on daily revenue flows for survival. In this regard, Nigeria and South Africa are two of the four African countries with the highest wealth inequality, with South Africa at 84.0 and Nigeria at 81.4. Nigeria is the only non-southern African country on the list (Adesina 2016).

Testing capacity, quality of care that medical outfits can provide, capacity to produce testing equipment and reagents, all point to the level and quality of pre-pandemic investment in the national system of innovation and national manufacturing capacity. Even at the much lower levels of the effects of the pandemic on cases and fatalities, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed important deficiencies in these areas of Africa's capacity to respond. These are issues of Development, what we mean by Development, and the nature of the social policy architecture that undergirds a country's welfare regime.

Informality and Social Policy Response to the Pandemic

The degree of informality of an economy and the labour market has implications for the development of social policy architecture. The proposition is that the reach of a national social insurance system is constrained by labour market informality. For Africa, this has been reinforced by the intense merchandising of segmented, stratified and segregated social policy (Fischer 2018) and the restraint of industrial policy that came as part of the neoliberal public policy project of the last four decades. The deepening of economic informality is itself a product of the reversal of the industrialisation project that was witnessed in the first two decades of the post-independence period.

Figure 3 suggests that 89.7 per cent and 82.7 per cent of females and males, respectively, in Africa are in informal employment (including agriculture). There are, of course, regional and national variations. Nigeria and South Africa demonstrate such variation. Dell'Anno and Adu (2020) put the figure of Nigeria's labour force employed in micro enterprises at 81.3 per cent in 2013. The 2020 third quarter labour force survey data for South Africa suggests that 16.72 per cent of South Africa's labour force was employed in what the national statistical agency refers to as the 'informal sector' (StatsSA 2020). This excludes employment in the agricultural sector. Even if we add employment in 'private households', the highest share of informal employment would be 24.35 per cent. Technically, however, informal employment will be less than this figure considering that, where someone is employed in domestic work for more than 24 hours per month, this employment is subject to a minimum wage and unemployment insurance.

Taken together with the social policy architectures of both countries, the structure of the labour market in Nigeria and South Africa would explain the differences in the social protection responses of Nigeria and South Africa.

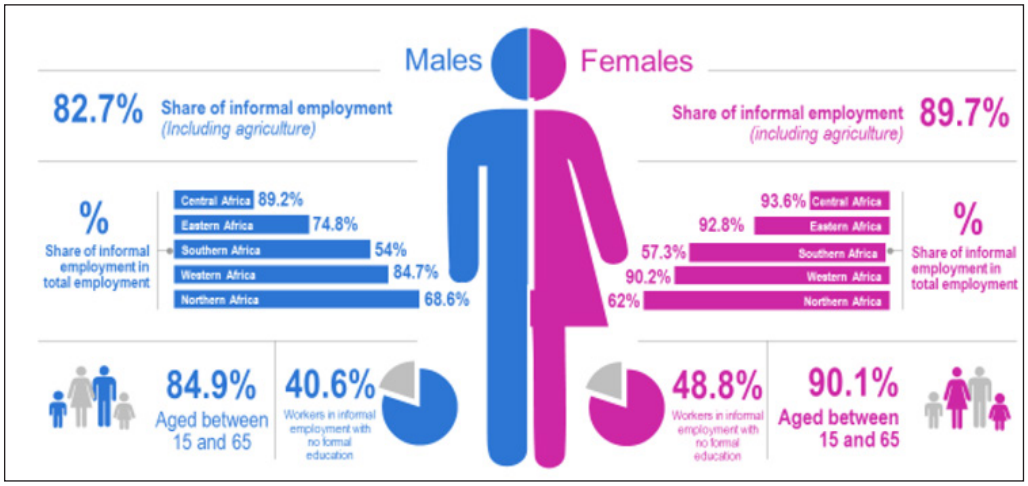

Figure 3: Size and composition of informal employment in Africa (2016)
Source: Kiaga, Lapeyre and Marcadent, 2020

In Nigeria, a localised lockdown started on 30 March 2020, affecting Lagos State, Ogun State and the Federal Capital Territory. The primary social protection responses included a transfer in cash and a promised food pack for the 'most vulnerable' in the areas affected by the lockdown. The cash transfer involved a lump sum payment of NGN 20,000 to people already on the Household Uplifting Programme (HUP) that had been launched in September 2016. The social assistance programme was a condition, set by the World Bank and Switzerland, for Switzerland to return to Nigeria the USD 322 million of the 'Abacha Loot' lodged in Swiss banks. This 'loot' was part of what the former dictator, Sani Abacha, was believed to have siphoned from the country's coffers. As of March 2020, the National Social Register, from which HUP beneficiaries are drawn, had on its roll 2.6 million households (about 11 million Nigerians). To get a sense of the generosity of the amount paid as cash transfer to mitigate the livelihood impact of the lockdown, the lump sum payment is the equivalent of NGN 333 per day. A 500g loaf of white bread in Lagos cost NGN 355 at the start of the lockdown.

The food parcels were distributed sporadically in some of the states. The widespread looting of government warehouses as an adjunct to the #EndSARS protest movement in October 2020 was indicative of the sense of fairness and efficiency in the distribution of the packs. The #EndSARS protests were initially a revolt led by young people in protest at policy brutality.

At the end of October 2020, another one-off cash payment of NGN 30,000 was announced. This was targeted at 'artisans and self-employed individuals'. The scheme restricted the pay-out to 9,000 beneficiaries in each of the thirty-six states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory.

In South Africa, a national lockdown came into effect on 27 March 2020. The social protection measures to mitigate the livelihood impact involved three broad instruments. The first involved existing social grants. The Child Support Grant (CSG) was raised to ZAR 740 per child in May 2020. From June to October, the grant reverted to ZAR 440 per child, while caregivers of a child received ZAR 500 a month for the period of June to October 2020. This amount was regardless of the number of children in a household who received the grant. Recipients of all other grants received a top-up of ZAR 250 per month from June to October 2020. These grants covered 17 million beneficiaries, out of which about 12.5 million were CSG beneficiaries.

While often mobilised within the international social assistance network as an example of 'social protection' worthy of emulation, South Africa's social grant system is no poster child for poor-centric social assistance schemes. While eligibility involves means-testing, this is not targeted at 'the poor'. In October 2019, for a child to qualify for the Child Support Grant, the income threshold for the caregiver was ZAR 4,300 per month (SASSA 2019). The Upper Bound Poverty Line for 2019 was ZAR 1,227 (StatsSA 2019).

In addition to the top-up of the social grant, a new Special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant was introduced for those who were normally not recipients of any of the existing social grants. The benefit level was ZAR 350 per month. Initially intended to run until October 2020, this special grant has now been extended to January 2021. Again, to apply our earlier measure of generosity, the special relief grant translates to ZAR 11.66 a day, or less than the cost of a 500-gram loaf of white bread. Like Nigeria's HUP-based COVID-19 mitigation measure, the Social Relief of Distress Grant reflects the dominant vision of public social provisioning in the so-called international development circles. It comes with a di-

minished vision of an acceptable level of human wellbeing. The grant was benchmarked against the national food poverty line (Ramaphosa 2020). However, in 2019, the food poverty line was ZAR 561 a month (StatsSA 2019: 3).

A third instrument, concerned with protecting jobs, was the Temporary Employee/Employer Relief Scheme (TERS). The scheme was implemented under the national Unemployment Insurance Fund—a contributory social insurance scheme that covers income loss while unemployed for a limited period. It is a national social insurance housed at the national Department of Employment and Labour. In March 2019, the net asset of the UIF was ZAR 144.26 billion (UIF 2019).

TERS compensates employers who are unable to pay the full salaries of their employees, and employees who were furloughed could apply to the scheme. Claims under the scheme were capped at ZAR 17,712.00 per month, per employee. As of 27 October 2020, over ZAR 51 billion had been paid to one million companies, disbursed in over 11.5 million payments (Buthelezi 2020). It is difficult to imagine that the UIF could have played the role it did in protecting jobs and livelihoods if it had been designed around market-based insurance models. Its strength and relevance lie in being a publicly managed national social insurance scheme.

The structure of the South African labour market and the space for social insurance for 70 per cent of those in the labour market allows the institutional basis and a national social insurance to support livelihoods at a much higher level than what is offered to those supported through social assistance measures.

R&I and manufacturing deficits

In March 2020, news emerged that researchers at the Institut Pasteur de Dakar in Senegal had developed a rapid diagnostic kit for SARS-CoV-2 (new coronavirus), which would cost about USD 1 and produce results in a matter of minutes, not hours. Senegal and the institute have accumulated considerable experience in dealing with epidemics in the past, the latest being the Ebola epidemic. Like many other African countries, experience of dealing with earlier cases of epidemic came into play in the mitigation and control of the COVID-19 pandemic. The diagnostic kit is being developed and validated in partnership with other research entities around the world, the most prominent of which is the UK's Bedfordshire-based Mologic. While most news outlets and the researchers at the Institut Pasteur de Dakar claim the development of the kit as largely their innovation, Mologic claims on its website that it:

> Is working in close partnership with the Institut Pasteur de Dakar to validate and manufacture the COVID-19 test at a new manufacturing site, DiaTropix, in Senegal. This will be the first time that a diagnostics kit *created in the UK* will be jointly manufactured in Africa, to ensure its immediate availability, to manage any potential outbreaks on the continent, and further international spread. (Mologic 2020)

While international collaboration is important for scientific efforts, the Institut Pasteur's tie-up with Mologic betrays once again the crisis of dependence and intellectual/scientific sovereignty, in which Senegalese researchers are likely to be reduced to junior partners. Much of this has to do with investment in, and building, national research and innovation capacity, within the framework of a national sovereign project. The underfunding of innovation infrastructure turned into defunding in the wake of first-wave neoliberalism—à la Structural Adjustment Programme. The validation of the diagnostic test kit is being undertaken in the UK, not Senegal. The issue is not if African scientists are capable of innovation. The concern is the denuding of the broader infrastructure that a national system of innovation requires for an autonomous and sovereign functioning.

Similarly, scientists at the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, in Lagos, developed the SARS-CoV-2 Isothermal Molecular Assay (SIMA) kit, which is ten times less expensive than the standard PCR test and will produce results in under forty minutes (Medical Brief 2020). The reagents used in the SIMA test kits still needed to be imported from the UK (Lawal 2020). The validation of the test kit would still depend on research establishments in Europe. Nigeria imports much of its test kits and personal protection equipment from China.

South Africa, with more depth of manufacturing capacity and support for the national system of innovation, was for much of the first eight months of the pandemic importing diagnostic test kits. In July 2020, the Minister of Higher Education and Innovation made seven awards, totalling ZAR 18 million, to seven local companies 'in order to ramp up the country's ability to produce locally developed reagents and test kits for COVID-19' (Nzimande 2020). The companies had 'six months to begin production'.

Early in the pandemic, the African Union established the Africa Medical Supplies Platform to coordinate the acquisition of medical supplies. The facility helps member states to acquire medical resources at bulk price. The PCR test kits being offered on the platform are imports from India, the USA, vendors in Lyon, France, etc. The absence of autonomous manufacturing capacity and dependence is glaring.

The above is indicative of deficiencies in manufacturing capacity, national systems of innovation and the associated ecosystem necessary for immediate response to external shocks such as the pandemic.

Perhaps, nothing signifies the crisis of investment in national system of innovation as much as the vaccine story. As far as I can tell, there is no current candidate vaccine emerging out of Africa. Of the forty-eight candidate vaccines in different clinical trial stages, over twelve are from companies and research outfits based in China, four in India, three in South Korea (if you count the International Vaccine Institute), two in Australia, one each in Singapore, Taiwan, Cuba, Japan, Kazakhstan. The rest are research entities based in Europe and North America (Sky News). Again, the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the crisis of maldevelopment and what Mkandawire referred to as the maladjustment of Africa. The maladjustment is not simply of its economies, but its society, its labour market and its systems of innovation.

The consequences of this are apparent in what Jayati Ghosh refers to as 'vaccine apartheid' (Ghosh 2020). Within days of Pfizer/BioNTech announcing the first successful vaccine development, we were already seeing vaccine hoarding. 'Within days of its announcement,' Ghosh notes, 'Pfizer had sold more than 80 per cent of the vaccine doses it will be able to produce by the end of next year to governments representing only 14 per cent of the global population' (Ghosh 2020). The same vaccine hoarding is equally playing out with the candidate vaccines from Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, and AstraZeneca. Even if Africa and other 'developing' countries gained access to vaccines through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX) it would be from a position of weakness and dependence.

The point about the lessons that we can draw from Africa's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic is that Development matters. So does Transformative Social Policy.

Why Development and Transformative Social Policy Matter

Over a decade ago, at the Inaugural Lecture that he delivered at the London School of Economics, Thandika Mkandawire made a distinction between the 'Truman' and the 'Bandung Conference' versions of the post-World War II development discourse (Mkandawire 2011: 7). In the Truman take on development, in which 'international development' is mired, development is 'the moral premise for helping "distant strangers",' (ibid.) with its attendant paternalism.

The dominant version of thinking in 'international development' has, in the wake of what John Toye (1987) refers to as the 'counter-revolution', denuded Development of strategic planning and industrial policy. In its place Development has become more concerned with microeconomic processes of 'human development' and the relief of poverty. In pursuit of this diminution of what Development means, vast areas of the African continent have been turned into spaces of open laboratory experiments, with the methodology of randomised control that says a lot about little. Giving 'money to the poor' was declared 'a silent (or quiet) revolution' in development (Barrientos and Hulme 2009; Hanlon, Barrientos and Hulme 2010). Barbara Harris-White (2006) has aptly described the 'new poverty agenda' as an 'impoverishment of the concept of development'.

At the April 2010 lecture, Mkandawire offered a vision of development grounded in the Bandung Spirit. Development involves growth with structural transformation of economy and society, the mastery of technology and strong manufacturing capacity. 'Catching up', a phrase Thandika had no problem using, 'requires that countries know themselves and their history that has set the "initial conditions" for any future progress' (Mkandawire 2011: 13). Development requires learning from the pioneers, but it is not mimicry. The knowledge imperative requires considerable investment in institutions of knowledge production and state capacity—the capacity to coordinate and steer the development process. This involves a sustained ecosystem of innovation and capacity to respond to a broad range of challenges. Structural transformation and mastery of technology goes with strong and innovative manufacturing capacity.

In the Bandung Spirit, Development is, in the words of Samir Amin, also grounded in a national sovereign project. It is a quest for averting the extraversion of economy, culture and knowledge systems that is inherent in the nature of imperialism.

What we learn from the COVID-19 pandemic is the urgency of Africa's quest for development in the sense

that Mkandawire understood it and underpins Africa's Agenda 2063.

Africa's development path cannot be subject to the discursive constraint from the West, but neither can it rely on the earth-depleting models of the West's history of structural transformation.

When the President of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes, in a recent blog, calls for 'overcoming developmentalism' (Melber 2020) and the article is accompanied by the image of a smouldering urban refuse dump, it is important to retort that what the image signifies is not an uncompromising commitment to development. What it signifies is *maldevelopment* (Amin 2011).

A second component of Thandika's thinking on development is that African states not only have to be developmental, but they also have to be democratic and inclusive (Mkandawire 2006a, 2007); 'developmental' in the sense of managing the economies 'in a manner that maximises economic growth, induces structural change, and uses all available resources in a responsible and sustainable manner in highly competitive global conditions' (Mkandawire 2007: 680); 'democratic' in the sense of being embedded in deliberative governance and a respect for people's rights; socially 'inclusive' in providing 'all citizens with a decent living' (ibid.).

At the heart of both enabling socioeconomic development and ensuring equity is the idea of Transformative Social Policy. This is a conceptual and evaluative take on social policy that emerged out of the multinational Social Policy and Development research programme that Thandika led as the Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Development (UNRISD). At the heart of the framework is a question that Thandika posed at the onset of the research programme: What questions does a country ask of its social policy in the context of development?

Transformative Social Policy emphasises the complementarity of economic and social policy, highlights the multiple tasks of social policy, and insists on the deployment of social policy for ensuring equity and inclusivity in the development process. Thandika identified four tasks of social policy (production, protection, reproduction and redistribution) (Mkandawire 2006b). I have argued for a fifth task of social policy—that of social cohesion or nation-building (Adesina 2011, 2015). It is not that Thandika was unaware of the importance of social cohesion. It is that it did not feature in the primary tasks he attributed to social policy. Further, that social policy for inclusive development has to be underpinned by the norms of solidarity and the pursuit of equality (and equity).

Transformative Social Policy is concerned with the transformation of the economy, social relations and institutions. It is concerned with mitigating the disruptive impact of the development process itself. Central to the transformation of social relations is the transformation of gender relations.

What has been evident in the 'social assistance' response—the segregated, residual, public social assistance—is that it is grossly inadequate in mitigating the livelihood impact of the pandemic. A social assistance package that is sufficient to buy a loaf of bread may keep hunger at bay, but it does little else. Yet, the Social Relief of Distress grant has become a *cause célèbre* within the Basic Income civil society campaign in South Africa. A wider vision of human wellbeing requires broader instruments.

Building social cohesion and a more equal society is important for how society copes with external shocks. Social cohesion that builds trust between state and society and within society allows for a more cohesive response to a pandemic—one that does not turn the non-wearing of a mask in a pandemic into a political statement of defiance. Social cohesion nurtures the norms of 'other-regarding' in which not catching a virus is as important as not passing it on.

I end on this note: at the heart of the imperative of development, underpinned by transformative social policy, is Mwalimu Nyerere's pivotal idea of the defence of, and *respect for human dignity.*

Thank You.

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(1940–2020)

Reflections on Neither Settler Nor Native

Reading History from the Bottom Up: From *Citizen and Subject* to *Neither Settler Nor Native*

Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children.[1] (Amilcar Cabral)

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From the publication of *Citizen and Subject* in 1996 as the premier tome in his celebrated trilogy, which dealt with citizenship in Africa, to the release of his recent book, *Neither Settler Nor Native*, which deals with citizenship as a troubling global unfinished business, Mahmood Mamdani has moved from jettisoning 'How Europe Underdeveloped Africa' as a research problematic to substituting 'How Europe Ruled Africa'[2] as the conceptual anchor in the burgeoning field of global citizenship studies. This methodological shift, and the consequent subverting of political economy in re-framing the study of contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism, constitutes the singular analytical thread linking Mamdani's oeuvres on the citizenship question, not only in Africa but globally. Mamdani's bold intervention in shifting the problematic from market-based oppression to governance-induced oppression and juridical violence from above raises complex and contradictory questions in how he frames and deploys his emancipatory discourse. From his original Africa-centred perspective, to a global comparative reach covering Germany and Israeli/Palestine, Mamdani finally offers a prescription that will be debated for years to come—embrace the South African option and let us all simply be survivors in the name of peace!

In what follows below I offer a personal reading of Mamdani's *Neither Settler Nor Native*, via his celebrated trilogy—*Citizen and Subject*, *When Victims Become Killers* and *Saviors and Survivors*—together with his prolegomena/interlude: *From Citizen to Refugee* and *Define and Rule*. This expansive longue durée pathway in making sense of Mamdani's latest book takes us from Africa to Euro-America and Asia; from the local to the global; from nineteenth- and twentieth-century African history to the global history of colonialism and oppression broadly defined and, of course, the genesis of the colonial world inaugurated via the fifteenth-century mercantile exploration and 'discovery' of the so-called New World. This revisionist political project from below, a truly counter-colonial script, has to be read as a radical reinterpretation of the global history of settler-colonial domination—Mamdani calls it colonial modernity —albeit through the prism of African historical realities. And it is significant that Mamdani selected 1492, not 1648, as his starting point for investigating the genesis of settler-colonial domination.

The point of departure for understanding this trilogy is Mamdani's autobiographical work, *From Citizen to Refugee* (1973). For it is here that Mamdani lays the groundwork for what was to become his original contribution to understanding contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism. Mamdani skilfully weaves the historical, the sociological, the political and the economic in thinking through why Idi Amin did what he did after the January 1971 coup d'état in Uganda. His analysis of race and class, and his discussion of colonialism and the contradictions inherent in postcolonial Uganda, were conducted within the framework of Marxian political economy before his sojourn in Dar es Salaam. It is doubtful whether, at that point, Mamdani had elaborated any long-term research project that would

have foreshadowed his singular contribution to citizenship studies—his now famous trilogy, for the young Mamdani was yet to turn in his doctoral dissertation. *From Citizen to Refugee* constitutes the foundational text for the clearly laid-out and well-argued trilogy that was rolled out eventually, two decades later. Here is a personal political experience, a crisp autobiographical intervention, weaponised in the service of liberation. The relevance of this text in shaping his subsequent contribution has been neglected by all in thinking through his magisterial intervention in the field of citizenship studies.

Of his trilogy, *Citizen and Subject* is arguably the most read and engaged with of the volumes, and has been debated and critiqued far more than the other two—*When Victims Become Killers* and *Saviors and Survivors*. However, it is virtually impossible to meaningfully engage with Mamdani's work on citizenship if one's interest begins and ends with *Citizen and Subject*. The first course in his citizenship menu is both a methodological exposé and a theoretical critique of Africanists' history and politics—those whom Mamdani disparagingly refers to as 'many a stargazing academic perched in distant ivory towers'. Yet it deals more with subjecthood than with citizenship, his numerous critics charge. This criticism, I want to suggest, carries weight only if and when *Citizen and Subject* is read as a stand-alone text. But such a reading strategy takes away the full import of Mamdani's contribution to citizenship studies globally.

It is when *Citizen and Subject* is read as part of a trilogy that it comes alive as the analytical anchor/framework for the trilogy. It stands out as the normative and foundational base within which the structures that were to produce ethnicity/tribalism were framed and analysed. As Mamdani reminds us in *When Victims Become Killers*, 'no one wrote of how Europe ruled Africa'. What was written and debated was how Europe underdeveloped Africa. Yet it is how Africa was (mis)ruled, Mamdani forcefully argues, that made it possible for resistance from below to reproduce the very structures it sought to transcend—a tribalised post-colony in which ethnicity was privileged as the norm. This, sadly, remains the enduring tragedy of postcolonial Africa. In the first volume Mamdani used examples from Uganda and South Africa to demonstrate how centralised/decentralised despotism produced a bifurcated state that henceforth became the proverbial birthmark of the postcolonial state. And this birthmark—ethnic through and through—together with race, gained empirical weight in the two subsequent volumes that deal with Rwanda and Sudan.

When Victims Become Killers, the second volume in the trilogy, wrestles with the April 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Deploying the ever-changing categories of natives/indigenes/settlers, Mamdani takes us to what became the Rwandan state from its inception to the end of colonial rule. His emphasis is on the changing dynamics in state–society relations involving the two dominant groups: Tutsi and Hutu. And his objective is to explain the concrete conditions within which genocide became 'thinkable'. The thinkability of genocide in a society peopled by two national groups who speak the same language and share the same culture has to be explained from the perspective of their long-drawn interaction—what Mamdani tirelessly refers to as 'historicizing' their relationship, warts and all.

Describing the genocide as a native genocide—'those who saw themselves as sons of the soil' in a final push to do away with alien 'presence'—he contends that 'The analytical challenge is to understand the historical dynamic through which Hutu and Tutsi came to be synonyms for native and settler.' Mamdani is no doubt uncomfortable with ethnicity when deployed as a primordial and instrumentalist category. For him, ethnicity has to be understood as a political identity. 'By understanding political identities as embedded in particular institutions', he tells us, 'they become historical not primordial' and 'institutionally durable', not amenable 'for instant manipulation by those who seek power'. 'To understand how tribe and race got animated as political identities', he tells us 'we need to look at how the law breathed life into them.'

Here is Mamdani at his best expounding on what is unarguably the central pillar of his conceptual anchor: 'every state form generates specific political identities: direct rule tended to generate race based political identities: settler/native! Indirect rule … tended to mitigate the settler-native dialectic by fracturing the race consciousness of natives into multiple and separate ethnic consciousness'.

If *When Victims Become Killers* is about two national groups with the same language and shared culture, *Saviors and Survivors*, the third tome in the trilogy, is about different groups who share the same religion and culture at the centre of which are race and the perennial making/remaking of space based on control and access to land. If there was genocide in one there was near-genocide in the other—a point that Mamdani laboured to hammer home against the backdrop

of the militant right-wing intervention that had coalesced around the Save Darfur campaign, which erroneously claimed that Arabs were killing 'black' Africans in Darfur.

Mamdani offers a materialist analysis of the conflict in Darfur, which began as a civil war in 1987–89 between nomadic pastoralists and peasants over fertile land in the south, triggered by a severe drought that had expanded the Sahara desert by more than ninety-five kilometres in forty years. He illustrates how the British colonialists had artificially tribalised Darfur, dividing its population into 'natives' and 'settlers', and created homelands for the former at the expense of the latter. How the war intensified in the 1990s, when the Sudanese government tried unsuccessfully to address the problem by creating homelands for 'tribes' without access to land, complicated an already complex situation. This context is key in understanding the drama around the war and its conflagration. The spillover of the war into Chad and the regionalisation of the conflict involving nations from different countries also brought Cold War warriors and the Israelis. Thus globalised, it became impossible to shift through the conflicting and competing interests—from Ghadaffi to Reagan et al.

In the two major states he examines—the Funj Sultanate and Darfur—population looms large in the complexity of being an Arab ('black' and 'white') and of having access to land (dar/darless). This leads him to look at the pre-history of Funj and Darfur state before the Mahdist State was created. By restoring the Fur Kingdom after conquest, the British began a process of 'retribalisation'. The indirect rule system imposed from above made place coterminous with ethnicity. Thus, Dar Zaghawa became an 'ethnic territory in which a particular group had legal jurisdiction'. Desertification/environmental degradation and the move to the south for land and water complicated the situation. In the end the battle over land was ethnicised and racialised.

Two conceptual observations are in order here. What seems to stand out in Mamdani's trilogy is the ethnic/'tribal' in the making/re-making of citizenship. First, the postcolonial state is 'deracialised'—his words. In Sudan and South Africa he discusses race and ethnicity. Here, race and 'tribe' are the defining markers in all their complexities—from black Arab to cultural Arab to Afrikaner and Bantu 'tribes'. We do not see oppressed minorities qua oppressed minorities—women and youth are left out of the script, missing as it were. Much more important is the total neglect of the Khoisan in South Africa and the Batwa in Rwanda—so-called aboriginals. Why neglect these aboriginals in Africa only to put them at the centre in explicating the genesis of the settler state in the United States?

Second, if ethnicity/tribe are supposedly the warp and woof of citizenship in Africa, could that be read as Africa's contribution to citizenship studies? Or, better still, the curse of the white man's burden, as Basil Davidson's once framed it? Put differently, why would a category that arguably atrophied elsewhere stubbornly refuse to go away in Africa? Or is this the case? Mamdani has not posed this question, the lingering refusal of ethnicity to go away, or attempted to provide an answer, he has explored only how the rural-urban divide and the ethnic question were (mis) handled in the post-colony by radical as well as conservative states. Yet his conclusions and prescriptions suggest that taming the ethnic beast is at the heart of the citizenship question in contemporary Africa. Is ethnicity/tribalism not laced with citizenship everywhere? And is tribalism not a universal category that rocks and undermines/undergirds citizenship everywhere?

Neither Settler Nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities builds on Mamdani's trilogy by universalising and expanding the argument presented in it. It is a magisterial synthesis, and a bottom-up approach, looking at settler colonialism as a global system of domination. The five chapters are contoured by the argument that was originally rolled out in *Citizen and Subject*. Three chapters deal with areas in which Mamdani originally had no research interest (Germany, the US and Israeli/Palestine history)[3] and two deal with the African situation, in South Africa and South Sudan, areas where he had done original research. The chapter on South Sudan, unlike *Saviors and Survivors*, the last volume in the trilogy, deals with Africa's newest nation-state. The most important intervention in this new book—apart from its expansive global swing—is the introduction of two new formulations: the *political community* as a vehicle in the process of societal transformation, and the notion of *political decolonisation*. Both formulations are, however, linked. They are both a critique of the standard prescriptions proffered under neoliberal guidance and tutelage, but they can also be read as an autocritique of Mamdani's earlier formulation presented in his famed trilogy.

The making and unmaking of permanent minorities is a re-interpretation of US and Israeli/Palestinian history through the prism of the African experience. The hegemonic white power superstructure and the subordination of the indigenous peoples via the native-settler dia-

lectic demonstrate the universality of the native-settler binary, which arguably defines all colonial socioeconomic formations. The US example became the template for others to emulate/appropriate—the Third Reich in Germany and Zionism in the Israeli settler state. The reproduction of this oppressive and dehumanising governance framework at the global level seems to suggest this pathway is the dominant route to settler colonialism. But is this really the case? With reference to the US and Israeli examples, Mamdani argues for a transformation outside the Nuremburg/ human rights paradigm, which has been heralded by neoliberal ideologues as the true way to salvation. Here he uses the South African example as the harbinger of hope—a 'deracialised' society in which the state is seemingly decoupled from the nation. The conjoined nation-state reality, Mamdani insists, remains the source of the problem because it conduces and even reproduces primordialism.

Yet Mamdani's prescriptive pathway, seemingly anchored on privileging the South African experience in crafting a meaningful 'adversarial' politics, skirts an old leftist debate that was inspired by the Fanonist problematic, the notion of true and false decolonisation yanked from the quintessential biblical spirit—of the first shall be the last. This formulation, which privileges armed struggle against constitutional negotiation, found expression in the so-called socialist pathway to development versus the capitalist pathway, which held sway in the first two decades of independence. Yet, as it later transpired, neither socialist nor capitalist could deliver the proverbial dividend of democracy. The popular masses, the peasantry and the labouring population, Africa's teeming urban poor and her beleaguered working classes (to use a tired leftist framing), did not experience what Nkrumah had envisaged when he exhorted them to 'seek ye first the political kingdom'.

Besides that, all the subaltern categories deployed in Mamdani's two and half decades of labour—from his trilogy to *Neither Settler Nor Native*—in defining the burgeoning field of African/global citizenship studies—(citizen/subject/saviours/ survivors/ victims/killers/settler/native)—appear continually in flux, a result of their constantly being made and remade (work in progress?). By privileging how Africa was ruled/ is ruled in crafting tools for our collective emancipation, Mamdani seemingly ends up focusing more on structure than historical agency. This structuration from above at the expense of agency from below has no doubt enriched our understanding of how subalterns were conditioned from above but not of their intervention/role as conscious historical actors of their own making. Historically, how subalterns handle their individual/collective making from above and without and how they deploy that experience in shaping their lives should be a central part of the narrative of their collective emancipation. This seemingly one-sided narrative in *Neither Settler Nor Native* comes out clearly in the South African and South Sudanese experience.

Put differently, what would 'decolonising the political' mean for the popular masses in contemporary South Africa and South Sudan? And how would a 'new autobiography' change their livelihood/ objective economic conditions? Lastly, who would write that 'new autobiography' and from what perspective or standpoint? Mamdani's notion that we could all be 'survivors' in the face of serious/complex issues around race and ethnicity does not speak to the above questions nor does it identify the forces that would constitute the emancipatory vehicle that would advance the collective interests of the undifferentiated survivors—a notion that seemingly evokes memories of unity in the name of the nation-state—a category that Mamdani himself militantly disowns in *Neither Settler Nor Native*. On these important questions *Neither Settler Nor Native* is painfully silent.

Mamdani, the self-described 'incorrigible optimist', has crafted a continental and global pathway to an imagined political community sans class struggle, together with a political community where race and ethnicity would be held in abeyance by survivors in a post nation-state. How this seemingly one-size-fits-all prescription pans out in the desperate case studies presented in his monumental synthesis remains to be seen.

Notes

1. Amilcar Cabral, 1965, Tell No Lies, Claim No Easy Victories, in Handyside, R., ed., 1970, *Revolution in Guinea: Selected Texts by Amilcar Cabral,* New York: Monthly Review Press.
2. This formulation of the author's conceptual and methodological shift from political economy to the institutional/juridical basis of colonial domination/oppression was originally presented in *When Victims Become Killers.* But it appears also in outline form in *Citizen and Subject* and in its fully developed form in his latest book, *Neither Settler Nor Native*.
3. Mamdani's published articles on political identities and Nuremburg do not deal with the Palestine/ Israeli question. And his *Good Muslim Bad Muslim,* the closest he has come to discussing US politics and history, does not deal with the issues of citizenship and exclusivity in US history.

Why has Europe's Past Become Africa's Postcolonial Present? Reflections on Mahmood Mamdani's Ideas on Decolonising the Political Community

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Introduction

The leading Ugandan intellectual, Mahmood Mamdani, has since the publication of his seminal book *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (1996) been making cutting-edge interventions in understanding how Europe ruled Africa, how colonialists dealt with what they called the 'native question', how colonial governmentality interpellated African nationalism and shaped African political consciousness, how colonialism manufactured problematic, antagonistic and racially hierarchised political identities, how the legacy of late colonialism lives on in postcolonial Africa long after the dismantlement of the physical empire, and indeed how to make sense of conflicts and violence including genocides.

At the centre of colonialism, Mamdani identified the project of 'define and rule' (as a form of colonial governmentality symbolised by a bifurcated colonial state), which produced problematic political identities, with far-reaching consequences, including generation genocides in countries like Rwanda and fuelling complicated postcolonial conflicts in places such as Sudan (Mamdani 2001, 2009, 2013a). One of his theses is that the invented 'settler-native' and indeed 'majority-minority' intersubjective construction survived the dismantlement of the physical empire to continue to generate postcolonial conflicts and violence, while at the same time providing a deeper understanding of the bifurcated architecture and configuration of the state produced by colonialism in Africa. Mamdani's interventions can be read together with that of Nigerian sociologist Peter P. Ekeh (1975), who introduced the widely cited concept of 'the two publics', a concept which he argued 'led to the emergence of a unique historical configuration in modern post-colonial Africa'.

Taken together, these are very persuasive, well-thought-out and usable theses, that helps in understanding many of the postcolonial African dilemmas of conflicts, governance and identity. They are even useful for understanding other parts of the world where imperialism, colonialism and racial capitalism wreaked havoc and left a legacy of conflicts and violence. Mamdani's position on the impact of colonialism and its consequences on Africa and the world that fell victim to it, places him firmly within the 'epic school' rather than the 'episodic school' that was advanced by the veteran historian, Jacob Ade Ajayi, of the Ibadan School of History (Ajayi 1969). Of course, the notion of colonialism being a 'mere episode' in African history emerged within the 'golden age' of African nationalism and within a terrain in which African historians were challenging and dethroning colonial/imperial historiography, which denied history to Africans. However, the nationalist corrective went too far and provoked Ekeh to question its complacent view of such a force as colonialism, with its transformations of Africa in 'epic proportions' (Ekeh 1975, 1983). In short, the epic school does not reduce colonialism to an event but understands it as a process and power structure located at the centre of what Mamdani terms 'political modernity'. At the heart of political modernity is the question of the 'birth of the modern state amid ethnic cleansing and overseas domination' (Mamdani 2020: 2).

What is distinctive about Mamdani's scholarship is its fidelity to nuanced historical understanding, its anti-imperialist orientation and grounded theorising, even though he has yet to address and integrate the topical issues of patriarchy and sexism, which cannot be ignored in any serious social science. This is a glaring gap in his work, bearing in mind

that heteronormative patriarchy ranks alongside enslavement, imperialism, colonialism and racial capitalism as a modality of oppression (see Mama 2001; Nnaemeka 2004; Lugones 2008). So, depatriarchisation of the modern world must be part of anti-imperialist and decolonial scholarship (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018, 2020, 2020b). This is urgent within a context in which there cannot be any cutting-edge social science that is not attentive to the intersections of race, class, gender, culture and other categories to highlight multiple forms of oppressions (see Crenshaw 1995). This point was delivered forcefully in the seminal work *Engendering African Social Sciences* (1997) edited by leading feminist scholars Ayesha M. Imam, Amin Mama and Fatou Sow. While Mamdani has not expressed any hostility to gender as an analytical category, several chapters in *Engendering African Social Sciences* made clear that there was a general resistance and hostility to it within African scholarship and African academy (see also Tamale 2020). It was this resistance and hostility that prompted Ayesha M. Imam to articulate the feminist standpoint this way:

> What makes the political character of this hostility even more marked is that, as we all know, at least half of humanity is of feminine genders. This fact alone gives sufficient grounds for our argument that a social science which does not acknowledge gender as an analytical category is an impoverished and distorted science, and cannot accurately explain social realities and hence cannot provide a way out of the present crisis in Africa (Iman 1997: 2).

The violent postcolonial state, like its predecessor the colonial state and indeed the modern state elsewhere, is characteristically male-led and -dominated, making its engender-ing and depatriarchisation very necessary as part of the efforts towards its pacification. While there is a gender gap in Mamdani's work, it has other positive distinctive features—not only a meticulous diagnosis of the modern problems of genocides, conflicts, identity and indeed the problematics of living together, but also in daring to prescribe what the historian Paul Tiyambe Zeleza (1997) depicted as the 'murky present and mysterious future'.

Europe's past as Africa's postcolonial present

Contrarianism is another hallmark of Mamdani's cutting-edge scholarship. This is well captured by Moustafa Bayoum in his endorsement of Mamdani's latest book, entitled *Neither Settler Nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities* (2020). This book is a treasure trove of razor-sharp and deep political diagnoses of issues of European political modernity and how these impinged on colonial notions of the state, constructions of political identities, the character of conflicts and the nature of violence(s). It offers robust, courageous, daring and sensible resolutions predicated on the radical agenda of decolonising the political community.

In this expansive and wide-ranging work, Mamdani spreads the canvas of his analysis wide to reflect on the Native American Indian question in the United States, the Nazification and limits of de-Nazification in Germany, apartheid and de-apartheidisation in South Africa, secession and the crisis of nation-building in South Sudan, and the Israel-Palestine question. While the human rights discourse has, since the end of the Cold War, assumed a normative character and has enchanted many scholars, Mamdani is very critical of its ability to resolve injustices connected to colonial and postcolonial conflicts, violence and even genocides, where the Nuremberg template cannot be easily implemented. Instead of being enticed by the reformist and transitional justice discourses cascading from neoliberal democracy and human rights, Mamdani is pushing for an epistemic revolution capable of delivering a new kind of political imagination and indeed decolonisation of the political community.

It is in this push that his work coincides with my own on epistemological decolonisation for the delivery of epistemic freedom. My books, *Epistemic Freedom in Africa: Deprovincialization and Decolonization* (2018) and *Decolonization, Development and Knowledge in Africa: Turning Over A New Leaf* (2020a), highlight the primacy of the epistemic question as perhaps the foundation of the systemic, structural and institutional problems that haunt not only Africa but the modern world in general. In *Epistemic Freedom*, I made the following observations:

> If the 'colour line' was indeed the major problem of the twentieth century as articulated by William E. B. Du Bois …, then that of the twenty-first century is the epistemic line. … Epistemic freedom is fundamentally about the right to think, theorise, interpret the world, develop own methodologies and write from where one is

> located and unencumbered by Eurocentrism. (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018: 3)

This intervention was gesturing towards an epistemic revolution for epistemic freedom. These two epistemic agendas for me formed the basis for a paradigmatic decolonial work of 'reconstituting the political' away from the dominant Eurocentric conception predicated on the paradigms of difference, discovery and war, and the notions of the survival of the fittest. Building on the work of Enrique Dussel and the life of struggle stalwart Nelson Mandela, I proposed a decolonial political project predicated on the 'will to live' and politics of life (see Mandela 1994; Dussel 1985, 2008; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2016, 2018). Mamdani's work, together with that of Latin-American decolonial theorists and liberation philosophers, influenced my thinking in a profound way (see Maldonado-Torres 2008, 2007). In particular, Mamdani's notions of survivors and political justice (2013b) made me begin to rethink the constitution of the political.

A close reading of Mamdani's expansive archive leaves one with the impression of a leading historically-inclined intellectual's take on how Euro-political modernity impinged on African postcolonial modernity and beyond—to the United States and the Middle East. Mamdani poses hard, serious and disturbing questions pertaining to the problematics of the contemporary era. Here are some of them:

- Why did Europe's past become Africa's present?
- Why did nationalist elites revive the civilising mission that colonialism had abandoned when it embraced the defence of 'tradition'?
- Is nation-building violence a criminal act, calling for prosecution and punishment?
- Or is it a political act, the answer to which must be a new, non-nationalist politics?
- Can a multinational society, organised as a nation-state that divides its population into a permanent national majority and minority, be democratic?
- Can the principle of the state, which calls for equal treatment of all citizens under rule of law, be reconciled with the principle of the nation, which preserves sovereignty for the nation—the permanent political majority?

Asking difficult questions is part of Mamdani's methodology and approach. One learns a lot from the questions themselves. Mamdani responded to the first, on why and how Europe's past became Africa's present, by delving deeper into Europe's political modernity and revealing how it provided a template for the constitution of the political, how it informed colonial governmentality and how it impinges on the postcolonial world. In the process, Mamdani manages to successfully rewrite the 'biography of the modern state', beginning from before the time of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. This rewriting is very necessary, as Mamdani posits:

> But this story starts too late, and, as a result, provides the wrong lesson. … Modern colonialism and the modern state were born together with the creation of the nation-state. Nationalism did not precede colonialism. Nor was colonialism the highest or the last stage in the making of a nation. The two were co-constituted. (Mamdani 2020: 1–2)

Like the Latin-American decolonial theorists, Mamdani identified 1492 as a beginning of the construction of the modern nation-state. It was not born out of a peace settlement or the abstract ideas of classical European philosophers, but from blood and tears (ethnic cleansing, genocides, displacements and conquests). For Europe, tolerance emerged after Westphalia; for non-Europeans, violence and conquest became the signature of Euro-political modernity. What is intriguing for me is Mamdani's interest in the epistemic aspects and epistemic consequences of Euro-political modernity. Listen to Mamdani (2020: 3): 'Embracing political modernity means embracing the epistemic condition.' He links the epistemic and the political this way:

> The violence of postcolonial modernity mirrors the violence of European modernity and colonial direct rule. Its principal manifestation is ethnic cleansing. Because the nation-state seeks to homogenize its territory, it is well served by ejecting those who introduced pluralism. (Mamdani 2020: 4)

Thus, *Neither Settler Nor Native* is thematically cut across by a desire to make sense of ethnic cleansing not as an aberration but as part of the epistemic condition of political modernity that normalises it as part of nation-state making and consolidation. Mamdani's thesis is that colonialism underpinned by Euro-political modernity unfolded in terms of 'making permanent minorities and their maintenance through the politicisation of identity, which leads to political violence—in some case extreme violence' (Mamdani 2020: 18).

In my own work I use the concept of the 'cognitive empire' to refer to

an empire that is not physical but that survives through the invasion of the mental universe of a people, in the process committing epistemic violence (see also Santos 2018, where the concept of cognitive empire is used in the title of the book). The victims tend to repeat/mimic what has been inscribed on their minds (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020b). This epistemic condition was well articulated by Frantz Fanon (1968) in terms of pitfalls of consciousness/alienation and by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) as 'colonization of the mind'. Paradigmatically, what Mamdani is driving at is how epistemology framed ontology. This is a point also made by Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh (2018: 135), who openly stated that 'Ontology is made of epistemology. That is, ontology is an epistemological concept, it is not inscribed in entities the grammatical nouns name.' Mignolo and Walsh elaborated that:

> What matters is not economics, or politics, or history, but knowledge. Better yet, what matters is history, politics, economics, race, gender, sexuality, but it is above all the knowledge that is intertwined in all these praxical spheres that entangles us to the point of making us believe that it is not knowledge that matters but really history, economics, politics, etc. (Mignolo and Walsh 2018: 135)

The primacy of knowledge in understanding even issues of conflicts and violence is increasingly gaining some consensus, including the concept that without changes in knowledge the outcomes might never be revolutionary (see Maldonado-Torres 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2021). This is why we find leading decolonial theorists and activists like Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2011: 8) advising that:

> Revolutions need their epistemologies, or ways of approaching knowledge, its production, and its justification. Political revolutions have arguably suffered for not having good epistemologies, and the wrong epistemology can halt a revolution or even bring back the very vices and problems that the revolution seeks to overcome.

What also emerges poignantly is that Mamdani has a number of fellow travellers in his journey of arriving at an epistemic revolution capable of unleashing the decolonisation of the political community.

Towards an epistemic revolution for the reconstitution of the political community

Across the case studies in *Neither Settler Nor Native*, Mamdani is demonstrating empirically that for paradigmatic change to take place an epistemic revolution is an essential prerequisite—for political change and practical political reconstitution of the political community in such a way that conflicts and violence are pacified. The current model and template of political modernity normalises violence 'as an act of constructing the political community' (Mamdani 2020: 329). The second problem is that in the current template and model of political modernity, the nation and the state are coupled problematically into what is known as the 'nation-state'. Nandita Sharma (2020: 3) expressed this problem in a profound way:

> In the Postcolonial New World Order, being a member of a nation in possession of territorial sovereignty is *the* thing to be(come). It is an aspiration, moreover, that cannot be named as such, for, to be convincing, it must be seen as an invitation but an *inheritance*. … The Postcolonial New World Order of nationally sovereign states thus ushers in a new governmentality, one which produces people as Nationals and produces land as territories in control (in the past and sometime in the future if not always in the present) of sovereign nation-states.

How African anticolonial nationalists casually embraced this model and template provoked Basil Davidson (1992) to write about the 'Black man's burden' and the 'curse of the nation-state'. The coupling of the nation and the state is increasingly identified as a major problem. For example, Hamid Dabashi (2020: 17) has this to say: 'My concern is a complete decoupling of the nation and the state. This is a bad and misbegotten marriage, and the sooner it ends, the better.' So, Mamdani is not alone in identifying the nation-state as an obstacle to the process of the reconstitution of the political. According to him:

> The decoupling of state from nation begins with a retelling of the history of the modern nation-state. In this retelling, the seemingly permanent categories of settler and native, majority and minority, are made provisional. They are exposed as products of modernity's obsession with civilisation and progress. (Mamdani 2020: 329–330)

Mamdani's latest book is the best example of how to retell the history of the modern state with a view to rendering its cognitive and epistemic foundation transparent, temporary and provisional. And in this way, it opens a political path for new political imagination

as an essential prerequisite for the painstaking process of the reconstitution of the political. Throughout the dense case studies, of the United States, Nazi Germany, Apartheid South Africa, Sudan and Israel-Palestine, Mamdani has successfully demonstrated through careful historical analysis how the political is produced through historical process mediated by the conflicts and violence that accompany state formation. Through law, state monopoly of violence is normalised, routinised and rendered 'righteous', making the state 'blameless' (Mamdani 2020: 331–332).

What is revolutionary about Mamdani's work is how he posits the agenda of decolonising the political as an epistemic revolutionary solution to violence as well as to the problematic identitarian categories of settler-native and minority-majority statuses. To him, the decolonisation of the political is in the first instance an act of new political imagination—an act of dreaming about another political community. Epistemic revolution is an enabler of this new dreaming and imagining of a new political community. The future political community can be imagined as an inclusive formation in which the state does not wither away but is decoupled from the plural nation and operates as a legal structural management institution protecting every citizen rather than a chosen and privileged nation above other nations.

Conclusion: Which social forces for epistemic revolution and for the decolonisation of the political?

Mamdani's *Neither Settler Nor Native* was published at a time of insurgent and resurgent decolonisation in the twenty-first century. This makes it very timely. Because at the heart of this decolonisation are deep cognitive and epistemic issues as well as a deliberate drive towards an epistemic rupture, which the decolonisation of the twentieth century failed to deliver. While most of the discussions are about decolonising the university, in which Mamdani is also involved, the decolonisation of the state is a necessary and urgent task partly because even the decolonisation of the university and knowledge cannot be realised without the decolonisation of the state.

Like all good books, Mamdani's *Neither Settler Nor Native* will provoke many questions but its shelf life and its virtual space life are guaranteed. The questions that arise from it include, 'Who are the potential social forces to be relied on for this decolonisation of the political community?' This question becomes pertinent if one considers Michael Rothberg's notion of 'implicated subjects', which he explained this way:

> Implicated subjects occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm; they contribute to, inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes. An implicated subject is neither a victim nor a perpetrator, but rather a participant in histories and social formations that generate the positions of victim and perpetrator, and yet in which most people do occupy such clear-cut roles. Less 'actively' involved than perpetrators, implicated subjects do not form the mold of the 'passive' bystander, either. Although indirect or belated, their actions and inactions help produce the positions of victims and perpetrators. In other words, implicated subjects help propagate the legacies of historical violence and prop up the structures of inequality that mar the present, apparently direct forms of violence turn out to rely on indirection. Modes of implication—entanglement in historical and present-day injustices—are complex, multifaceted, and sometimes contradictory, but are nonetheless essential to confront in the pursuit of justice. (Rothberg 2019: 1–2)

We know that the leading social forces in the decolonisation of the twentieth century were the African educated elite born within the belly of the beast of colonialism, about whom Fanon had expressed misgivings because of their intellectual laziness and pitfalls of consciousness. With hindsight we also now know that the African educated elite never paid attention to Amilcar Cabral's call to commit class suicide to be reborn as genuine revolutionaries. Today, this elite, which is in charge of the postcolonial nation-states, contains the most vociferous defenders of the nation-state in Africa. Epistemically and cognitively, this elite is blind to any new imagination of the political community. It is this lazy bourgeois elite that has internalised Euro-political modernity and colonial political modernity to the extent of reproducing it in Africa within their problematic nation-building and state-making projects.

Even for those South African leaders who met the erstwhile apartheid leaders at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and produced the notion of a 'rainbow nation', there was no clear radical epistemic awakening that would sustain the articulation of a decolonised

political community beyond the rhetoric of neoliberal democracy and human rights that was in vogue. And this is evident in South Africa's political elite's disturbing pandering to xenophobia and its fidelity to the notion of South Africa as just another 'nation-state'. The rainbow nation is today facing its most trying moments, with Mandela himself being accused of having sold out those who were fighting for the decolonisation of South Africa.

South Africa is today an epicentre of resurgent and insurgent decolonisation, symbolised by the Rhodes Must Fall political formations. In this context, which social forces have the potential to advance the revolutionary agenda that Mamdani has meticulously mapped out ? This is a pertinent question, because these social forces have to first of all undergo the painstaking process of learning to unlearn in order to relearn so as to make them ready to set alight an epistemic revolution for the purpose of reconstituting the political. Mamdani ends his book with a call to rethink political modernity for our own political survival:

> Recognizing this history gives us the power to change perspectives and reality. The history of political modernity tells those of us who identify with the nation that we have been co-opted. The nation is not inherent in us. It overwhelmed us. Political modernity led us to believe we could not live without the nation-state, lest we not only be denied its privileges but also find ourselves dispossessed in the way of the permanent minority. The nation made the immigrant a settler and the settler a perpetrator. The nation made the local a native and the native a perpetrator, too. In this new history, everyone is colonized—the settler and native, perpetrator and victim, majority and minority. Once we learn this history, we might prefer to be survivors instead. (Mamdani 2020: 355)

Yes, we must listen to Mamdani. He combines the direct experience of Idi Amin Dada's exclusionary nationalism with extensive and meticulous research. His call to decouple the nation from the state will benefit many and perhaps lay to rest the inimical politics of xenophobia and racism in a world that is best described as a planetary entanglement of people. But what requires even more attention is this question posed by Sharma (2020: 280):

> But what would a world without nations, without borders, without racisms, without people being separately categorized as either National-Natives or Migrants look like?

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Reimagining Decolonisation Today: A Review of *Neither Settler nor Native*

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In his 2001 book on the Rwandan genocide, *When Victims Become Killers*, Mahmood Mamdani asks, 'What can the study of Africa teach us about late modern life?'(Mamdani 2002: xv). This question, as Ibrahim Abdullah has recently reminded us in his review of Mamdani's latest book *Neither Settler Nor Native*, emerged in the context of Mamdani's nearly five-decade-long examination of the practices and consequences of African state formation, which began with his 1973 work, *From Citizen to Refugee*. Abdullah argues that this early autobiographical account of Idi Amin's regime in Uganda spurred the trilogy of *Citizenship and Subject, When Victims Become Killers and Saviors and Survivors*, which reconstructed the framework of late colonial rule in Africa and examined its legacies for postcolonial citizenship, attending in particular to the recurring problem of political violence. In these works, Mamdani pioneered a method of studying African politics that maintained a concern with historical specificity yet viewed the continent as a site of generating political theory. Mamdani described this critical standpoint in *Citizen and Subject* as one that refuses the choice of 'abstract universalism and intimate particularism' (Mamdani 1996:11). This is a position that refuses to view Africa through an exceptionalising gaze while approaching the crises

of postcolonial citizenship on the continent as sites of wider, perhaps even universal, significance.

Neither Settler nor Native offers two answers to the question of what Africa teaches us about late modern life. First, the analysis of colonial and postcolonial African state formation that Mamdani has developed in his works, ranging from *Citizen and Subject* to *Define and Rule*, is transformed through a lens that reveals the working of colonial modernity more generally. That is, the politicisation of racial and ethnic identity, which was central to the experience of colonial statecraft in Africa, is now conceived as part and parcel of the formation of the modern nation-state. This process, Mamdani argues, began with the onset of European colonial expansion in 1492. By examining state formation and political violence in the United States, Germany, South Africa, Israel and Africa's newest state, South Sudan, Mamdani argues that the modern nation-state has everywhere involved the construction and reification of political identities. Moving from the exploration of the African state to this global canvas, Mamdani shows us how the theoretical frameworks he developed in his study of late colonial rule and the postcolonial state in Africa provide a new window into the character of the nation-state as such. The persistence of politicised identity so central to postcolonial Africa is not aberrational or incidental, but instead can be seen as a recurring pattern of state formation.

Mamdani is alert to the divergent instantiations of these patterns in the examples he covers. And I will soon turn to how one of these divergences becomes an opportunity for him to offer the second lesson of late modern life from the African experience. For now, I want to dwell on Mamdani's global extension of his thinking on citizenship and political identity as an example of how Africa can be positioned as a site of generating 'analytical universals' that speak to the global conditions of political modernity. Analytical universalism, which seeks to uncover recurring political logics, can be distinguished from the 'abstract universalism' that Mamdani rejects.[1] The latter posits an ideal norm of political institutions and practices that serves as a barometer for existing practices. In *Neither Settler nor Native*, Mamdani dismisses the idealised picture of the nation-state, in which it is the product of an internal social contract and governed above all by an ethic of tolerance. His central interventions, that the nation-state is a colonial project and that it requires the manufacture of permanent majorities and minorities, identify general political dynamics of state formation. When viewed against the idealised picture of the nation-state, the African postcolonial state is exceptional or pathological. However, Mamdani shows that its historical trajectory is in fact the universal experience of the nation-state.

In Mamdani's work, Africa not only offers leverage for analysis of late modern life, but it can also be the grounds of building an alternative normative model to address the impasses of political modernity. Here, the example of the struggle against apartheid is especially significant. For Mamdani, the crucial turning point arrived in South Africa in the 1970s when student- and worker-led mobilisations abandoned race-based resistance to forge cross-racial alliances that would become the basis of a deracialised vision of political membership. He emphasises here the process of coalition-building that helped to generate a wide political base internal to the country. The formation of this internal political coalition, he argues, was more important than the exiled ANC and international solidar- ity in the pivotal period of the last decades of apartheid. The recent general strike in Palestine, in which Palestinians on both sides of the green line participated, suggests the beginning of a similar stage in the struggle for Palestinian liberation.

South Africa's transition period also provides a second normative lesson, concerned with how a society can reckon with political violence. Mamdani contrasts South Africa's framework of political justice with the criminal model of Nuremberg. The criminal model depoliticised Nazism, rendering its violence the responsibility of individual actors while ignoring the wider structures and political roots that had enabled its rise. Absent from this focus on individual perpetrators was attention to the economic elites (from German industrialists to foreign corporations), the intellectual classes and others who had supported Nazism and benefited from the regime. Despite the limits of the criminal framework, it has become a model of transitional justice in the post-Cold War moment, especially in postcolonial contexts. It has also been elevated to the wider stage of international justice through the International Criminal Court. The story of South Africa's transition is sometimes folded into this framework of transitional justice. Its Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has been replicated in other contexts of genocide, civil war and transitional justice. Despite the global celebration of the TRC, however, Mamdani de-emphasises it and centres, instead, the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). CODESA, he argues, sought not punishment but reform.

It was not the victor's justice, but a negotiated settlement that created a new political system in which apartheid's victims and critics as well as its supporters and beneficiaries were included as citizens.

At the various public discussions of *Neither Settler nor Native* since its publication late last year, the limits of the South African process of democratisation, particularly the ongoing demands for overcoming apartheid's economic hierarchies, have been raised. It is not that Mamdani thinks that the emergence of a multiracial and democratic South Africa has addressed the social and economic elements of the apartheid state. He argues instead that in the context of the negoti- ated process, the balance of forces between the anti-apartheid coali- tion on the one hand and the apart- heid state and its supporters on the other hand did not allow for a more thoroughgoing challenge to the apartheid economy. He also suggests that by remaking the political community through a deracialised citizenship the negotiated settlement that ended apartheid created new terrain for demands for social and economic justice. Mamdani's disaggregation of political and economic justice in *Neither Settler nor Native* speaks to his longstanding concern to correct what he perceived as an overemphasis on political economy in the first generation of African Studies scholars after formal decolonisation. As he argued in *When Victims become Killers*, political identity has a distinct logic, which is neither reducible to nor exchangeable with market-based identities. The achievement of the anti-apartheid struggle, on this view, was its successful deracialisation of political identity, such that equal citizenship could be realised by all South Africans.

Mamdani's efforts to draw out alternatives and possibilities from the history of political struggle in South Africa speaks to a commitment to a historically grounded political theory. As he notes in the introduction, historical narrative and normative ideals are entangled moments in the book. The normative is excavated from history; that is, normative horizons are immanent to Mamdani's analysis. They do not form an ideal theory that stands apart from political practices. Instead, they are disclosed in the modes of political contestation that are generated within and against its frameworks. The upshot of this mode of theorising is that it not only locates alternative trajectories within each historical context, but also points to the contingent political processes of coalition-building and the distribution of power within a political field, which are central to realising any political vision.

The connection between the narrative and the normative informs Mamdani's vision of political de- colonisation. In the remaining space of this review, I would like to pose three questions about political decolonisation as both a narrative and normative project. Political decolonisation, Mamdani writes, is a two-sided process: externally, the assertion of independence from foreign rule, and internally, 'the reimagination and redefinition of the political community'. In Mamdani's account, 'epistemological revolution is closely tied to internal political revolution—not throwing off outside rule but excising the ideology of political modernity internalised under colonialism' (2020: 34). I was struck by this pairing of epistemological and political decolonisation because critiques of 'epistemic injustice' and 'epistemic colonisation' as well as demands to 'decolonise knowledge' are recurring features of the contemporary political landscape, leading with South Africa, where #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall have made the university a central site of contemporary decolonisation.

How should we think about Mamdani's call for 'epistemological revolution' in this wider context? Its explicit linkage to the reconstruction of political community seems to me to be a significant difference, and one that perhaps ties Mamdani's vision to earlier moments of anticolonial thought, like Fanon's, which viewed epistemic decolonisation as a necessary part of their political project. One of Fanon's central critiques of nationalist parties was that their mimicry of European political institutions and practices failed to take seriously the specific social and political contexts of the colony, including especially the rural/urban divide. His famous call for stretching Marxist analysis appeared in the context of this critique as a call for developing social analyses and strategies of political mobilisation that would be adequate to the historical and political trajectories of the colonised world. Mamdani offers another possible example of epistemic revolution in *Define and Rule*. There he highlights the work of Nigerian historian, Yusuf Bala Usman, whose pioneering scholarship on precolonial Nigeria destabilises ethnic categories, highlighting alternative ways of imagining ethnic and religious pluralism. While Fanon emphasises the generation of new analysis and concepts from the experience of the colonial/ postcolonial world, Usman's contribution suggests a historical reconstruction that challenges what appear now to be stable, almost natural, con-

figurations of ethnic politics. Where does the contemporary struggle for an 'epistemic revolution' overlap with and depart from these earlier examples? And what lessons, if any, might we learn from these efforts?

Mamdani models the epistemic revolution he calls for by locating the birth of the modern nation-state in 1492, rather than following the standard narrative in which the 1648 Peace of Westphalia is the originary moment of the modern state system. The implications of this reorientation are significant. Where 1492 points us to the birth of the state in conquest and genocide, 1648 points to a rosy dawn of toleration and state self-limitation. Where 1492 makes the extra-European world central to the story of the rise of the nation-state, 1648 is an entirely in- tra-European affair. Yet even as we take up this long imperial history of the nation-state, how do we think through important transformations of the nation-state, particularly the rise and universalisation of popular sovereignty and democracy in the nineteenth and especially twentieth centuries? Far from separate political forms, the democratic state and the nation-state were mutually entangled in this period. The numerical principle central to the democratic imaginary has contributed to enshrining majoritarianism as the only morally and politically legitimate form of rule.[2] Mamdani distinguishes between permanent majorities and political majorities, which are shifting democratic coalitions. 'From a democratic point of view,' Mamdani writes, 'majorities and minorities cannot precede the democratic process; rather, they must be its outcome' (Mamdani 2020: 339). Yet, in practice, democratic majorities and ascriptive permanent majorities are difficult to disentangle. Are there structures internal to democratic practices—electoral competition, partisan mobilisation, for example—that have entrenched the politicisation of identity? And if democratic practices have contributed to the calcification of permanent majorities and minorities, how might we rethink democratic politics in the present?

Finally, I would like to turn to the call to decouple the nation from the state, which is part of Mamdani's vision of political decolonisation. This 'relationship between state and nation', Mamdani argues, 'produces a vicious cycle whereby the nation imagines that state as its protector and aggrandizer, the state fulfills the role, and the nation's investment in the state's bestowals of privilege only intensifies' (2020: 334). In addition to decoupling nation from the state, I wonder if this argument also points to the need to diminish and fragment the power of the state such that it cannot monopolise the role of protector and aggrandiser. Capture of state institutions becomes so central to political communities because it appears as the only way to protect rights and privileges. If these powers and capacities were not centralised in the state, would this help to limit competition and conflict over control of the state? Would a de- centralised and confederal structure work to undo the pathologies of the nation-state? To be sure, federal structures that maintain the politicisation of tribal and ethnic identity would not move us far in this direction. For in these cases, the coupling of nation and state is only replicated and reproduced internally by tribe and ethnicity. This is one of the central lessons Mamdani draws from the experience of South Sudan. But might there be forms of fragmenting state power such that political power is distributed in overlapping and plural institutions that help to disperse and mitigate escalating conflicts tied to state capture? If the nation is decoupled from the state, might the state, with its claim of omnipotence, its vision of unitary sovereignty, also have to be radically reimagined?

These questions are informed by a concern that Mamdani had already highlighted in Citizen and Subject. There he argued that while conservative regimes of postcolonial Africa maintained the 'decentralized despotism' of indirect rule, radical regimes generated a 'centralized despotism', overcoming the bifurcations of tribe, but reinforcing the Leviathan-like power of the state. Across various postcolonial contexts in Africa, and elsewhere, this has generated authoritarian and assimilationist states that have repressed a recognition of pluralism, local autonomy and self-determination. The challenges of religious, ethnic and national pluralism calls for a reconsideration of the state side of the nation-state model as much as it does the decoupling of nation from state. The decentralisation of political power, in addition to its democratisation, might well be a necessary correlate to overcoming the colonial legacies of the state.[3]

Notes

1. For an account of this idea of analytical universalism, see Getachew and Mantena, forthcoming 2021.
2. On the number principle and demo- cratic politics, see Scott 1999: 158–189.
3. A critique of centralised state pow.er and even forms of anti-statism played an important, albeit largely ignored, role in 20th-century traditions of anti-colonialism (see Fejzula, 2020: 1–24). In a consideration of the Middle East, where for a century

the redrawing of nation-state boundaries has served as an antidote to pluralism, Asli Bâli has recently argued that reforms predicated on decentralisation and devolution are likely to be less violent and might provide better grounds for democratisation (Bâli 2020: 405–460; Bâli and Dajani, forthcoming).

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Neither Settler Nor Native
A Response to My Critics

I am thankful to CODESRIA for arranging this thoughtful engagement with my new work, ***Neither Settler Nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities****. My interlocuters have raised several key issues.*

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A Gender Gap?

According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 'there is a gender gap in Mamdani's work'.

Thandika Mkandawire once told me that it was CODESRIA's misfortune that just about every African scholar, whether lawyer, political scientist or novelist, felt compelled to pay homage to political economy. Even if someone wrote a love poem, he or she was likely to be asked: What about class? The result was that we had not only bad poets and political scientists but also bad political economists. It seems to me that the place of political economy has been taken by gender analysis. No matter the theme you write on, you are likely to be asked: What about gender? Then we used to say: Working people are most of humanity. Now we say: After all, women are half of humanity. The fact is that every person is multiply identified, by gender, class, race, and so on. There is no single majority; each of these identifications gives you a different majority. The identity salient at a given time gives us a particular majority. It is the articulation of these identities that we now refer to as "inter-sectionality". At one General Assembly, there was even a suggestion that CODESRIA should not publish an article or book that did not include gender analysis. Some members wondered whether we were witnessing the making of a gender police. Someone reading Ndlovu-Gatsheni's response could easily mistake him for a member of a new gender police. But police, as we know, are often unable to see what is not in front of them.

I have never claimed to be a gender theorist. But neither have I stayed at arm's length from gender analysis. My first published book was the result of a research paper I wrote as a graduate student. *The Myth of Population Control: Family, Class and Caste in an Indian Village* (Monthly Review Press, 1972) was an ethnographic study of changing gender and patriarchal relations in a village in Punjab. I sought to understand how rapid technological change in agriculture was changing social relations and in turn transforming the reproductive behaviour of different castes and classes.

My first attempt to theorise gender as a central category in social and political analysis was a decade later, in the 1980s, as a member of a Gender Working Group formed by CODESRIA. Its four members included Samir Amin, Zene Tadesse, Marie Angelique Savanne and me. At the first meeting, I presented the draft of a conceptual essay. I recall the title as 'Gender and the Division of Labour'. I ended up being harshly criticised by my colleagues for pursuing an approach they thought had subordinated gender to class analysis. This was before the emphasis on 'intersectionality' became popular.

The outcome did deter me from trying to produce theory on gender, but not from using gender as an analytical category in research on themes that I thought would be enriched by it. There were two such thematically driven research efforts. The first was on the relationship between the division of labour (gendered and patriarchal) and the process of capital accumulation. From 1980 to 1985, when I taught at Makerere University, I carried out ethnographic work (we then called it 'field work') in eight individual villages in different parts of Uganda. Two of these (a study of Amwoma in Lango and another of Kitende in Buganda) were published as two separate articles in *Mawazo*, the journal of the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences at Makerere. I focused on the changing division of labour within families (both monogamous and polygamous). My core interest was in processes of social differentiation, and was driven by one question: Why do some peasant households become rich while most get impoverished? When I returned to Uganda after the NRM took office in 1986, I got together with a number of students and expanded the research to many more villages throughout the country. We gathered over 2,000 responses to the same questionnaire over several years. They remain in a box in my study in Kampala, unprocessed, mainly because I had a strong feeling that the result was unlikely to yield any new question; repetition would not be productive.

My second encounter with gendered research was driven by an interest in the question of group rights. It followed my involvement in the National Commission on Local Government, which I chaired from 1986 to 1988. The Commission led me to study the affirmative action programme introduced by the new government, the NRM, which included special parliamentary representation for historical minorities (women, workers, handicapped persons, etc.). My writing explored the contradictory effects of officially sanctioned representation: Would affirmative action empower marginalized groups through self-representation or disempower them by turning their representatives into so many de facto state agents, leaving these same minorities leaderless? I pursued this theme in several public meetings organised by the Centre for Basic Research (CBR) on Uganda's experience with gender-based representation in Parliament. I also wrote a few articles on the subject, though in relatively obscure journals. Ndlovu-Gatsheni is understandably unaware of these publications and meetings since they were all under the radar, so to say. But I mention these as background to the question that Ndlovu-Gatsheni is interested in: Why do I not write of gender in *Neither Settler Nor Native*? This is certainly not because of a lack of reflection on the relationship between gender and extreme violence, the latter being the central thematic preoccupation of the book. The process of reflection led me to conclude that I could not just 'add' gender to race, tribe, religion, this time not even to class. I will spell out here the different steps in my reflection. Whereas I had come across instances of members of a self-defined race or tribe or religion dream of a genocidal path to a future without the other, I had yet to come across an instance where either gender, male or female, had imagined such a future, let alone tried to bring such a genocidal nightmare to life. The reason seemed clear to me: neither men nor women can survive without the other. Our future, as men or women, lies in co-existence. This posed a wholly different set of questions, pointing to a hitherto unfamiliar terrain. Historically, it seemed to set gender apart from other forms of politicised identities, such as tribe, race, etc. Gender needed to be thought through in greater depth—pre-class, pre-state or pre-polity. It also pointed away from genocidal tendencies to possibilities of co-existence amidst tension. I shared these thoughts with students and colleagues at Makerere Institute of Social Research, and concluded that the question of gender in a study of extreme violence required a fresh approach. Such an approach would have to begin with the above reflection.

Structure Without Agency?

In spite of the great generosity and insight with which he has mapped the intellectual journey leading to the publication of *Neither Settler*, I found the review essay by IB (which is how Abdallah Ibrahim is known in the CODESRIA community) puzzling. If Ndlovu-Gatsheni could see only what lay in front of him, IB seemed not to register my central preoccupation as stated in the very book he is reviewing. IB has two concerns. I shall begin with the first. In his words, Mamdani 'ends up focusing more on structure than historical agency. … This seemingly one-sided narrative in *Neither Settler Nor Native* comes out clearly in the South African and South Sudanese experience.'

I think a re-reading may help clarify this doubt.

There is a detailed analysis of 'historical agency' in *Neither Settler*, particularly in the chapters on South Africa and South Sudan. I divide the South African response to apartheid into two historical periods—before and after the mid-1970s. Before the 1970s, anti-apartheid politics was largely derivative. Each racial group organised separately, as defined by apartheid power—Africans as ANC, Indians as Natal Indian Congress, Coloureds as Coloured People's Congress, and whites as the South African Congress of Democrats. This was structure dominating agency. By uncritically embracing the architecture of apartheid, the resistance reproduced it.

I argue that apartheid's ideological hold on its victims was broken only in the 1970s. The key initiative came from the student movement, black *and* white. The starting point was when Black students under Biko left the liberal white student organisation, formed their own separate body, and went on to organise township dwellers, beginning with Soweto. Left in the wilderness, radical white students turned to organising hostel workers on the fringes of these same townships. The turning point in anti-apartheid politics was the strikes that began in Durban in 1973 and the uprising in Soweto that followed in 1976.

The Soweto Uprising unfolded under the banner of Black Consciousness (BC). Biko said: Black is not a colour; if you are oppressed, you are Black. This was the beginning of rethinking race not as destiny but as a historically produced agency. At the same time, there was nothing inevitable about the impact of BC on the anti-apartheid struggle. BC could have led to a nation-state consciousness—claiming that South Africa is a Black nation, of the Black majority, thus reifying and essentialising Black as a trans-historical identity. Instead, it led to an epistemological awakening—the consciousness of Black as a historical political identity.

Afrikaners, too, made a journey from being junior partners of British colonialism to being part of the anti-apartheid coalition. Even here, there was no consensus. The rift inside the Afrikaner community was demonstrated by the publication of a book, *My Traitor's Heart* (1990), authored by Rian Malan, a great-grandson of a former Boer state president. Malan was a crime reporter for the Johannesburg paper, *The Star*. His beat covered black townships. Each chapter of his book focused on a specific type of what was then called black-on-black violence. One chapter was devoted to The Hammer Man, a big black man who wielded a heavy hammer to smash the skull of his victims, all equally black, but all poor people who would yield small pittances. Malan's subtext was not difficult to decipher: If they can do this to their own, what will they do to us if given half a chance?

There was nothing structurally inevitable about any of the above developments. Indeed, these historical actors began the process that would lead to an undermining of existing structures. I call this shift 'the South African moment'. I argue that its birth in the 70s and 80s was marked by a three-fold shift in vision. One, from simple opposition, its opponents looked for an alternative to apartheid; rather than being content with turning the world upside down, they dared to think of a different world. Two, from a state of the majority—the national majority, the black majority—the resistance began to think of creating a state of all the people. Finally, from opposition to whites, the resistance went on to oppose white power.

In *Neither Settler*, I suggest we think of 1994 as marking the birth of a new political community. The alternative would have been to rupture the existing community into two separate ones, as indeed happened in Sudan. The partition of South Africa into two separate political communities, one for victims and the other for perpetrators, one for blacks and the other for whites, would have reproduced the structures created under apartheid. Neither a modified reproduction nor a transformative impulse was a given. Let us not forget that, in 1994, Afrikaners too were divided about the future, with a minority asking for a homeland, where Afrikaners would have their own state. The anti-apartheid movement chose a different future, a common future for survivors of apartheid, who as Ndlovu-Gatsheni notes, often described themselves as a 'rainbow'. In my words, they were no longer just victims who had survived, but ALL were survivors, whether victims, perpetrators, beneficiaries or bystanders.

It seems to me that this vision was shared in its essentials by John Garang in South Sudan. Garang's clearest statement of his vision on the historical nature of political identity—leading to his call for a 'New Sudan'—was articulated in his address to representatives of the Northern Sudanese opposition at the meeting in Koka Dam. Garang challenged his audience to think of building an alternative political identity, other than one based on race and tribe. But Garang was murdered. The road he pointed to was not taken. It remains, however, not buried in the sands of history, but there to be opened by future generations who may learn from it.

When it comes to the dialectic of structure and agency, my central concern in *Neither Settler* is precisely this: if our agency is structured and blunted by history, is it possible for us as historical subjects to recoup agency through an understanding of the nature of these structural constraints so we may reshape that very structure and rethink and remake the future? I state in the book that I refuse to think of structure as a Foucauldian prison in which historical subjects are fêted to live out their lives, like mice in a cage. Indeed, IB takes note of my claim to being an 'incorrigible optimist'. No optimist can be an unthinking prisoner of historical structures.

IB suggests that the lessons I draw from South Africa and South Sudan are more 'prescriptive' than analytical, and that they are belied by the present reality of South Africa. Forms of political identity, I have argued and my interlocuters note, are not artifacts of the market or sediments of cultural communities of meaning, but are linked to historically changing forms of the state. South Africa faced a dual political challenge in 1994: I describe the two issues as 'deracialisation' and 'detribalisation'. IB focuses only on the former, and suspects that my analysis is contaminated by some kind of a romantic embrace of 1994. But if we look at the dual legacy of 1994, only 'deracialisation' gives us ground for optimism; the same cannot be said of the failure to detribalise. The outcome of this failure, called 'xenophobic' violence, highlights the depth of the challenge confronting the unfinished political transition. That this violence is more against the 'tribal' rather than the 'racial' other should be reason for sober reflection. I will return to this towards the end of this essay.

IB's second and parting critique is that *Neither Settler* does not address the question of social (economic) justice. In a rhetorical flourish, he laments the call for creating a political community of 'undifferentiated survivors': to quote IB, 'the self-described "incorrigible optimist" has crafted a continental and global pathway to an imagined political community sans class struggle' presumably to leave us with a 'seemingly one-size-fits-all prescription…'. Alas, concludes IB, this 'prescriptive pathway … skirts an old leftist debate that was inspired by the Fanonist problematic, the notion of true and false decolonisation'. True, my engagement with the left is not on true and false decolonisation, but on the left's limited understanding of political decolonisation. I call for both a broadening and deepening of how we think of political decolonisation. I ask that we deepen our understanding of political decolonisation beyond freedom from external political domination, to include an internal aspect, rethinking and remaking the political community by depoliticising and redrawing internal political boundaries ('race' and 'tribe') that were drafted during the colonial era. Will this give rise to a community of 'undifferentiated survivors', or to a differentiated community who are divided in their response to the demand for social justice? My only point is that, the more deracialised and detribalised the political community, the less likely will is its response to demands for social equality be along racial and tribal lines.

The principal critique of 1994 is that there has been no social justice. I have stated that this critique both states a truism and misses the significance of the political rebirth that was 1994. I argue that we should see the rebirth as the beginning of political decolonisation, but not the end of decolonisation. Without social justice, the gains made in the political domain will not endure. At the same time, any move towards deracialisation and detribalisation is sure to improve the chances of waging a struggle for social justice than what they were under apartheid. My claim is that a successful struggle for social justice will need to cut across the political divides imposed by race and tribe. Without political equality, the mobilisation for social justice will be fragmented along lines of race and tribe. It will more likely lead to an internal civil war. The result will stink, like the 1994 genocide in Rwanda or its mini version, the ongoing xenophobic violence in South Africa.

Popular Sovereignty and the Nation-State

I would like to close by engaging with questions raised by Adom Getachew, mostly in the context of 'the rise and universalisation of popular sovereignty and democracy in the nineteenth and especially twentieth centuries'. Getachew recognises that the notions of democratic state and national self-determination have been 'mutually

entangled' over the past century and a half. What, we may ask, is the consequence of this fact, that the principle of democratic majorities has come to life within the shell of the nation-state?

The point is best made if we return to the South African transition. The post-apartheid elections in 1994 posed a big question: Who should have the right to vote? At stake were the political rights of hundreds of thousands, maybe over a million, migrant workers who had over decades come from neighbouring territories: Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Malawi and others. Migrants had been pivotal in worker mobilisation since 1973 and were among the driving forces of the trade union movement that followed, starting with FOSATU. The ANC had historically been in solidarity with migrants. The 1955 Freedom Charter had boldly proclaimed that 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it'—to all its residents, not just to its citizens.

In 1994, migrants voted. But, following 1994, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) took control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Step by step, they chipped away at the rights of non-citizen residents, disenfranchising them. They told black South Africans that their rightful gains in the post-apartheid era were being usurped by non-citizen residents pouring in from across the country's borders. They thus set citizens against residents. This is why, when post-apartheid violence erupted, its target was the tribal stranger, not the racial stranger. 'Xenophobic' violence is testimony to the two-sidedness of citizenship: just as it empowered some (citizens), it excluded others (migrants).

The state form inherited from apartheid was bifurcated: the central state was racialised and the local state was tribalised. The reforms of 1994 moved towards deracialisation, but not detribalisation. The beneficiaries of that reform had no problem accepting that race should rightfully be depoliticised, but not tribe; far too many believe that tribal (customary) rights are part of an age-old African culture, and not part of the legacy of apartheid. I argue that the failure to detribalise the state also marked the state of South Sudan from its birth in 2011.

Getachew is certainly right to point out that whereas *Neither Settler* aims critically to reflect on the nation, the first half of the couplet nation-state, more critical energy needs to be focused on the overriding power of the state, the second half of the couplet, : 'Would a decentralised and confederal structure work to undo the pathologies of the nation-state?' At the same time, she recognises that 'federal structures that maintain the politicisation of tribal and ethnic identity would not move us far in this direction', this being 'one of the central lessons Mamdani draws from the experience of South Sudan'. Getachew calls on us to reflect further on the question of federalism. The way forward, I think, is to acknowledge that federalism has multiple forms. I have in mind two: territorial and ethnic. The territorial form of federation was the innovation of settler states in the West, which drew their populations increasingly from European states. In the US, the state was reformed after the Civil War. The constitutional amendments that followed created a single federal citizenship overriding the citizenship of different states. Henceforth, someone born in one state could migrate to another and have the same rights as a person who had not only been born there but also had never moved out of the state. Contrast this with the ethnic federalism characteristic of most African federal states, from Nigeria to Ethiopia, where one's rights, particularly to land, are derived from one's ethnic belonging. Ethnic federations have simply turned the federal unit into a collection of so many ethnic groups, each claiming its right to self-determination. It resembles more the pre-Civil War confederacy in the US than the federal arrangement after it.

True, decentralisation needs to go hand in hand with democratisation, whereby the notion of citizen gives way to a broader and more inclusive notion, that of the resident, as a bearer of political rights. That is the limit of my ambition in this book. Neither the reform of the state nor the modalities of how the nation may exist are part of the agenda my book seeks to address. My focus is the present day conjoined unity of the two, the nation-state. A separate reflection on either of its halves, the nation and the state, will have to be the focus of a different book.

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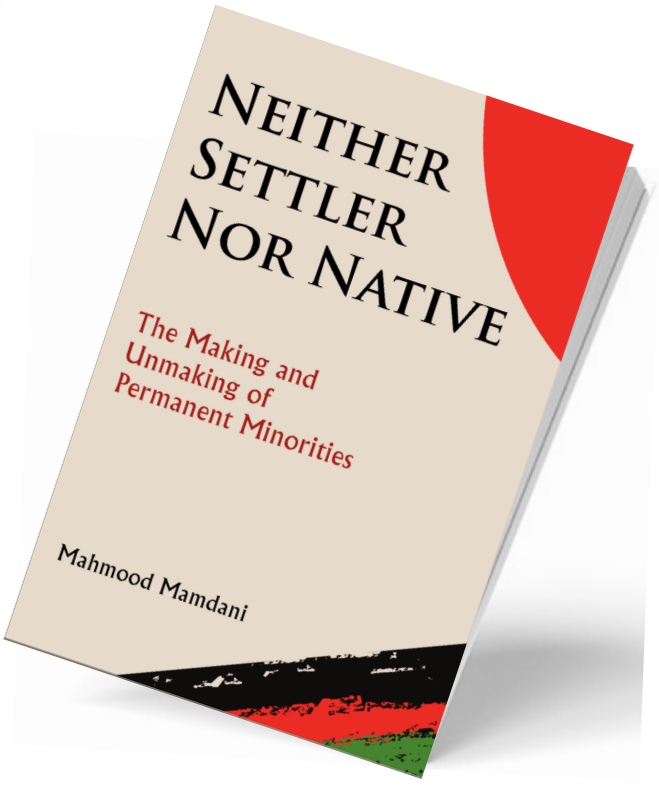

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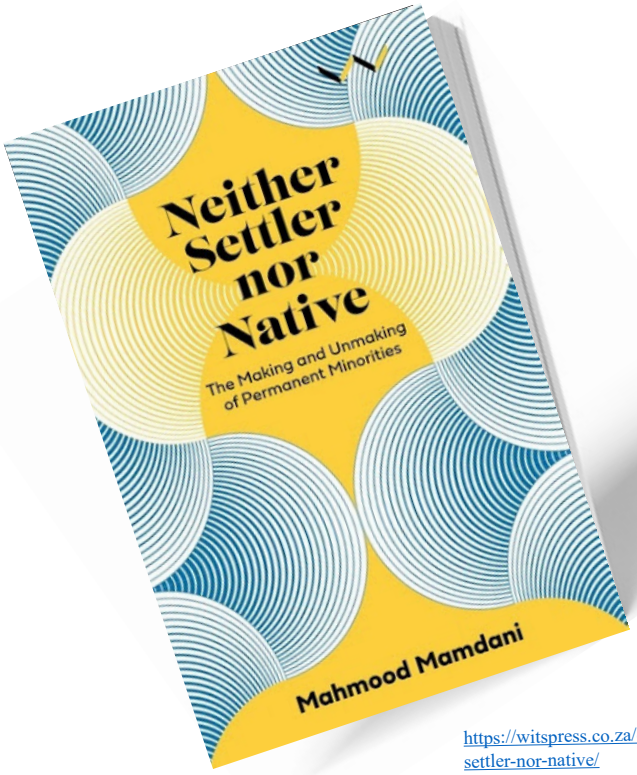

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