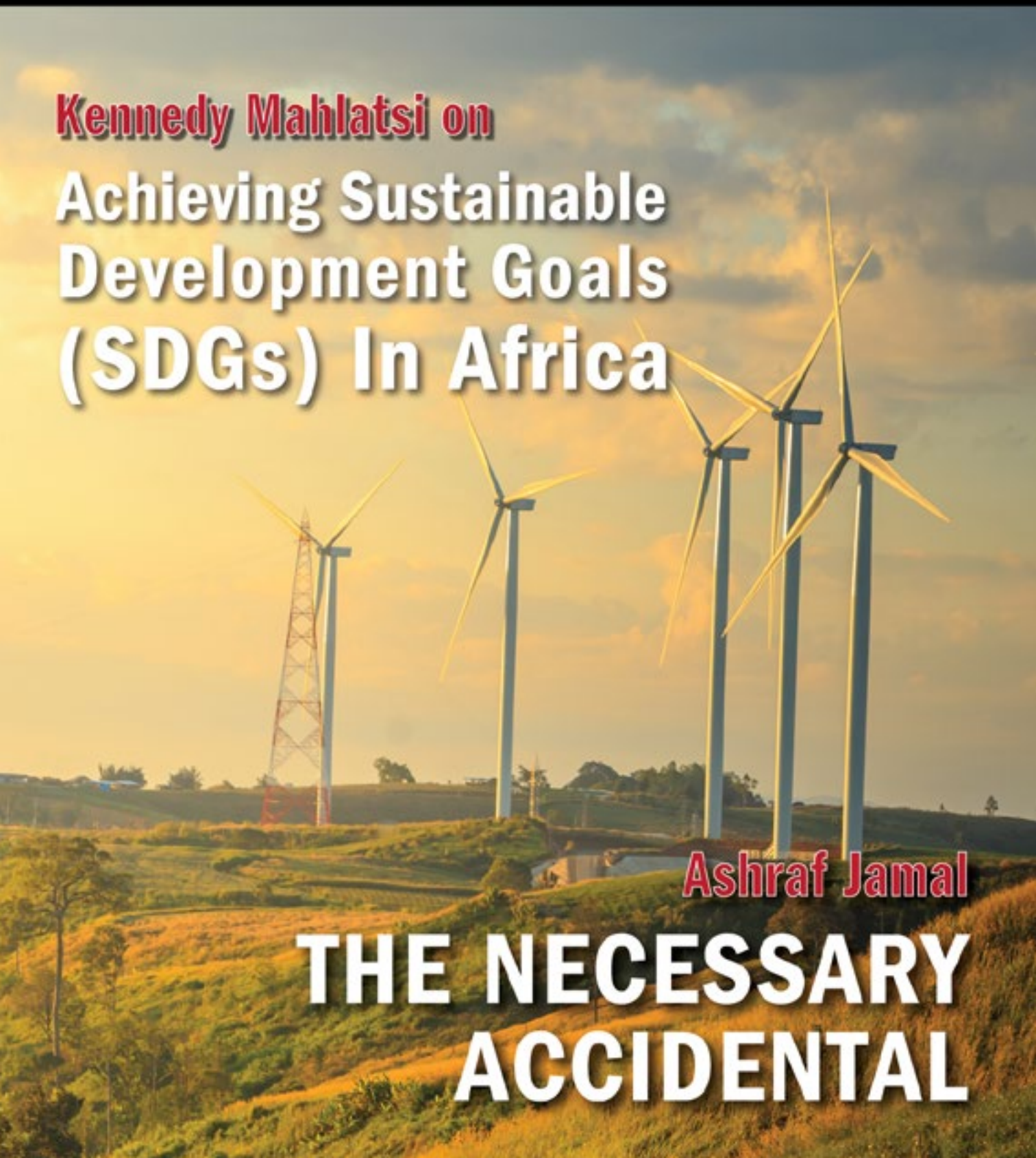
Quarter 2 2021 / VOLUME 87

The Thinker

A PAN-AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS



Kennedy Mahlatsi on

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) In Africa

Ashraf Jamal

THE NECESSARY ACCIDENTAL

The Thinker

A PAN-AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS

CALL FOR PAPERS

Africa

Open Submissions on any aspect

Decolonization

Submissions due 15 July 2021

For further enquiries, please contact the editor,
Ronit Frenkel at thethinker@uj.ac.za

#ujlibrary

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

@ujlibrary

In This Issue

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Prof Ronit Frenkel

The University of Johannesburg acquired The Thinker in April 2019 from Dr Essop Pahad. Over the last decade, The Thinker has gained a reputation as a journal that explores Pan-African issues across fields and times. Ronit Frenkel, as the incoming editor, plans on maintaining the pan-African scope of the journal while increasing its coverage into fields such as books, art, literature and popular cultures. The Thinker is a 'hybrid' journal, publishing both journalistic pieces with more academic articles and contributors can now opt to have their submissions peer reviewed. We welcome Africa-centred articles from diverse perspectives, in order to enrich both knowledge of the continent and of issues impacting the continent.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS EDITION - All contributing analysts write in their personal capacity

Narnia Bohler-Muller is Professor of Law and the Executive Director of the Developmental, Capable and Ethical State (DCES), Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa.She is also Adjunct Professor at the Nelson R Mandela School of Law, University of Fort Hare and a Research Fellow at the Centre for Gender and Africa Studies at the University of the Free State. Previously, she was Professor of Law at Vista University and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) before joining Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) as research director of social sciences in 2011. Prof. Bohler-Muller has over 100 peer reviewed publications and has co-edited five books on gender violence; human trafficking, the dynamic of BRICS, the evolution of the Constitution and the Blue Economy. She is an admitted Advocate of the High Court of the Republic of South Africa.

Andy Carolin a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Johannesburg. He holds a PhD in English literature and has received a Y-rating from the National Research Foundation (NRF). He is the author of Post-Apartheid Same-Sex Sexualities: Restless Identities in Literary and Visual Culture (Routledge 2021). His research focuses broadly on race, gender, sexuality and history in South African literary and cultural studies.

Thulani Andrew Chauke a youth development practitioner by profession is a National Youth Service: Provincial Coordinator at the National Youth Development Agency, Western Cape Province, South Africa. He holds a Doctorate Degree in Education from the Tshwane University of Technology, a Master of Arts in Youth Development degree with Cum Laude, and a Bachelor of Arts in Youth in Development degree from the University of Venda. He is a peer reviewer for eight accredited journals and holds membership for various academic associations. His research interest includes youth deviant behaviour, school violence, youth work, positive youth development, and youth entrepreneurship. Thulani has published 14 articles in DoHET accredited journals and author of the Vusiwana Va Hleka book. He has a vast of experience in project management ranging from local government, electoral democracy, investment, and youth service. His day-to-day job is to help all three spheres of government, private sector, civil society, and institutions of higher learning to deliver their youth development intervention through the National Youth Service Model.

Edward Chikuni is a Professor in the Faculty of Engineering, and Technology at Botho University, Gaborone, Botswana. His area of expertise is Engineering Education as well as Energy and Power Systems. He has a BEng (First Division) Electrical Engineering from the University of Sierra Leone, an MSc in Electrical Power Engineering from the University of Manchester (UMIST) and a PhD (Electrical Engineering) from the University of Wales. His over 20 years of academic experience has included teaching major Universities in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. He has over 25 years' industrial experience acquired during his tenure of senior positions in the Railways and major private sector industries. Prof. Chikuni is registered as a Professional Engineer in the United Kingdom, Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. He is also a Certified Measurement & Verification Professional (CMVP). His consulting experience has included assignments funded by

World Bank and Regulatory Authorities in Zimbabwe. He has published two books, two patents and over 60 scientific articles in refereed Conferences and Journals. His current Research is the development of Electric Vehicles to meet local and regional needs.

Sally Field is a researcher at the University of Cape Town. She has an MA focussing on participatory practices for development. She authored a distance learning book on maternal mental health for health and social workers and has published book chapters and journal articles related to service development, screening tools and provider training for maternal mental health, as well risk factors for maternal mental illness in low-resource settings. She works as a consultant to Singizi and was involved in the Heartlines "What's Your Story?" evaluation.

John Boulard Forkuor is a lecturer at the Department of Sociology and Social Work, KNUST. He teaches social work at the undergraduate level and qualitative research methods at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. His research focuses on transformation in urban areas and its implication for urban social life. The urban street as an important space for urban actors (street beggars; street children and street hawkers) has also been a focus of his research. His research interest also include the provision of social welfare for vulnerable groups in urban areas, especially for the vulnerable aged and for persons living with intellectual disabilities. His publications have appeared in journals like Journal of Contemporary African Studies; Urban Forum; Urban Review; Sage Open; Gender Studies and Qualitative Social Work. For his career development, his aim is to conduct research that will have implications for social work practice and social service delivery in Ghana and in Africa.

Candice Harrison-Train is a qualitative and quantitative researcher and M&E specialist who has worked with Singizi Consulting Africa for twenty years. She has worked with Singizi on global projects, projects in the SADC region and the rest of the continent, as well as projects in South Africa. These have included projects in the human rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, general health and rights, employment, and skills development sectors. Candice has been involved in evaluating Heartline's "What's Your Story?" programme since 2017.

Ashraf Jamal is a Research Associate in the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre, University of Johannesburg. He is the co-author, with Sue Williamson, of Art in South Africa: The Future Present and co-editor of Indian Ocean Studies: Cultural, Social, and Political Perspectives. Jamal is also the author of Predicaments of Culture in South Africa, Love themes for the wilderness, The Shades, In the World: Essays on Contemporary South African Art, and Strange Cargo: Essays on Art (forthcoming).

Lehlohonolo Kennedy Mahlatsi holds a PhD degree in Public Management and Governance from North-West University (Vaal Campus). His Mini-Dissertation from the same institution evaluates the Developmental Role of Local Government in fighting poverty in the Free State. His dissertation explores the developmental Mandate of District Municipalities in the Free State in promoting environmental rights. He also holds B. Iuris and LLB from the University of the Western Cape. He has published dozens of newspaper articles and columns. He has extensive experience in public service, especially in local government. He was the former Municipal Manager of Metsimaholo Local Municipality and he is also accredited facilitator with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). He has interest in the Working Class Heritage and he is involved in the campaign for the recognition of Coalbrook Mine Disaster as National Heritage Site. He is a founder member of the Zamdela Youth Congress (ZAYCO) and he is currently Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) Member of the South African Communist Party (SACP) in the Free State.

Francis Onditi, D.Phil., heads the School of International Relations and Diplomacy, Riara University, Kenya. He was recently enlisted as professor of research and distinguished author at the Institute of Intelligent Systems, University of Johannesburg, South Africa. He is the 2019 recipient of the AISA Fellowship awarded by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa. He is a widely published pan-African researcher specializing in conflictology with a bias in the geography of African conflict and institutional evolutionary theory. He has published numerous research papers in peer reviewed journals, contributed several chapters to edited volumes and authored/co-edited 6 books. His current research focuses on "exploring the analytical conception of the

closeness centrality and its implications for a theory of interactivities for enhancing understanding of the process of conflict excavators and extractives with the aim of providing an explanation of the intrinsic character of interaction among human beings, communities and states as a process of diffusion of power, conflict reversals, and peace interlocutors."

Tanusha Raniga teaches social work and community development at the University of Johannesburg. She is a C2 NRF Rated Researcher. She is actively involved in research primarily in the area of social protection policy, feminization of poverty and sustainable livelihoods. She has published widely in national and international journals and has presented at Social Work conferences. Her teaching areas include: Social Policy, Development Management and Integrated Social and Economic Development.

Iqra Raza is a research scholar in the Department of English at Ashoka University, India. Her areas of academic interest include South African Anglophone Writing, Muslim representation, Post 9/11 literature, empire studies, literature from conflict zones, human rights literature, critical race studies, identity (and) politics, literary studies and cultural studies. She is also a poet and a haijin (haiku poet) whose works have been published and awarded internationally.

Douglas Yates is Professor of Political Science at the American Graduate School in Paris (France). He recently published the fourth edition of the Historical Dictionary of Gabon (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), which brings the political affairs of this French-speaking, oil- rich, equatorial African country up to date since the accession to power of Ali Bongo, eldest son of Omar Bongo, who died in 2009 after the publication of the third edition. Dr Yates is an established country expert who has been researching and writing about Gabon since 1993 with his doctoral dissertation at Boston University, later published as The Rentier State in Africa: Oil-Rent Dependency and Neo-Colonialism in the Republic of Gabon (Africa World Press, 1996). Since then, he has taught and directed graduate research on African politics at the American Graduate School in Paris and has consulted for the State Department and Defense of the United States government as well as non-governmental organizations, private international investment firms, African studies centres, and European development agencies. Yates is the co-author (with Marquette University's David Gardinier) of the previous edition of the Historical Dictionary of Gabon (2006) and has also authored the annual chapter on "Gabon" for Brill's Africa Yearbook since its creation in 2004.

The Thinker

PAN-AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS

The Journal for Progressive Thought
www.thethinker.co.za

Publisher
English Department
University of Johannesburg
Kingsway Campus,
Auckland Park,
Johannesburg
Tel:+27 11 559 2553

Editor
Prof Ronit Frenkel
thethinker@uj.ac.za
Leila Hall - Assistant Editor
thethinker@uj.ac.za

Design & Art Direction
On The Loose
matt@ontheloose.co.za
Tel:+27 83 302 8969
www.ontheloose.co.za

The Necessary Accidental

By Ashraf Jamal | Peer Review

Abstract

This essay on William Kentridge's ideas and practice, in particular regarding his multi-media theatrical works, was prompted by a visit to Zeitz MOCAA to see his retrospective in 2019. Watching a documentary on the making of the 'The Head and The Load', I was struck by the production's frenzied energy, and the exhaustive attempt to break down any predictive or conclusive vision. This has always been Kentridge's approach – his animated works are exercises in a deconstructive erasure. I have addressed this matter elsewhere, in my essay 'Faith in a Practical Epistemology: On Collective Creativity in Theatre' (Predicaments of Culture in South Africa, 2005), but on this occasion, while watching the documentary, it was Nietzsche's view in Contra Wagner which proved the trigger, namely, that 'Wagner's art is sick. The problems he brings to the stage – purely hysteric's problems – the convulsiveness of his affects, his over-charged sensibility ... the instability he disguises as a principle'. While Kentridge does not share Wagner's reactionary ideology, I argue that there is a connection between the two whose root lies in a decadent sensibility. And the peculiarly late-modern Western crisis that underlies it.

Introduction

'Wagner est une névrose,' Nietzsche declared (Turner, 2014: 258). We know what people in glass houses shouldn't do, but Nietzsche never cared for censorship. When he damned Wagner in his broadside, *Contra Wagner* (1889), it came at a great cost to himself. It was his third book on the composer, and his last. There, for the first time, he concludes that 'Wagner's art is sick. The problems he brings to the stage—purely hysterics' problems—the convulsiveness of his affects, his over-charged sensibility, his taste that craves stronger and stronger spices, the instability he disguises as a principle … presents a clinical picture which leaves no room for doubt' (Turner, 2014: 258). I am no clinician, but I think we can agree that Wagner is a neurosis, a gateway drug for nationalist extremism and fascism, phenomena that are omnipresent today. It is intriguing that against extremism, Nietzsche should champion Bizet, a composer he found more soothing, more human—more 'African' (Nietzsche, 2016: 182). That Nietzsche was also ill when he wrote *Contra Wagner* does not diminish the force of his insight. That his own thinking would be distorted by his sister to mirror the man he eventually loathed is a curse he could not avoid. 'I am just as much a child of my age as Wagner—I am a *decadent*,' said Nietzsche, 'The only difference is that I recognised the fact, that I struggled against it'. His judgement of Wagner is also a judgement of himself. Most of all, it is a judgement against their age.

Kentridge is no Wagner. He doesn't share the composer's diseased fascination for myth or his extremist views. And yet, working my way through the Kentridge retrospective (which spans over forty years) at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), it is Nietzsche's third critique of Wagner that resurfaces. It is the immensity of the scale, the density and intensity of the experience, that leaves me dumbfounded and aghast. Blockbuster shows do this to me. They dissipate far more than they articulate, preoccupied as they are with ensuring that the viewer exits the scene with their bruised head ringing—hobbled, hocked, reverent. After two hours standing in front of a small screen watching a documentary on the making of *The Head & the Load* (2018)—its theme the tragic fate of African soldiers, largely deployed as load-bearers in the First World War—it is Nietzsche's concern for the 'convulsiveness' of affect; the 'over-charged sensibility'; the 'taste that craves stronger and stronger spices'; the 'instability' that disguises itself as 'principle,' that comes flooding back.

I withdraw from the screen, exhausted, overwhelmed, and like Nietzsche, longing for the therapeutic calm Bizet affords. 'Bizet's music seems to me perfect,' wrote Nietzsche. 'It comes forward lightly, gracefully, stylishly. It is lovable, it does not sweat' (Nietzsche, 2016: 182). Kentridge's music (and here I'm speaking of its mechanics), his shadow puppetry, his voice-song-sound, his light projection, and his living bodies (as further prostheses), are diametrically other. Kentridge confronts us with the destabilisation of the senses, the routing of causality and the embrace of what the German poet Novalis (a.k.a. Friedrich von Hardenberg) termed 'the necessary-accidental'. Discomposure is the thing; art the nightmare from which we cannot awaken.

Derived from a Ghanaian proverb—'The head and the load are the troubles of the neck' (Kentridge, 2014: 28)—the drama, first staged at the Tate Modern in 2018, introduces us to the stressors that inform the work's theme and making. I realise that, after Nassim Nicholas Taleb, this production is 'anti-fragile', a thing 'that gains from disorder'. As writes Taleb, 'Everything that does not like volatility does not like stressors, harm, chaos, events, disorder, 'unforeseen' consequences, uncertainty, and critically, time' (2013: 12). The Head & the Load, however, is defined precisely by these invasive conditions. They are not conceived as anomalies. They are core elements in the making and experience thereof. The necessary-accidental is the artist's engine-room. If the Ghanaian proverb is fitting it is because, for Kentridge, the problem—be it

> "If Kentridge's art is symptomatic, it is because it reveals illness. It tells us what we are, or what we are fast becoming. The reveal, however, is never stated. It is implicit. Implicated. One enters trouble, engages in discord. It is the symptom articulated as art, as experience, that we absorb."

the making of a work or the history that informs it—is in the head, the load it carries, and the neck that struggles to support it. Physical and psychological, this burden finds its echo in Nietzsche's reading of the culture Wagner embodies as decadent and neurotic. The key difference, however, is that Kentridge never enshrines the problem or reduces it to a fetish.

As the art dealer Jeff Poe remarked, 'our business is to sell symptoms articulated as objects' (Thornton, 2008: 187). A symptom is a physical or mental manifestation of illness. It is a telling term when applied to art—what it does, how it works. If Kentridge's art is symptomatic, it is because it reveals illness. It tells us what we are, or what we are fast becoming. The reveal, however, is never stated. It is implicit. Implicated. One enters trouble, engages in discord. It is the symptom articulated as art, as experience, that we absorb. If art has become a global opiate, this is certainly why. It is an intoxicant, a distraction for a world distracted by distraction. Whether good or ill, art as an answer to life is a charged debate. In the case of Kentridge, what interests me is why and how the artist arrived at that point of near hysteria—his own, but more importantly, the global hysteria that his art symptomatically expresses. When Nietzsche declared that Wagner is a neurosis, it was not the man he was solely assessing, but what he culturally represents. If Kentridge represents a neurosis, it should be understood similarly. The root of the problem, which Kentridge strives to convert into a strength, lies in the society that fostered his genius. Here I am not only talking about South Africa, but the fretwork of Empire and European influence upon which it is crucially founded. One cannot think of Kentridge's work outside of Europe and Empire. The 'decadence' which Nietzsche failed to survive is also Kentridge's inheritance. It is a decadence that remains with us, that defines us. We are all 'une névrose'. The art we make, live alongside, and inhabit is symptomatic of a cruel, unloving, and frenetic age that will not allow for the glitch that is Bizet—a place for calm, for love.

If Wagner is Kentridge's thither world—the dark side which stalks us all—it is not Bizet but Henri Bergson who is his corrective. 'To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly,' Bergson writes (Malarkey & Pearson, 2014: 7). Change (as a condition for making) is central to Kentridge's practice. It allows us to endure the load we fail to carry. For Kentridge, this failing is not an error. It is inevitable. Making is always an unmaking. Nothing holds because nothing is fixed. Time not only evolves; it reverts, flips, folds, comes asunder. We exist in snarled and ravaged bits and pieces. Unlike Wagner, Kentridge is unmoved by predestination. There is no assigned point at which a being or work arrives. If the volatility built into a work can be said to err on the side of hysteria, it is not solely such. Between anxiety and hysteria lies an infinity of symptoms. But what cannot be doubted is Kentridge's attentiveness to some or other complaint. Sickness is the crux; art its manifestation (and, if you are an optimist, its antidote).

***

Whether Kentridge's art can save us depends on one's understanding of what is happening, and whether resolution has a part to play in a given work's structuring of feeling or affect. My view is that Kentridge refuses closure. Beginnings and endings are interruptions. Movement is peripatetic. Nevertheless, there is a method that is intuitive. One knows this, not because of Kentridge's distinctive signature—what his work looks like—but because of what it does, how it moves. If his art appears to bind it is because of the vitality with which it is infused, its energy (which, as I've noted, is nerve-wracked and raw). If a work appears to complete itself it does so under duress, as though thrust beneath a guillotine. The cut is visible; the fragment torn, sutured, cut again. Or dissolved, pooled, dissolved again. That some have insisted on resolution in the face of dissolution is perplexing. After Bergson, I can only agree by conceiving Kentridge's works as 'open wholes' or subjunctive propositions.

In his reading of Bergson, Gilles Deleuze notes that 'movement only occurs if the whole is neither given nor giveable. As soon as a whole is given to one in the eternal order of forms or poses … there is no longer room for real movement' (2004: 7). This qualification is vital. As I understand it, one must intuit incompleteness as a critical part of the creative act. The 'forms or pose' a work assumes cannot succumb to the idea of itself. It must understand its aggregative existence within an unfinished schema. To suppose, as many do, that Kentridge's 'forms or poses' are iconic is to mistake their meaning and thrust the artist into a realm he refuses—that of mythic or symbolic art. An object (be it a megaphone, tripod, pruning shears, or

coffeepot) is never reducible to itself. Neither is it a symbol for some greater metaphysic. Their purpose in a given situation is always-already provisional. Their movements are never over-determined. Rather, it is change—duration, movement, volatility—that matters. It is not what something is or what it represents, but what it does. If Kentridge's art is never closed (always open), this is because his intuitive method sees a solution as a ligature in a schema that remains intrinsically incomplete.

***

No South African artist surpasses Kentridge's achievement. This is the message that tolls as I work my way through two encyclopaedic retrospectives, staged between 2019 and 2020 at the Norval Foundation and Zeitz MOCAA. If the Norval showing had the languid elegance of a Bizet score, it was hysteria that distinguished its display at Zeitz MOCAA. This agitation—most evident in Kentridge's films and dramas—was further amplified by the building that housed them. It is not that I seek to distinguish the event from its placement (they mirror and feed off each other). My point, however, is that Zeitz MOCAA is a sick building. It was once a grain silo, a locus for imperial trade. It was re-conceived by Thomas Heatherwick. The grain it once housed would prove the kernel for its redesign. In the end, however, the change was more cosmetic than substantive. It was more of a conceit, an idea about itself, than a genuine attempt at making the structure functional for the display of art. Instead, it collapses under its hubris. Once you have passed the awe and glamour that informs its towering atrium, through heavy-twinned, white hospital doors that divide an incoherent warren of rooms, lacking in oxygen, it is as though one has entered an unwholesome sanatorium. The building does not care for art. It cares for itself and its vainglorious statement: 'Look at Me!' The sixth-floor restaurant with its bug-eyed windows overlooking the harbour and Atlantic Ocean is the only other valve that allows one to breathe.

If art must palpate the mind, move it between sickness and health, then Zeitz MOCAA is infected by the former while the Norval Foundation, with its acres of glass, its cathedral-like heart and lilting sequence of anterooms, achieves the latter. One can breathe and contemplate. If Wagner and Bizet are the two chambers in Nietzsche's mind, they find their mirror in the bipolarity of these exhibition spaces, and the differing stories they tell about the artist's work and the age and culture it reflects. This is not to say that Kentridge is solely subject to his time. On the contrary, his influences span millennia. But it is the splicing of past and present, and, more significantly, Kentridge's response to decadence—a culture spanning the late-nineteenth century to the present—that is his surest focus.

***

The American ethnographer, James Clifford, wrote that the world became permanently surreal after the First World War (1988: 119). This is because it realised essences to be inessential, absolutes a mockery, betrayal a condition for living. At the root of the fall lies trauma. Modernism, Kentridge's greatest resource, is the outcome of this trauma. Nietzsche of course predicted it, as he predicted the persistence of conflict, the rise of fascism, and the toxicity of consensus and political correctness. It is within this trauma, and the neurosis it generates, that Kentridge positions his art. His global celebrity, like the Herculean joint retrospective, is a pyrrhic victory. The spoils of success are never the main concern but the 'main complaint'—symptoms of a project forever protracted and unfinished. What matters is never the thing itself (let alone the accolades thrust upon it), but its processual articulation, and the inarticulacy built into that process—a work's ever-changing changeling quality; how things accrete, moulder, blur, waver, morph, sicken.

In the snare of making, the outcome cannot be predicted. The reason for its existence, trauma, is key. It asks that we suspend judgement. It is not what we want from a thing that matters, but what it wants, the anthropomorphic force that drives it. For Bergson, it is this force which accounts for the molten power that is change. This is why, for Kentridge, canonisation is akin to death. As for the system that rigs a work's monetary value? Therein lies madness. What matters far more, and what distinguishes Kentridge's oeuvre, is its irresolute avidity. The artist does not make things. He makes questions. Whether static or mobile, his art is performative. It does not re-enact the reason for its existence, but existence itself, a condition for which any answer must be peremptory.

As Bergson notes, 'Intuition is a method of feeling one's way intellectually into the inner heart of a thing to locate what is unique and inexpressible in it' (Benke, 2000: 28). By aligning method with feeling, the French philosopher evokes the systemic and its refusal. One needs both for something to work. A condition must be posited as an expressive act that can be overridden, broken down, rendered inexpressible. For if, as Bergson resumes, 'reality' is thought to impact 'directly on our senses and our consensus'—if a 'direct communication' can be said to exist 'between the material world and ourselves'—then 'art would be unnecessary'. For Bergson and Kentridge, there can be no collective agreement as to the meaning or value of anything. Bergson's aphorism—'act like a man of thought and think like a man of action' (Malarkey and Pearson, 2014: 457)—is an acute distillation of the Kentridgean paradox. For the artist, thought and action are an affair, embroiled and ceaselessly interactive. Nietzsche's notion of the 'physiological' thought is also fitting in this regard, because what matters is a thought's embodied articulation as an inscrutable feeling (2007: 34).

It is not that one cannot (or should not) posit some rule for understanding what Kentridge makes and does; it is that one should always acknowledge that such an endeavour is perilous. For Kentridge, 'vulnerability and the process of growth' are 'continuous acts of transition.' He opposes the 'sensation … of discovery' and, with specific reference to charcoal, notes 'the imperfection of erasure.' Elsewhere, he ponders why 'passion can be so fleeting and memory so short-lived.' Emotionally, intellectually, and artistically, Kentridge negates the fixities of place and time which a retrospective may suppose. He challenges each and every attempt to fix his art as something monumental, or worse, as a window onto a country's history. Rather, Kentridge puts categorical imperatives under erasure. This process is both aesthetic and ethical. In the artist's world, the two are inseparable. Together they form 'a polemic for a kind of uncertainty,' he notes in a conversation with Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev. 'Neither programme nor chance' can define a given project. After Stéphane Mallarmé (or more recently, Taleb), hazard always comes in the way of system, and the error factored into it (2006: 161–81).

It would therefore be reasonable to question any parenthetical framing of Kentridge's oeuvre. No guide, no segue from room to room, can account for his output in any resolute fashion. The artist does not memorialise what he does. As he has roundly declared, 'I am only an artist, my job is to make drawings, not to make sense.' If he acknowledges that his work appears 'quaint,' this is not the price one pays for looking backwards. If he repeatedly draws a 1950s Bakelite telephone, it does not mean that he is being nostalgic. As he reminds Christov-Bakargiev, 'The lines of communication are contemporary even though the instruments are old.' And as J.M. Coetzee further notes in his essay on *The History of the Main Complaint* (1999):

> It would be a mistake to conclude … that Kentridge's films are about a past era. A more likely explanation is that he simply finds the look, the style, the heft of those times congenial, perhaps also the mode of power then (centralised, dictatorial) is easier to image. There may even be a component of nostalgia in the backward look, as long as we recognise a certain loathing mixed in with the attachment (and is not the mix of loathing and attachment what defines obsession?) (1999: 87).

Coetzee's qualification is vital to understanding Kentridge's mechanics of erasure, its roots in psychopathy, and its obsessive-compulsive expression. In Kentridge's world, nostalgia begets its comeuppance; the contemporary its conceit. He defines his polemic of uncertainty—through the act of drawing—as 'a model for knowledge' (Christov-Bakargiev, 1999: 8). This model is never absolute. 'What ends in certainty does not begin that way.' Therein lies our decadent late-modern paradox. What

> "The root of the problem, which Kentridge strives to convert into a strength, lies in the society that fostered his genius. Here I am not only talking about South Africa, but the fretwork of Empire and European influence upon which it is crucially founded. One cannot think of Kentridge's work outside of Europe and Empire."

matters to Kentridge is 'the unwilling suspension of disbelief' (Christov-Bakargiev, 1999: 19). This inversion of a prevailing view points to a non-aligned and highly ambivalent relationship to the finite meaning of an image, thought, or experience. Kentridge's relationship to politics is just as indeterminate—'concerned but distanced.' This is because the artist has always had a strange relationship with the familiar, and a familiar relationship with the strange. This curious vertigo allows for belonging and non-belonging. It gives his art its querulous, suspended, and cryptic quality.

In 'Landscape in a State of Siege' (1988), Kentridge strips Africa of a putative innocence before colonialism. Instead, he affirms the 'strange contradictory relationship between Western conquest and the tribalism that still endures.' Against the 'Edenic'—akin to the 'plague of the picturesque'—Kentridge speaks of a ceaseless dismembering; a layering of history upon history which renders impossible the desire to fix or separate the past from the present:

> In the same way that there is a human act of dismembering the past … there is a natural process in the terrain through erosion, growth, dilapidation that also seeks to blot out events. In South Africa, this process has other dimensions. The very term 'new South Africa' has within it the idea of a painting over the old, the natural process of dismembering, the naturalisation of things new.

In 'The Body Drawn and Quartered' (1999), Kentridge shifts from pentimenti to sonar, X-ray, MRI, and CAT-scan. Here we find the core of his unsettling and highly suggestive vision: 'Dissect as deep as you like and you will never find the mimetic reference of the sonar. They are already a metaphor. They are messages from an inside we may apprehend but can never grasp. In their separation from the apparent they come as reports from a distant and unknown place' (1999: 140). His work does not define itself in relation to an external source. The work in itself is metaphor. What this suggests is that art—as metaphor, devoid of mimetic reference—exists unto itself. As such, it is both ineffable and ontological. And yet, despite this insight, Kentridge's art remains burdened by a retrospective marker that sets it up as a beacon for South Africa's new found sovereignty.

***

Timing is crucial, even for an artist for whom time is error stricken. Yet what of bad timing? That Kentridge arrives on the Western stage at the precise moment when South Africa is reintegrated into the world—after the unbanning of the ANC and before the country's first democratic election—is fitting and vexing. Then, there existed (and remains) an avid interest in 'contemporary' African art. That said, Kentridge's work has always been irreducible to the continent's idea of itself, or more pointedly, its construction from without. Why is it, then, that Kentridge is more celebrated than any other South African artist? Has his international success not skewed and deflected a domestic capacity to read his value? Here I am well aware that I can be charged with parochialism. By challenging Kentridge's stellar international reputation, however, I am not implying that those who broker and report on art within the nation's borders automatically know better. Rather, I am interested in what it is that the rest—the West—find so deserving of praise.

The answer lies in Kentridge's readability within an international, specifically European, context. Other than Dumile Feni, his aesthetic sensibility is wholly European (Buchner, Goethe, Daumier, Hogarth, Goya, Max Beckmann, and Otto Dix, among others). Not only has he thoroughly digested and translated these influences but, by virtue of his postcolonial location, added to this European store of knowledge, revealing its tentacular global imprint. Kentridge's translation of this impact is never cravenly deferential. In 'Faustus in Africa! Director's Note' (1999), he pointedly states that Faustus is a 'risposte … to Hegel's high-handed dictum that "after the pyramids, World Spirit leaves Africa, never to return".' In 'Landscape in a State of Siege', he challenges Theodor Adorno's assertion that after Auschwitz, lyric poetry is impossible. In short, Kentridge questions the very heritage he has made his own. In his diagnosis of this heritage, its decadence in particular, he emerges as the bastard son of Empire—its aggravated conscience. Hand in hand with Kentridge's ethical riposte comes artistic innovation. The key is his technique—the redrawing and erasure of a given work which, at each instant of its mutation, is photographed then animated. No drawing is in and of itself complete. Rather, each is assigned a fleeting place in an unfolding narrative that is never storyboarded in a strictly causal sense.

Kentridge's process finds its echo in deconstruction—a method maligned in our predictive and Stalinist era—namely, Jacques Derrida's theory of erasure, or sous rature. The method involves the crossing out of a word in a text that allows its cancelled iteration to remain legible. The process begs the question: where does meaning lie? In the projection, in its cancellation, or both? The ambiguous slippage is key. For Kentridge, both must arrive at their exhaustion. They must both be up-ended; in effect, deconstructed. That this process is intellectually and ethically scorned in our absolutist era is deeply concerning.

As Michael Godby notes in his response to The Head & the Load, 'lunacy' is central to the work's schizophrenic and convulsive affect (2018). Kentridge is not telling the story of the abuse and exploitation of the Black body in the First World War, but performing its abjection. The vision of a ship dismantled and carried piece by piece by load-bearers is as deranged as it is obscene. Unlike Werner Herzog's comparable vision in the film Fitzcarraldo (1982)—in which a ship is hauled across a mountain with the aid of a pulley-system and the use of slave labour—in The Head & the Load, bodies bare an oppressive weight. They are singly dehumanised mechanisms in a brutal Imperial venture. 'There is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism,' Walter Benjamin reminds us (1969: 256). Kentridge's drama is precisely thus—a brutal paradox. The affect is neither discursive nor moral. It is immanent, deranged, deconstructive; wracked by a monstrous ambivalence which it cannot override.

To what end, if any, does Kentridge forge his logic and its expression? If it is not to correct a received lens, but to shatter it, then why? It is, I think, because ambiguity and the anxiety that courses through it cannot be easily resolved. Like so many white male South African artists, Kentridge has an avowedly uneasy relation to the country of his birth and the imperial stain that blots it. While I understand the artist's agitation concerning a sense of place and purpose, I believe that the complacent appraisal thereof has blunted the complexity of its thrust. When Kentridge asks that we keep 'nihilism at bay and optimism in check,' he is posting a grievous concern regarding the danger of these respective drives (1999b: 103). How he mediates them deserves closer examination. It is not mere ambiguity that Kentridge values, but a charged and self-reflexive ambivalence. When he states that 'irony' is 'the last refuge of the petit-bourgeoisie,' we are alerted to the artist's refusal to sit on the fence and bitch from a position of power or lack thereof. But what, then, is left? What makes Kentridge so compelling?

It is the unsettlement of his position, an unsettlement vitally needed in a society (domestic and global) that is caught between the toll of fatalism and the clarion call of hope. Kentridge's position is a non-position—a negative critique of a lived and unresolved contradiction. If his art is so appealing today, it is not because his work posits a solution to an existing dilemma, but because it exemplifies that dilemma and the hysteria that underpins it. Is his work an attractive sop—in extremis—for a troubled conscience? If so, does this make the work worthy of acclaim? Is this what we want and need—the convulsiveness of affect? A sensibility over-charged? A logic and a passion that is provisional, elliptic, trapped inside a rictus of irresolution? Are these the sources of present-day satisfaction? And is this the end-game that defines the co-optation of South African art, a co-optation that suggests not the distinctiveness of South African art but its post-liberatory inscription into a global malaise? Surely, what South African art emphatically does not need is the funereal glamour of a retrospective? A move of this nature is surely worrisome to an artist such as Kentridge, who is better served by a healthy inquiry into his aesthetic and ethical dilemma and process.

It is not only the international art community that should be held culpable in this regard. The domestic community has preferred craven reverence over an open-minded cultural engagement with his work. That his preoccupations have become global cultural capital says more about the art market's nefarious attempts to transform its limits into a strength. The international success of Kentridge's work is ironic; the work is not. One could ask what artist in their right mind would resist such acclaim? Here Samuel Beckett comes to mind, as does J.M. Coetzee. The former declined the Nobel Prize, the latter—despite accepting it—remains uninspired by craven celebration. I imagine that Kentridge, though temperamentally dissimilar, remains similarly wary. Turn to any interview with the artist and one encounters a disarming modesty and a

pointed ambivalence. His reflections are hallmarks of intellectual and artistic clarity which, in the instant of their articulation, are always searching. The root of the problem lies in how his work has been positioned. Here the prevailing fault lies with critics and curators, but also with a hapless public who, despite knowing better, invariably follow accredited opinion. Or, then again, perhaps it is simply the work's seductive articulation of the inarticulate that compels? And is this not what Nietzsche, regarding Wagner, warns us against? Instability disguised as a principle? Is it appropriate to assign a system and a meaning where there is none? What of Kentridge's belief that it is not the job of the artist to make sense?

The resounding response to Kentridge's production, Processione di Reparazionisti (2017) in Turin was expressed in a single word, notes David Freedberg—imparagonible! ('without peer' or 'beyond comparison'). The response is fitting because it defies reason. In the face of the anarchic—the absence of any governing principle—what is left to say? Freedberg, however, maintains a belief in the restorative power of Kentridge's art. 'When he makes forms explode, disintegrate and arrive near dissolution, he shows the possibility—and actuality of reconstitution.' A question however persists: Where does the reconstitution occur? In the work? In the audience's singular minds? In group-think? Surely the cry—imparagonible!—supposes something that cannot be measured, and therefore can never be reconstituted? The will to synthesise when confronted by an aggravated movement is only possible if, after Bergson, one recognises that resolution is always temporary. It can only be understood as such by acknowledging that wholeness—as idea, principle, or belief—is only and always open. At no point is it immune to puncture or leakage. Therein lies neurosis; therein the fallout of trauma. The awe Kentridge inspires comes after a fall. As such, it is always belated.

> "The root of the problem, which Kentridge strives to convert into a strength, lies in the society that fostered his genius. Here I am not only talking about South Africa, but the fretwork of Empire and European influence upon which it is crucially founded. One cannot think of Kentridge's work outside of Europe and Empire."

As I understand it, Kentridge offers no reprieve. He provides no final solace. What we have are sluices, sumps, diffusions, interruptions. The method—more free-fall than elevation—is crudely schematic. Kentridge's puppetry—a given work's mechanism—is its entirety; the sum of 'limbs' and 'articulated rods with primitive hinges' that affirm an austere inclination. 'Time and again, Kentridge looks for the basic forms of things,' writes Freedberg. The rudiment is the thing. The husk. Bare-boned. Inessential yet critical. For what exercises Kentridge are worlds voided, without answer and without reprieve. His theatre is a stark expression of that constitutive void, an art reduced to an inchoate (if robust) gasp.

If the people and things that populate his art—little more than mechanicals—appear vital it is because they inhabit their death. Kentridge's art thrives as an afterlife, a ghosting. Things and people who revolve about their own corpses. I say this in full knowledge that others like Freedberg believe his works to be infused with life. For me, however, their nullity is their surest tell. Phantasmagorical, his is a traffic in death and dying, an art that thrives at the limit of expression. Therein lies their greater strength. If we cheer at the close of a performance—I am usually the one who remains seated, dumbfounded, mute—it is because we are the victims of a rapture. Enslaved to frenzy, riven with distress, ours is a somatic response to life's futility, and Kentridge's articulation thereof.

After Guy Debord, we know this unchecked frenzy as the 'society of the spectacle' (Goniwe, 2017: 14). Rallies, toxic and hypnotic, come to mind. As does Edmund Burke's formulation of the sublime as a combine of awe and terror. Once again, we find ourselves returning to Wagner and the Nuremberg rallies his music inspired. Where Kentridge differs—and I'm making a fine point here—is that he knows the monstrousness of his theatrical confections. If he deems them necessary, it is because sobriety is no longer viable, reason futile. Ours is a culture of decadence which, having long ago arrived at its expiry date, nevertheless thrives as a death-in-life, a procession of corpses. What must we do? How can we countermand the mind-

numbing excessiveness of our age? One does so, not by ignoring the horror, but by living inside of it. This, by default, is Kentridge's gift. That Nietzsche failed to pass through the decadence he railed against is unsurprising. No one can. Nietzsche recognised it in Wagner, as have I in Kentridge. The critical difference is that Kentridge does not exult therein. He merely articulates its unrelenting and morbid excrescence—our schizophrenia and lunacy, our hysteria, our neuroses.

No one can dispute that ours remains an acutely nervous condition. In this neo-fascist moment, it might seem like hysteria and hyperbolic excess have returned with a vengeance. The truth is, they never left. We roam the earth, our bodies a set of pruning shears, our heads a megaphone. Its grotesque flowering is certainly the aftermath of the First World War. It is then, long live David Byrne of Talking Heads, that we stopped making sense. Kentridge knows this. He has tolled this truth throughout his life and work. What is conveniently forgotten is that the artist is both more and less than the grotesque inflation he has become. Unlike Wagner, he has never courted reverence. Snarled and unforgiving, his is an art that patently rejects its edification.

References

Ahmed, S. (2014). The Cultural Politics of Emotion. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Al-Saji, A. (2014). 'A Phenomenology of Hesitation: Interrupting Racializing Habits of Seeing.' In: E.S. Lee, ed. Living Alterities: Phenomenology, Embodiment and Race. Albany: State University of New York Press, 133–172

Black Lives Matter, (2021). Herstory. [online] Available at: https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/

Butler, J. (2004). Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London: Verso

Butler, J. (2009). Frames of War: When is Life Grievable? London: Verso

Chisala, U. (2015). soft magic. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

Cocks, J. (2012). 'The Violence of Structures and the Violence of Foundings.' New Political Science, 34(2): 221¬–227

DiAngelo, R. (2016) What Does It Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy — Revised Edition. New York: Peter Lang Publishing

Fanon, F. (1959). A Dying Colonialism. New York: Grove Press

Hazell, K.J. (2017). Immovability as the coloniality of frozen affect: Exploring ungrievability and the transformative potential of (e) motion in the Modern world system. Unpublished Thesis, University of Cape Town

Hepple, A. (1963). 'Job Reservation – Cruel, Harmful and Unjust.' The Black Sash, July 1963. South African History Online (SAHO). [online] Available at: https://www.sahistory.org.za/sites/default/files/DC/BSJul63.0036.4843.007.002.Jul%201963.7/BSJul63.0036.4843.007.002.Jul%201963.7.pdf

Kēhaulani Kauanui, J. (2016) "A Structure, Not an Event": Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity. Emergent Critical Analytics for Alternative Humanities, Issue 5.1. [online] Available at: http://csalateral.org/issue/5-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-enduring-indigeneity-kauanui/

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the coloniality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept. Cultural Studies, 21(2–3): 240–270

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2008). Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity. Durham and London: Duke University Press

Mignolo, W.D. (2011). The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options. Durham and London: Duke University Press

Mangena, F. (Date unspecified). Hunhu/Ubuntu in the Traditional Thought of Southern Africa. [online] The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (IEP), ISSN 2161-0002. Available at: https://iep.utm.edu/hunhu/

I (Don't) See You:

Absence, Omissions, and Spectrality in the Works of Ishtiyaq Shukri

By Iqra Raza | Peer Review

Abstract

This paper studies the representation of the Muslim body (within the context of the War on Terror) as an instance of disembodied subjectivity that haunts through the remnants of its presence, via a close textual analysis of Ishtiyaq Shukri's novels The Silent Minaret (2005) and I See You (2014). The paper examines the corporeal absence within the said texts as a template for understanding the modus operandi of the necropolitical regime and the extremities of state violence it implies. It explores the implications of spectrality within texts saturated by instances of taxonomical categorisations of the body and examines spectrality alongside the implications of absences and omissions in order to reveal how the three interact and inform each other. Conceptualising spectrality as the dominant mode of writing for post-9/11 novels, the paper engages with Derrida's work on deferred mourning in relation to spectres, offering a new paradigm for an understanding of the post-9/11 Muslim experience.

***

Ishtiyaq Shukri, an award-winning novelist from South Africa, premises his two novels – *The Silent Minaret* and *I See You* – on the extremities of state violence and their impact on individual human lives. The global geopolitical concerns are fleshed out in both the novels through characters whose lives are directly affected by the said politics. The locus of all the violence is the human body, whose presence and the lack of it throughout the text have varied meanings for various contexts. While the literature responding to the War on Terror has thus far largely focused on visibility as a response to the misrepresentations of the Muslim experience, Shukri offers an alternative possibility in writing protagonists who are invisible, and who haunt the texts only through their absent presence (Raza, 2020: 1). While he largely focuses on spectrality as a condition of being, he inscribes it within the body of his works through absences. Hence, the texts are haunted by presences that do not correspond to corporeality in their immediate contexts but are alluded to and presented as memories. Shukri uses spectrality as a metaphor to allude to various kinds of absences including omissions from the public discourse and absence from within the body politic.

Nationality is another contested terrain while undertaking such an activity. Shukri's emphasis hence lies heavily on the transnational aspects of identity, presented less as a treatment for the illness that plagues the world today, than as a mode of diagnosis itself. His protagonists are not preoccupied by their 'ontopology', which is not the same as saying that they are not aware of it. (Derrida in *Specters of Marx* uses the term 'ontopology' to refer to an ontology reliant on and determined by topos and geographies.) While tracing their belongingness to the nations of their origin and being acutely aware of it, they not only lend solidarities to the oppressed across the globe, they also do not fashion themselves as located individuals. The writer highlights the limitations of such a transnational subject position by describing in detail their physicality which thwarts attempts at dislocation, tracing their origins to specific topos, which also anchors them to various other political or social subjectivities. Profiles and photographs provide the writer a window through which to further his point about spectrality.

Thus, it is no coincidence that Issa Shamsuddin in *The Silent Minaret* is a research scholar while Tariq Hassan of *I See You* is a photojournalist. Shukri's most sustained commentary on the spectral, however, is contained in his second novel, *I See You*, where through the means of a war photograph captured by his protagonist, the fundamental ambivalence, characteristic of a spectre, is made apparent. Tying his commentary on spectrality together is the way the themes intersect with the style of the texts. *The Silent Minaret* is crafted as what Linda Hutcheon calls 'historiographical metafiction' to make apparent the absences and omissions from discourse and representations, historical and otherwise. *I See You* achieves the same through photographs, which are themselves spectral in their superimposition of the past and the present.

Shukri erases the material body from the space of his textual world. In doing so, he hints at a radical subversion made possible by turning to 'hauntology' especially within a context wherein taxonomy reigns supreme and the subject is construed as an object of knowledge. While this might be doomed by the possibility of labelling what is outside epistemology as 'dangerous', Shukri is cautious of the same and meticulously chooses to build the everydayness of the protagonists' lives (before their disappearance) with minute details, making them relatable and unrelatable at once (Raza, 2020: 1).

“Shukri erases the material body from the space of his textual world. In doing so, he hints at a radical subversion made possible by turning to 'hauntology' especially within a context wherein taxonomy reigns supreme and the subject is construed as an object of knowledge.”

In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida uses the term 'hauntology' to describe that which no longer corresponds to the 'essence of life or death', an element that 'is neither living nor dead, present nor absent' (1993: 63). For Shukri, spectrality within the scope of the texts is employed as a stylistic technique, an intervention at the level of style and structure. It allows the writer to operate within and beyond the co-ordinates he chooses to lay his work at. Thus, Dublin talks to London, talks to Pakistan, talks to Palestine. It allows anachronism without slipping into absurdity. It links the War on Terror to colonial violence at the Cape Colony, to the Palestinian occupation, to apartheid-era politics, and so forth. Spectrality for Shukri is less an ontological concern, and veers more towards social and political implications (Raza, 2020: 2).

The Silent Minaret is the story of Issa Shamsuddin's absence from within the space of the textual world. On a dark night, as he sits in Baghdad Café, watching images from Guantanamo and war-torn Iraq being projected onto the screen, Issa – as a History student conducting research on colonial violence in the Cape Colony – recognises the historical pattern of neo-colonial violence, and quietly 'slip(s) through the door into a dawn that is beginning to illuminate the devastation wrought by the violent night' (Shukri, 2004: 48). Shukri draws the reader's attention to Issa's absence from within the text by italicising his dialogues, which bring his absence to the fore by pointing to the fact that they do not exist within the linguistic registers of the novel's world. Issa's absence is hinted as being a deliberate act of disappearance consequent of the protagonist's acute awareness of his corporeality and how it serves the surveillance mechanisms of the necropolitical regime he is located in. In this context, it becomes an act of subversion, of defiance, of resistance. For Issa, who is a transnational at heart, for whom differences are mere conversation starters, the reality of his 'exceptionally good [Arab] looks' thwarts possibilities at subversion while being located and held down by his corporeal frame. He chooses to turn into a spectre, haunting through the remnants of his presence in the form of clues he leaves behind. These clues highlight, quite literally, the margins, the ones out of frame, as they present themselves mostly as scribbles at the margins of texts and newspaper reports.

Shukri's second novel, *I See You*, appearing ten years after the first, is a story of its protagonist's abduction and disappearance. Tariq Hasan is an award-winning photojournalist, abducted by ZAR Corps, a mercenary organisation. Tariq is also an activist who criticises the involvement of nations in each other's affairs and, more specifically, territorial invasions such as that of Palestine. The two novels are set within different contexts with different power dynamics and socio-political milieus. However, what unites them is the necropolitical power both the texts assume at the helm of their affairs. These regimes locate the individual body as the site for enacting violence. The necrality of their power lies in turning a body into a corpse while controlling the socio-politics of its being. Therefore, the differences between concepts such as resistance and terrorism are eliminated. Tariq's absence, while creating a public hue and cry, does not therefore elicit a response from the state and the deep cabals of power. Derrida, in writing about spectres, says:

'...one does not know if precisely it is, if it exists, if it responds to a name and corresponds to an essence. One does not know: not out of ignorance, but because this non-object, this non-present present, this being-there of an absent or departed one no longer belongs to knowledge. At least no longer to that which one thinks one knows by the name of knowledge. One does not know if it is living or if it is dead.' (1993: 5)

The spectre remains outside epistemology and it is precisely this positioning which allows it to survey without being surveyed. It was once there but no longer is, which equips it with the tools of epistemology, while allowing it to escape the box altogether. This liminality becomes a powerful subject position in that it facilitates a diagnosis. The spectre, knowing the epistemological tools through and through and being able to survey the present while being both in it yet outside it, can spot the lacunae and point out the necrosis. Its location outside temporality also allows it to look for solutions from across time. In doing so, it poses questions of social, political, and ethical dimensions. The traditional ghost that has associations with the supernatural has often served a similar function in folklores, and later in magical realist texts. Commenting on this, Maria del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren write:

'Their [the spectres'] representational and socio-

cultural functions, meanings, and effects have been at least as manifold as their shapes—or non-shapes, as the case may be—and extend far beyond the rituals, traditions, ghost stories, folktales, and urban legends they populate' (2013: 9).

With the early twentieth century turn of the 'spectral', the spectre specifically served functions beyond its supernatural element and began to be incorporated within the scholarly and the theoretical. The ghostly at this moment had already shifted meaning from return from the dead to radical possibilities: economic, social, political, and ethical. At the peak of the World Wars, as death became common, the spectres haunting Europe in modernist writing (such as that by Yeats and Eliot) pointed to a lack of spirituality and a hollowness of being. Eliot's work specifically highlighted the 'wasteland' created by the spirits of war whose prayers are uttered only to be aborted by nursery rhymes (Eliot, V: 68–98). Despite the obvious reference to spirits, the works were never classified as 'ghostly', the spirits serving to question the ethics of war instead. As the enlightenment came to be critiqued, so did the principles of reason and the insistence on empirical possibilities. The ghost therefore moved away from being a question of rationale to that of ethics. For Derrida as well, a ghost is not so much a return of the dead than it is a metaphorical signifier which exists to raise questions pertaining to justice in the radical possibility of its non-being.

The spectre, in colluding temporal frames, allows for a disruption along the said axis, offering alternative versions of history as well, the ones buried and whitewashed. It becomes especially potent in postcolonial texts where history suffers from omissions at the hands of the colonials. Therefore, the spectre presents a rejection of metanarratives in favour of fragmented versions of it. Del Pilar Blanco and Pereen write:

'...spectrality is used as a conceptual metaphor to effect revisions of history and/or reimaginations of the future in order to expose and address the way certain subjectivities have been marginalized and disavowed in order to establish and uphold a particular norm, as well as the way such subjectivities can never be completely erased but insist on reappearing to trouble the norm' (2013: 310).

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* come across as obvious examples of the same. In the former, the revenant is the murdered child of Sethe, who comes back to question her death and to seek answers, ones that in turn raise serious moral and ethical questions. In the latter, however, it is not a return from the dead that is a spectral figure, but an absence. The skeleton of the 'Sailor' serves to highlight the extremities of violence inflicted upon civilians by the state in Sri Lanka. Both reappear, one quite literally, the other through the remnants of its presence – a skeleton.

In Shukri's works, the functionality of the spectre extends more towards the second kind of reappearance, or a presence anchored on to some remnants of their once-being-there. However, much like in *Beloved* and *Anil's Ghost*, Shukri's spectres critique the politics that have rendered them invisible and point to histories and geographies of violence to bring connections to the fore and hence offer a diagnostic. For Issa, the link between the War on Terror and the colonial violence is obvious. For Tariq, the absolute lack of 'freedom' in post-apartheid South Africa, in Palestine, in Libya, in Yemen, and in Afghanistan require the same cure and hence are part of the same necrosis. Both protagonists are pre-occupied by highlighting connections of violence and building solidarities across the globe. Responding to a question on what distresses him the most, Shukri in an interview said: 'When this war... is over, we will stand back and say, "What have we done?" I say "we", because it's not Syria's war, or Iraq's war, or the DRC's war. They are our wars, they brutalise all of us' (Shukri, 2014; emphasis added). Shukri's response highlights the need to be empathetic to others' suffering by identifying with 'the other' as a human being, subverting the particularism of ethnocultural subjectivity. However, since such attempts are prevented from reaching fruition by the state's insistence on corporeal taxonomy, it is the spectre which deftly fulfils this function in his works.

Hutcheon (2003) contends that 'Postmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or to re-present the past in fiction and in history is, in both cases, to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological.' Derrida attests to this functionality fulfilled by the spectre in its being a catalyst in this process of opening up. Alternative historiographies

allow for attempts at 'conjuration', a process of ridding the space of the ghost by recalling it. *The Silent Minaret* not only does that, but also fashions itself as an alternate historiography with copious footnotes and bibliography. Issa, the spectre, leaves behind a thesis as well as scribbling at the margins of books that trace an alternative course of history, one that proposes a subaltern account of the historical events and their significance. Issa, through his thesis, is able to pick out the transcultural fusion 'of both people and ideas, in a historical context that is situated contemporaneously. His historical research delves into the hybridity of South African culture, which he uses to comment on the roots of "global cross-pollination", and how history has been whitewashed to ignore them' (Frenkel, 2011: 131).

Disrupting the grand narrative of the European Historical discourse, Issa refashions Islam as a religion that played an indispensable role in the anti-colonial uprising at the Cape Colony. Shukri does both to probe the grounds as well as the processes of production of historical knowledge. He blurs the distinctions between history and fiction by imitating the style of a historical narrative for his fictionalised account of history. Absences also form a chunk of the narrative. On a visit to the British Museum with Katinka, Issa is quick to note: *'It (the exhibition) was as much about forgetting as remembering. Not a single thought spared for how the exhibits came to be here in the first place'* (Shukri, 2004: 143; italics original). The absence of the historical records of violence unleashed by colonial expansion that has lent them the exhibits disturbs Issa as much as the exhibits themselves. The absence of the history of Dutch settlement at the Cape Colony, the cosmopolitan cultures of South Africa's past, and the socio-cultural and intellectual history of Islamic expansions, are just some of the other absences that are rendered visible through the alternate historiography.

It is the work of mourning that allows for a rewriting of some of these discourses. The 'traces' left behind by the protagonists are read as an expression of a mourning of their absences. In these 'traces' lie the potentiality for subversion. While the politics of mourning of itself offers subversive potentiality, according to Derrida, the 'traces' left behind are subversive in their scope, the two protagonists being activists. In an interview, Derrida said of death and mourning:

"Disrupting the grand narrative of the European Historical discourse, Issa refashions Islam as a religion that played an indispensable role in the anti-colonial uprising at the Cape Colony. Shukri does both to probe the grounds as well as the processes of production of historical knowledge. He blurs the distinctions between history and fiction by imitating the style of a historical narrative for his fictionalised account of history."

'In my anticipation of death, in my relation to a death to come, a death that I know will completely annihilate me and leave nothing of me behind, there is just below the surface a testamentary desire, a desire that something survive, get left behind or passed on—an inheritance or something that I myself can lay no claim to, that will not return to me, but that will, perhaps, remain....' (quoted in Naas, 2015: 113)

Both of Shukri's protagonists, though not dead but 'disappeared', leave their 'traces' behind, in the form of words and pictures, which are revived in the wake of their disappearance. Though what is mourned is not the protagonists themselves, since as Derrida says, death annihilates the self, the subject to whom memories are attached, the 'traces', imply the existence of heirs who inherit them and mourn. However, as Derrida says, it is not only the work(s) left behind which double up as 'traces' but 'everyday gestures' as well. Hence, the two novels are saturated by instances that build up the everydayness of the protagonists' lives, which are mourned in the absence of the protagonists themselves. In *The Silent Minaret*, Issa's friends and family often recall and mourn him through their memories of him. The trace, argues Derrida 'must continue to 'act' and to be readable even if what is called the author of the writing no longer answers for what he has written, for what he seems to have signed, whether he is provisionally absent, or if he is dead' (quoted in Naas, 2015: 116). It must be readable even in the absence of the producer, the interpretation of the trace must not be contingent upon the presence of the producer, as he further adds 'a writing [or any trace] that was not structurally readable—iterable—beyond the death of the addressee would not be writing' (ibid). Issa's writings,

as well as those of Tariq, are read and understood by people, long after they are gone. Some of Issa's texts, which were earlier thought of as overstatements, in fact start making sense when he is gone:

'At the time she thought it might be overstated, but he wouldn't change it. Now she thinks he was right and sends a text message to his mobile number, as she still does from time to time: Im by da wal@qalqilia. Wen jan landd @cape he plantd a hedj 2 sepr8 setlaz frm locls. Da histry of erly urpean setlmnt @da cape is unversly&eternly pertnt x' (Shukri, 2004: 182).

The same happens with Tariq's photographs. In his absence, they are widely circulated over the media, along with his writings as a symbolic gesture of public mourning. For Derrida, mourning is always caught in a 'double bind', it is both 'within us' as well as 'beyond us'. While the absent subjects are incorporated into our psyche, because they must be in order to make mourning possible, their 'infinite exteriority' remains, marking them as the Other. So, one has to appropriate, in that one has to not leave the dead over to indifference, as well as not appropriate in order to respect their individuality, making mourning always unsuccessful. In *The Silent Minaret*, Issa is caught in this double bind of mourning just before he disappears. He recognises the precarity of the lives of victims of the War on Terror, sees a pattern in their deaths, and thinks immediately of the violence at the Cape Colony. However, he acknowledges the individuality of the chained men in 'orange overalls' and disappears. The aporia of mourning leaves him befuddled. He recognises his own death at the hands of the same power, in his awareness of how power structures operate in the necropolitical regime. In what I call here the moment of successful mourning for Issa, the moment of his realisation of his own death while keeping those of others' distinct, and not entirely incorporated into his psyche, he vanishes. Shukri writes:

'Blurred pictures on the giant screen of heavily shackled men in orange overalls behind high-security fences, their arms chained behind their backs to their feet, sent an ominous hush through the room [...] Issa leaned back into his seat and watched as history rose up from the open manuscript on his table and came to hover between him and the images on the screen' (2004: 53). It is immediately after this moment that Issa decides to walk into the night and disappear hereafter. Derrida argues: 'the mourning of the Other as such ... has to be incorporated ... But the incorporation should not be total, and in that case, of course, the Other remains foreign in myself, it remains Other, it doesn't become part of myself. I cannot appropriate the Other in myself so it is a failure in a work of mourning, but it is the only way of respecting the Otherness of the Other' (2001: 66). In this aporia, Derrida envisages the politics of mourning. Aporia, for him, becomes the 'provocation to think new paths, new ways through apparent impasses', as Issa does, and thus holds subversive power. Mourning allows us to engage with the (former) subject and puts one on a trail, as we attempt to remake ourselves, enabling a resistance of 'totalizing gestures'. Mourning gives the Other a 'sort of survivance, a kind of living on' (Derrida, 2001: 23). As the protagonists are surveyed by their survivors, they are in turn surveyed from the place of their 'infinite alterity' (Kirkby, 2006: 471) in their being spectres. The protagonists are offered readings, re-readings, analysis, and questioning of their 'traces' that open up space for subversive politics. The mourning does not cease as long as the 'traces' are kept open and the engagement with the dead continues.

As stated, Shukri's concern for allowing space for a subversive politics to emerge is also located within his characters' 'traces', the works and 'gestures' they have left behind. Spectrality of certain communities as a political reality is conveyed through his portrayal of the precarity of the lives of Muslims in the face of the War on Terror in his first novel (including that of the protagonist) and most potently in his second novel through the victims of the Kasalia civil war (and through the portrayal of Palestinian lives, and lives of people like Tariq Hasan). Both Issa and Tariq are deeply concerned about visibilising the invisible. Issa, as well as Shukri, addresses this by fashioning an alternate historiography, while Tariq and Shukri do this by capturing gaps and silences within their works which imply a depth discernible only when one scratches the surface. As Minesh Dass writes:

'Tariq's career as a photojournalist has been driven by his desire to make people see the suffering and humanity of those deemed "beyond the frame." What most interests me, however, is how his photographic work is described, as an endeavour that posits the still

as a surface that is capable of capturing depth' (2017: 3).

The photograph described by Dass is of the Kasalia war, which sits at the heart of the novel. Photographs are spectral in nature in that they superimpose the past onto the present. This characteristic of photographs elicits a bodily reaction from viewers, akin to the enactment of physical violence that the photograph embodies. The picture of a young girl who has been raped looks like 'at first sight, the kind of idealized depiction of rural privation so indulgently romanticized in banal watercolours and sentimental greeting cards' (Shukri, 2014: 41). The moment, a thing of the past being witnessed in the present and lending meaning to the present, has 'women cross their legs as the realization of what has befallen the girl dawns' (Shukri, 2014: 42). This spectral potency of the photograph is what gives it power, and makes Tariq's works 'powerful', so much so that 'with one photograph, he did more to stop it [the war] than UN did with a hundred toothless resolutions' (ibid).

Shukri's focus on spectral subjectivities, however, extends beyond the War and Tariq. He uses the themes of absence, silence, and omissions to further his point. While *The Silent Minaret* is saturated with omissions that Issa takes upon himself to make apparent, *I See You* comments more on the former two aspects. Recent theorisations of spectrality have seen scholars write about how certain subjects are prone to forms of erasure and hence omitted from the public sphere and discourse. Issa sets out to correct this by attempting an alternate historiography of South Africa: not through a process of destruction of the current history, one in favour of another, but rather through locating the aporia in the existing narrative and offering radical possibilities. In *The Silent Minaret*, Issa makes astute and pertinent comments on the totalizing tendency of European historical discourse, and addresses the fissures created by a quite literal 'whitewashing' of history. Issa is acutely aware that historical discourse is made intelligible by structuring events (which entails omissions) into a coherent narrative, subject to power structures in place at a given time (Raza, 2020: 7).

Issa does not just discreetly maintain an alternative account of history, but also once confronts his history teacher at school with another version of the history of the Anglo-Boer War, only to have the latter retort: 'History cannot be re-written [...] History *is*, and at St Stephen's we accept only the thorough, rigorous and sanctioned historical versions outlined in the syllabus' (Shukri, 2004: 16; italics original). However, these 'thorough, rigorous and sanctioned historical versions' do not account for the omissions presenting a discord between history and memory. Kagiso's grandmother, commenting on the Anglo-Boer War and the involvement of Baden Powell (who was painted as a national hero) says: 'The only reward our people received for their sacrifice, was more death – more than, 1 000 of our people died of starvation. So, your Boy Scouts' Baden-Powell may be a national hero in Jo'burg and London, but here, among our people, he's a lying thief' (Shukri, 2004: 22). This discord between history and memory is highlighted further by the writer's frequent use of the motif of remembering and forgetting which comes across in his commentary on religions as well. Frances, an Irish Catholic lady enforcing an overlap between Islam and Christianity portrayed as entirely distinct religious civilizations, argues for the Arabic heritage of Jesus, which she thinks the Bible has forgotten: 'And don't you think it peculiar, Father, how one religion remembers things another doesn't?' (Shukri, 2004: 17). While *The Silent Minaret* in addressing these omissions fashions itself as a historical text, I See You also presents the novelty of form and fuses it with content in its subversive intertextuality which requires the readers to fill in the absences and silences. As Dass puts it, I See You achieves this by enforcing a link between seeing and reading:

'In fact, the ekphratic aspects of the novel suggest a close link between the processes of looking and of reading. As readers, we are asked to imagine an image that we are not shown, and therefore, reading it "simply for what it says" is very complex, given that "what it says" is heavily mediated' (2017: 4).

Absence and silence are referred to time and again in the novel. Both are posited as states of being that further trauma. Leila is asked to maintain silence after Tariq's disappearance, lest it compromise with his safety. This only makes her more traumatised and she decides to contest the elections to be able to speak. However, this leads to her house arrest. Leila's absence from the scene of Tariq's kidnapping also furthers her trauma as she is not able to wrap her head around the fact: 'And the word 'kidnap', an act so alien, so seemingly irrelevant to my life, added yet further to

the absurdity of the announcement such that at first I wondered why this man thought the information pertinent to me' (Shukri, 2014: 105).

In so far as hauntology is described as a disruption occurring along ontological and temporal axes, the Opera scene in I See You is important for its temporal deviations. The Opera presents a series of looping scenes, inundated by the refrain: 'Forget about beginnings. All we have is messy middles confused as twisted guts and eternal as the long intestine' (Shukri, 2014: 128). This reference is furthered by Tariq's kidnapping scene recurring and Tariq losing sense of time in the cell, as he says: 'I look to my body as a measure of time [...] But how reliable a measure of time is the male body? A woman would know a month' (Shukri, 2014: 136). This theme recurs in all of Tariq's accounts as he struggles to keep track of minutes, hours, days.

Spectrality is also foregrounded in Shukri's use of the imagery of mashrabiya screens in both his novels. As Yahya explains to Leila in *I See You*, commenting on the spectralised subjects, in this case quite literally through the metaphor: 'The idea [behind mashrabiya screens] is that the women of the house could look out on to the streets without anyone looking at them – they could see without being seen' (Shukri, 2014: 165). Spivak, in her criticism of Derrida's *Specters of Marx*, talks about his 'how-to-mourn-your-father book' that fashions haunting as an entirely male-driven economy and ignores the exploitation of subaltern women in its commentaries on the new world order. She argues about the disservice done to the women by assimilating all marginalised groups into a mass of spectral entities. Mashrabiya screens are also a metaphor in *The Silent Minaret* as Issa's favourite spot, linking him with the spectral. Issa in the text is fashioned as a spectral subjectivity, shifted out of the political discourse, who turns himself into a spectre for the subversive potential of a bodily disappearance in a necropolitical regime that has built itself on the premise of surveillance. Thus, Shukri's works skilfully explore the potentialities of spectrality and offer an astute commentary on it for Muslim bodies subjected to surveillance and violence under the neo-colonial US Empire. In commenting on the spectral subjects, Shukri, unlike Derrida, does not portray them as an undifferentiated mass of spectral entities but focuses on each individual subjectivity, and how they are affected in different ways by the same mechanisms of power. Therefore, Leila, as a woman, has to undergo a different trauma than Yahya as a Palestinian; like Issa as an Arab African Muslim undergoes a very different experience from that of Frances, an Irish Catholic woman. However, Shukri makes sure to portray how geopolitics and necropolitics affect all, even if they are in positions of privilege. In doing so, Shukri calls for an empathy towards the suffering and an awareness of self and how it is intricately involved in global politics and holds potential for change and subversion.

References

Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press.

Aumeerally, N L. (2017). Rethinking recognition in Muslim diasporic writing. From an 'ethics of responsibility' in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* to an 'ethics of dispersion' in *The Silent Minaret*. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 4(1): 1386396.

Bhattacharya, B (2018). Somapolitics: a Biohermeneutic Paradigm in the Era of Empire. *Boundary 2*, 45(4): 127–159.

Cleo, B. T. (2014). Reconstructing the Past, Deconstructing the Other: Redefining Cultural Identity Through History and Memory in Ishtiyaq Shukri's *The Silent Minaret*. *English Studies in Africa*, 57(2): 45–56.

Dass, M. (2017). '[A]ll just surface and veneer: the challenge of seeing and reading in Ishtiyaq Shukri's *I See You*.' *Safundi*, 18(4): 349–364.

De Kock, L. (2009). Judging New 'South African' Fiction in the Transnational Moment. *Current Writing*, 21: 24–58

Del Pilar Blanco, M. and Peeren, E., eds. (2013). *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

Derrida, J. (1976). *Of Grammatology*. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins.

---. (1993). *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. Trans. Peggy Kamuf. New York: Routledge.

---. (2001). *The Work of Mourning*. Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

---. (2001). *Jacques Derrida, Deconstruction Engaged: The Sydney Seminars*. Patton, P. and Smith, T., eds. Sydney: Power Publications.
---. (2014). *For Strasbourg: Conversations of Friendship and Philosophy*. New York: Fordham University Press

Easton, K. (2006). Coetzee, the Cape and the Question of History. *Scrutiny 2*, 11(1): 5–21.

Foucault, M (2006). *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Routledge.

Frassinelli, PP., Frenkel, R., and Watson, D., eds. (2011). *Traversing Transnationalism: The Horizons of Literary and Cultural Studies*.

Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Frenkel, R. and MacKenzie, C. (2010). Conceptualizing 'Post-Transitional' South African Literature in English. *English Studies in Africa*, 53(1): 1–10.
Frenkel, R. (2011). Reconsidering South African Indian Fiction Postapartheid. *Research in African Literatures*, 42(3): 1–16.

Goyal, Y. (2017). The Genres of Guantánamo Diary: Postcolonial Reading and the War on Terror. *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 4(1): 69.

Ho, E. (2004). Empire Through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46(2): 210–246.
Hutcheon, L. (2003). *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*. New York: Routledge.

Jayawardane, N. (2014). 'Forget Maps': Documenting Global Apartheid and Creating Novel Cartographies in Ishtiyaq Shukri's *The Silent Minaret*. *Research in African Literatures*, 45(1): 1–23.

Kirkby, J. (2006) 'Remembrance of the Future': Derrida on Mourning. *Social Semiotics*, 16(3): 461–472.

Lord, C. M. (2017). Set Adrift in Style: The Scholar as Fiction and Film-Maker in Jacob's Room. In: Beer, G., Bowie, M., and Perrey, B., eds. *In(ter)discipline: New Languages for Criticism*. New York: Routledge, 94–106.

Mamdani, M. (2004). Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: Post-Apartheid Perspectives on America and Israel. *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, 27(1): 1–15.

Mbembe, A. (2019). *Necropolitics*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Moonsamy, N. (2014). Spectral Citizenry: Reflections of the 'Post-transitional' in Contemporary South African Literature. *English Studies in Africa*, 57(2): 69–78.

Naas, M. (2015). When It Comes to Mourning. In: Colebrook, C., ed. *Jacques Derrida: Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge, 113–121.

Rastogi, P. (2011). International Geographics: Looking Out in Ishtiyaq Shukri's *The Silent Minaret*. *Research in African Literatures*, 42(3): 17–30.

Raza, I. (2020). I (Can't) See You: Politics of In/visibility in the Writings of Ishtiyaq Shukri. *Language Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies,* 4(2): 1–18.

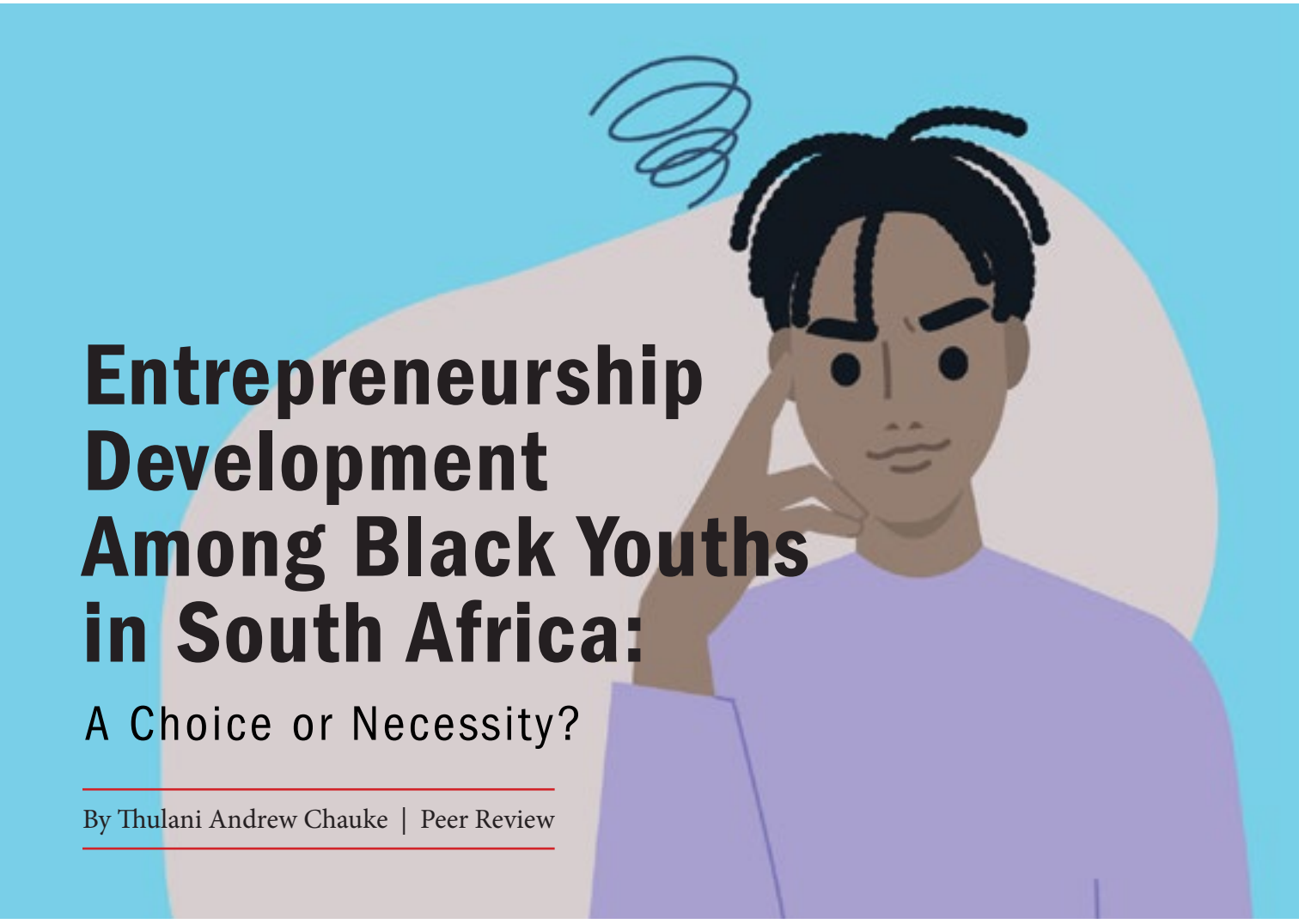
Samuelson, M. (2007). Re-imagining South Africa Via a Passage to India: M.K. Jeffreys's Archive of the Indian Ocean World. *Social Dynamics*, 33(2): 61–85.

---. (2012). Crossing the Indian Ocean and Wading Through the Littoral: Cosmopolitan Visions in Amitav Ghosh's 'Antique Land' and 'Tide Country'. *Cultural Dynamics*, 24: 189–205.

Shukri, I. (2004). *The Silent Minaret*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.
---. (2014). *I See You.* Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Steiner, T. (2007). Pockets of Connection against the Backdrop of Culture Talk in Ishtiyaq Shukri's Novel *The Silent Minaret*. *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, 19(1): 53–68.

---. (2012). The Indian Ocean Travels of Sheikh Yusuf and Imam Ali Ali: Literary Representations in Ishtiyaq Shukri's *The Silent Minaret* and Achmat Dangor's *Bitter Fruit*. *Social Dynamics*, 38(2): 172–183.



Entrepreneurship Development Among Black Youths in South Africa:

A Choice or Necessity?

By Thulani Andrew Chauke | Peer Review

Abstract

Black-youth-owned enterprises are essential to sustainable development and wealth creation for rural-based municipalities like the Vhembe District Municipality, where they can play a pivotal role in economic growth. This paper aims to explore the socio-economic determinates of entrepreneurship trends among Black youths in the Vhembe District Municipality. The investigation focused on youths living in the Vhembe District Municipality in Limpopo province, South Africa. The study used judgmental non-probability sampling to sample the participants. The study used qualitative research to collect and analyse data. The unstructured interview was used to gather data from the participants. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected. The study findings revealed that Black youths in the Vhembe District decided to be entrepreneurs to empower their communities, escape underemployment and scarcity of jobs, create jobs, and stimulate economic growth. The paper recommends that the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities in the Presidency, in collaboration with the Department of Small Business Enterprise Development and the National Youth Development Agency, should provide a two-year internship for young Black entrepreneurs in foreign companies that specialize in mining, technology, creative industries, and agriculture. When these Black youth return home, the government should set aside a Presidential Youth Fund to assist them to start their own businesses in the same industry

Introduction

The National Youth Policy 2015–2020 and Integrated Youth Development Strategy 2018 emphasise the need for youth inclusion in an economy through youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. Over the years, there has been a gradual increase in government policy about the vital role that entrepreneurship can play to create jobs among young persons. One of the functions of the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) Act 54 of 2008 is to mainstream youth in economic participation through a grant programme, which assists young people between the ages of 18–35 years old who aspire to be entrepreneurs. The definition of youth in South Africa emanates from the country's political landscape, given the fact that young persons, especially Black youth during the apartheid era, were denied the opportunity to participate in socio-economic activities. Therefore, the definition seeks to address the injustices of the past. NYDA (2015) attempts to conceptualise and define youths as a group of young people who fall between the ages of 14–35. Sharma (2013) defines a youth entrepreneurship venture as a structured business run and owned by a young person, individual or collective (Statistics South Africa, 2019). The alarming rate of unemployment amongst young people in South Africa is a serious concern to the government and is seen as a cause of unrest in the country.

Study Contribution

The government can channel a large amount of money to help Black youth start their own businesses, but if the youth themselves do not see entrepreneurship as the best strategy to eradicate unemployment and poverty in South Africa, these efforts will be in vain. Therefore, it is important for youth development researchers in South Africa to explore this area to determine if Black youths venture to do business because they have no choice or because they believe that starting their own business would enable them to create jobs to involve other Black youths to contribute to economic growth. In addition, we need to get a better understanding of Black youth's perspectives and their reasons for starting their own businesses. Therefore, this study sought to fill that gap by producing new knowledge that will contribute to youth and entrepreneurship development research in South Africa. This paper explores this area of study with the aim of providing appropriate policy responses to youth entrepreneurship development in South Africa to foster economic growth and job creation among young people.

Literature Review

The United Nations (2013) states that it is of greater significance for young people to venture to support opportunity entrepreneurship because it has a positive effect on the economic development of any country. Necessity entrepreneurship was proven to be the opposite of opportunity entrepreneurship. This simply means that young people should start businesses where there are opportunities in the market rather than being forced by the country's fiscal crisis. Furthermore, mixed feelings were reported among youth driven to venture to develop their own businesses. Older Black youth aged 30–33 years old were more likely to pursue entrepreneurship with the mindset of making more money, and were found to contribute to the national development agenda through job creation (Schillo, Persaud and Jin, 2016). On the other hand, younger youth in their early 20s start their own businesses because of the fiscal crisis, which makes it difficult for them to secure employment.

Black youth attitudes towards entrepreneurship were found to be different in most reviewed literature. Mixed feelings were commonly reported, since 69.5% of Black youth who had been involved in a business at a younger age were found to be inclined to start a business again. Fear of failure in business was revealed to be the main factor that prevented youth from becoming engaged in business again. On the other hand, 30.5% of Black youth who had experience in running a business showed an interest in starting a business again despite the hardships endured in the process of establishing and running a business (Sharma and Madan, 2014). The same authors further elaborate by demonstrating that level and types of qualification play a significant role in young people's entrepreneurial mindset.

In addition, Black youth who have an educational background in a business-related field such as Master of Business Administration were more likely to start their own businesses. King'ori (2012), Chiloane-Tsoko and

Botha (2015) support this statement by underscoring that youth with formal education are more likely to successfully establish their businesses. Furthermore, young people who had working experience were more likely to venture to become engaged in business, as opposed to those who had no working experience. Entrepreneurship education surfaced as an important decisive factor for youth to develop the habit of starting their own businesses, especially in terms of career guidance (Dzomondo and Fatoki, 2019). The effort that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) put in place to provide youth with career guidance towards entrepreneurship careers cannot be taken for granted. However, these institutions are not doing very well in terms of providing young people with the practical experience of running a successful business (Osoro and Areba, 2013). This simply means theoretical aspects alone will not play a bigger role in encouraging youth to start their own businesses.

Youth participation in an economy is of paramount importance to the sustainable development and wealth creation of any developing country (Osoro and Areba, 2013). The youth symbolises energy, innovation, creativity, and the know-how stage. Therefore, youth in this stage should channel their energy in initiating projects that will contribute to the growth of their country. These claims are supported by Ngorora and Mago (2018) who indicate that the entrenchment of new ideas in a young person's mind drives them to start their own businesses, particularly amongst Black youth who reside in rural areas. Over the years, the world has witnessed the rapid increase of youth engagement in businesses of their own, increasingly adding pressure on governments who find it difficult to create jobs for young people (Lau, Dimitrova, Shaffer, Davidkov, Yordanova, 2012). In addition, unemployment among youth often leads to deviant behaviour for survival, such as crime and becoming sex workers. There is a correlation between unemployment pathology and entrepreneurship as a driving force among the youth. Nassium et al. (2017) attest to this argument by emphasising that young people venture to join youth enterprises because they are unable to find employment.

A young person's desire to venture into entrepreneurship can be disrupted by several factors, especially for youth residing in rural areas and townships. These claims are supported by the work of Herrington et al. (2010) who attest that young people in South Africa who have an interest in being entrepreneurs find it very difficult to realise this dream due to a lack of mentors. Mentorship linkage is essential to young inspiring entrepreneurs. Therefore, agencies tasked with addressing youth unemployment should have good policies in place that seek to address mentorship and linkage matters. Youth entrepreneurship scholars argue that entrepreneurship education can play a pivotal role to cultivate young people's desire to start their own businesses (2011). These remarks call upon transformation of the South African education system where entrepreneurship should be compulsory from primary schools to honours level. This will change the old tradition of being job seekers to becoming job creators. Starting a business requires some financial muscles in order for young people to be equipped for the challenges they may encounter. Murimi (2014) alludes to the fact that Black youth who had access to funding were much more likely to venture to youth enterprises compared to those who had no access to resources. This finding reveals that Black youths who received funding from government agencies or family financial support are much more likely to start and run a successful business. Entrepreneurial studies demonstrated that young people who had any form of training in business gained the necessary skills to drive them to start their own business (Olugbala, 2017). In addition, these youths are more likely to run a successful business and hire unemployed youth. Furthermore, some of the youths who grow up in an entrepreneurship environment were more likely to start their own businesses.

Youth unemployment has been noted as the number one factor to influence youth enterprises globally. A study that focuses solely on the correlation between underemployment and youth enterprise is not well documented. A study conducted by Fritsch (2012) was relatively close to filling that gap by demonstrating that young people in a modern society where everything is changing dramatically find no pleasure in doing traditional jobs. Therefore, entrepreneurship is the only solution that young people have. Women venture to become entrepreneurs because they want security and to be financially independent and achieve work-life balance (Justo et al., 2015). According to Chauke and Obadire (2020), talents and creativity in the 21st century are among other

reasons that give rise to Black-youth-run businesses.

Youth fanaticism is a new subject in entrepreneurship development research and plays a significant role in influencing a young person to embark on entrepreneurship. The rise of technology encourages young people to explore a new area. In addition, the old traditional boss may be an impediment for a young person to innovate. Kaur (2012) supports this statement in his work by emphasising that young people start their own business because they do not want to report to anyone and follow the old protocol. Therefore, doing their own thing is the only option that brings excitement to their lives.

Despite the inner drive for youth to start a business, proper training is needed for youth to understand the importance of running a successful business (Ellis and Williams, 2011; Ekpe, Razak, Ismali and Abdullah, 2015). Moreover, a young emerging entrepreneur needs some skills such as soft skills, communication skills, time management skills, and leadership skills (Kline, 2015). In the context of South African youth enterprise development, the National Youth Development Agency has been doing a wonderful job by providing young emerging entrepreneurs with a life skills programme for the past ten years that helped the youth to know who they are before they venture into business.

Theoretical Framework

This study employed a social learning theory that is founded by Bandura. According to Bandura (1976), social learning theory is based on the assumption that a person's behaviour, attitude, and drive to do something is shaped by the surrounding environment. Moreover, this theory attribution is based on rewards and punishment. The individual will observe someone else's behaviour to see if the behaviour is rewarding or punishable. Thereafter, if the behaviour is perceived to be rewarding the individual is more likely to produce the same behaviour. In the context of this paper, the researcher argues that Black youth's drive to start their businesses emanates from seeing other successful Black persons who were once unemployed and decided to venture to initiate an enterprise and began to make an honest living by becoming successful. In addition, social learning theory is the best theory to be used in entrepreneurship education in South Africa from primary to tertiary level where the youth will be exposed to a practical entrepreneurship system and will be coached by successful young businessmen and women.

Purpose of the Study

The study's purpose is to shine a new light on youth entrepreneurship by investigating socio-economic determinates of entrepreneurship trends among Black youth in the Vhembe District Municipality.

Methodology

The research methodology used in this study was a qualitative approach. The research approach aims to understand the world through people's perceptions, experiences, attitudes, and motives (Hossain, 2011; Mertler and Charles, 2011; Neuman, 2011). Chauke and Malatji (2018) note that the qualitative approach helps the researcher to save time since it involves a small group of people to participate in the study. Chauke and Mudua (2019) allude to the fact that a qualitative approach is human-oriented because it drives the researcher to interact with the participants in a face-to-face discussion to understand the study investigated. A qualitative approach was useful in this study, because a small group of Black youth were interviewed and their attempts to start businesses were explored through face-to-face discussions. This study was conducted in a natural setting, and the Black youth were given the opportunity to answer questions regarding what drives them to venture into enterprises. This study comprises a case study approach, because of its usefulness in qualitative research. As is common in case studies (Kumar, 2011), observations and interviews formed a crucial part of the research.

This paper made use of purposive sampling by selecting Black youths who share the common experience of being entrepreneurs. Purposive sampling is defined as a sub-type of non-probability sampling that seeks to sample participants who share the same characteristics (De Vos et al., 2011). Bryman (2012) and Creswell (2007) assert that population is a group of people who are sampled by the researcher to act as participants in the study with the aim of understanding the world through their experience. This study's target population consisted of 10 young people aged 18–35 years old who own businesses.

> The aim of the study was to investigate socio-economic determinates of entrepreneurship trends among Black youth in the Vhembe District Municipality. The findings revealed that Black youth venture into entrepreneurship for the following five major reasons: because of underemployment; for the empowerment of their community; in order to stimulate economic growth; because of a scarcity of jobs; and in order to pursue self-fulfilment.

The participants in the study were sampled in the Vhembe District Municipality, South Africa.

Gender was taken into consideration in this study, with five young men and five young women selected to participate. All the participants had tertiary qualifications. Seven were living with their parents and siblings, while two had families of their own. The dominant languages spoken by the participants are Xitsonga and Tshivenda. The participants reported that their families were able to afford their basic needs. This study was carried out in the historically rural area of Vhembe District Municipality, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The district is estimated to have 1.1 million inhabitants (Statistics South Africa, 2011). It shares borders with Botswana, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The district is composed of four local municipalities, namely: Collins Chabane, Thulamela, Makhado, and Musina. The area is predominantly rural and has a number of foreigners, mainly from African countries such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique, some of whom own small businesses. It is composed of diverse groups such as Black Africans and Indians. According to Vhembe District Municipality (2018), 4.4% of South Africa's total agricultural output, 8.4% of its sub-tropical fruit, and 6.3% of its citrus are produced in the Vhembe District. The district is one of the most impoverished areas in Limpopo Province, with a high rate of youth unemployment. Cadre deployment and tribalism were indicated as some of the factors that fuel youth unemployment. This district was selected because of its high number of unemployed graduates as an appropriate location to find out why Black youth venture into entrepreneurship, from the perspective of Black youth.

The researcher used unstructured individual interviews to gather data; this was done in a conversational manner between the researcher and the young people. The unstructured individual interview was very useful in this study, because it helped the researcher to gather in-depth information. Collins (2010) and De Vos (2013) assert that unstructured individual interviews are also known as conversations which allow for individuals' points of view and perceptions to be explored in detail. The researcher arranged a convenient time and place where he met the participants with prepared questions.

The research used thematic data analysis; thematic coding enabled the researcher to gather in-depth information from the responses given by the participants. Davidson's (1997) data analysis in qualitative research involves making sense of the data collected to understand the social phenomena investigated. In the case of this study, the researcher carefully interpreted the data through the themes and sub-themes that emerged in the study. Informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, and voluntary participation were practiced in this study. The participants were informed about the study and its intentions, and were assured that their names would not be shared with the public. Babbie (2006) highlights the importance of ethical considerations and of providing participants with accurate information about the study to allow them to make informed decisions about their participation. Trustworthiness was taken into consideration in this study and credibility was achieved by making sure that the report was prepared for the participants to check.

Results and Discussion

The aim of the study was to investigate socio-economic determinates of entrepreneurship trends among Black youth in the Vhembe District Municipality. The findings revealed that Black youth venture into entrepreneurship for the following five major reasons: because of underemployment; for the empowerment of their community; in order to stimulate economic growth; because of a scarcity of jobs; and in order to pursue self-fulfilment. The issues raised by the participants in relation to each of these reasons are discussed in detail below.

Themes	Description
Underemployment	Black youths venture to become engaged in entrepreneurship in order to improve their monthly income, as most of these Black youths were once underemployed.
Community Empowerment	Black youths venture into entrepreneurship in order to empower their community.
Stimulate Economic Growth	Black youths venture into business so that they can create jobs for others and contribute to economic growth in South Africa.
Scarcity of Jobs	Black youths venture to join youth enterprises because they are unable to find employment. Therefore, self-employment is the only available option they have.
Self-fulfilment	Black youths start their own businesses for self-fulfilment where they find joy in running their own businesses

Underemployment

The study findings revealed that there was a common understanding among nine participants that the main aim of venturing to join youth enterprises is to improve one's monthly income, as most of these Black youths were once underemployed. Underemployment in this study refers to Black youths who are highly qualified, were employed in a lower position, and were paid a salary that did not meet their level of qualification. Thus, the Black youths deemed it essential to start their own businesses to meet their basic needs, rather than being underemployed and generating a lower income. Justo et al. (2015) attest that women start their own business in order to achieve economic

freedom, to be financially independent, and to achieve a work-life balance. One participant stated:

> P1: 'I hold an honours degree; I have been working as an administrator for years. My contributions were taken for granted at all the companies I worked for. I was best known for making copies, printing, and nothing else. So, exploring entrepreneurship was the only option left for me to escape this unbearable situation.'

Contrary to P1's view, P2 asserted that being underemployed was not a problem at all. In fact, this experience enabled her to discover her own passion to help people who are in need and to begin to be creative. Ngorora and Mago (2018) argue that young people start their own business because they have ideas to implement. Another participant said:

> P3: 'I desire to make a meaningful impact in this world before I leave for good, and starting my own business will help me to leave a legacy to my children. Unlike if am hired by a government when I die, someone will replace me, but in business, my children will take over.'

This indicates that Black youth in the Vhembe District Municipality understand the importance of leaving something behind for the next generation. Black youth feel that becoming involved in entrepreneurship will enable them to leave a legacy behind, and to counter the commonly held false impression that Black youth are lazy.

Community Empowerment

With the number of socio-economic challenges that South Africa is confronted with, it is very important for new ideas to be generated that can solve challenges that communities face, especially in townships and villages. There is a dire need for creative and innovative solutions in our communities. P5 mentioned that people residing in villages struggle a lot to travel to town to buy necessities such as vegetables. She therefore desired to open a community vegetable garden where she could sell products to the community at a cheap price, which would help customers to not have to travel to town to buy these products. This remark reflects that Black youth sometimes venture into entrepreneurship with the aim of solving existing problems within their communities. Others venture into enterprise in order to make money (Olugbola, 2017). One participant commented:

> P4: 'There is a higher rate of crime committed by young people in my village so I want to start my own businesses so I can empower youth in my community by hiring them.'

Based on the above quotation, it is clear that some youth begin their own business in order to help reduce anti-social behaviour such as crime and to bring positive reinforcement into young people's lives by improving their economical background. Young Black entrepreneurs aspire to empower youth within their community by hiring them and contributing to job creation. This is consistent with the work of Ngorora and Mago (2018) who argue that young entrepreneurs use their ideas to solve problems within their communities.

Black youths also venture into entrepreneurship because they have identified a gap in the market and intend to fill that gap. For instance, one participant explained that they had set up a business to assist university students in their community:

> P8: 'I have seen a need for a photocopying and printing machine within the University of Venda then I have decided to venture to that business to ensure students do not go off campus to look for this product and service while we are here. The business is not formally registered but I am planning to expand it one day.'

Stimulation of Economic Growth

The South African economic growth rate is slow in comparison with other countries on the continent, such as Ghana and Rwanda. Ghana's economy was able to grow fast in comparison with South Africa's, because it focused on small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). South Africa's slow economic growth rate can be linked to poverty and a high rate of unemployment, especially among Black youth. Against this backdrop, all 10 participants indicated that they are venturing into their own businesses in order to contribute to South Africa's economic growth and to assist with job creation. According to Osoro and Areba (2013) entrepreneurship enables young people to be economically active and to contribute to a country's wealth and job creation. As one participant stated:

> P5: 'South Africa's future, economically speaking, depends on entrepreneurship, particularly on small businesses. There is evidence backed by numerous research that shows that small businesses create more jobs and stimulate economic growth compared to big players in the market and more funding is needed. So, I want to be part of the people who will contribute to economic growth. In addition, the coronavirus exposed problems. As a country we need to rethink informal trading based on research where the market is much more competitive.'

The above quote clearly demonstrates that youth are keen to contribute to South Africa's economic development by starting their own businesses. Furthermore, Black youths recognise that informal trading suffered severely during Covid-19, and that the government needs to channel more funding into supporting Black youth enterprises.

Scarcity of Jobs

Findings in this theme revealed that scarcity of jobs was a major reason for Black youth to start their own businesses in the Vhembe District Municipality. The study further revealed that the majority of young people go to a higher education institute with the hope

of being able to secure better employment after the completion of their studies, only to find that jobs are still scarce. Therefore, the only way to escape this sad reality of youth unemployment is to start a business. Nassim et al. (2017) support this finding by indicating that young people venture to join youth enterprises because they are unable to find employment. This finding is supported by the below responses:

> P6: 'I went to university with the hope that one day I will get a good job but, it turns out to be impossible, so I left and decided to open my own business.'

> P7: 'I was unemployed for three years after attaining my qualification; then I started to approach NYDA for funding so I can start my own business. I realised, here in the Vhembe District Municipality, if you are not connected to the ruling party or belong to certain tribes you will not get a job. So, starting my own business was the best solution. Even though NYDA did not fund my business, I will not lose hope.'

The above quotation indicates that scarcity of jobs can in part be explained by ethnicity discrimination and cadre deployment in the Vhembe District Municipality, making it very difficult for young graduates to secure employment. Therefore, venturing to engage in a youth enterprise is the best alternative for Black youths to create jobs for themselves. Moreover, Chauke and Obadire (2020) maintain that lack of job opportunities for youths in South Africa remain a challenge. The youths venture to commence with entrepreneurship to create jobs for themselves. The National Youth Development Agency, despite the disappointment that some of the young emerging entrepreneurs have faced, is still seen as the best option for Black youth to secure funding. One participant said:

> P10: 'There is no better gift that a person can give others than helping them to put food on the table. I have a business administration qualification. So, I have skills on how to run a business. Therefore, I have started a business to employ others so I can change their lives.'

Reflecting on the above responses from the 10 participants, the study findings revealed that young people venture to become entrepreneurs with the aim of improving the lives of other people economically by creating jobs for them. More so, having a qualification in business administration is the most empowering qualification for Black youths to start their own businesses in the Vhembe District Municipality. This finding is in relationship with the work of King'ori (2012), Chiloane-Tsoko and Botha (2015) who attest that youth who have formal education especially in business-related studies are much more likely to start their own business.

Self-Fulfilment

Success in humankind is deeply rooted in self-fulfilment. In this theme, the study findings revealed that Black youths start their own business for self-fulfilment where they find joy in running their own businesses. More so, self-fulfilment emanates from the desire to be in charge. This confirms the observation of Sharu (2013) that young people easily generate new ideas to start their own businesses, as opposed to working in the corporate world where everything is already in place. Kaur (2012) argues that young people venture into enterprises in order to be their own boss. This finding is supported by the below:

> P9: 'I have worked for a corporate company for a few years; I used to get bored as there was no creativity. I then decided to start my own business so I can come up with something new that can address today's challenges.'

Reflecting on the above statement, one can conclude that Black youths venture to begin new enterprises with the aim of discovering their true potential that the corporate world fails to acknowledge. Therefore, embarking on entrepreneurship is both financially rewarding and provides a space for creativity.

Conclusion

This study indicated that there are multiple socio-economic factors in the Vhembe District Municipality that are associated with Black-youth-owned enterprises. Black youth venture to become entrepreneurs because of underemployment, job scarcity, and out of a desire to stimulate economic growth. Black youths of the 21st century find no pleasure in being underemployed or working in the

corporate world where there is no room for creativity and innovation. They often start their own businesses in order to pursue this creativity and innovation: skills that are needed in the 21st century for young people to succeed. This study concludes that Black youth pursue entrepreneurship for different reasons: some do it out of necessity, whereas others do it out of choice. The limitation of this paper is that only a few Black youth from the Vhembe District Municipality participated in the study, and the results therefore cannot be generalised to the entire population in South Africa.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Research

The following are some of the recommendations from the study:

- The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities in the Presidency, in collaboration with the Department of Small Business Enterprise Development and the National Youth Development Agency, should provide a two-year internship for young Black entrepreneurs in foreign companies that specialize in mining, technology, creative industries, and agriculture. When these Black youth return home, the government should set aside a Presidential Youth Fund to assist them to start their own businesses in the same industry.

- The National Youth Development Agency, in collaboration with the Small Enterprise Development Agency, should strengthen mentorship and a linkage programme to ensure that all funded youth entrepreneurs have a mentor who specialises in their business to coach them and link their products and services with the international market.

- Professional Youth Workers are trained to fully take responsibility to influence the mind of the young generation to improve their lives through youth development principles and practices. Therefore, South Africa should professionalise youth work and task youths with the coordination, management, and implementation of outreach programmes that will positively change the mind of Black youth to venture to become entrepreneurs.

- The private sector in South Africa should set up a coordinated Youth Enterprise Fund that will assist small businesses and informal trading without any political interference per province.

- An exploratory study on challenges faced by youth-owned businesses in South Africa using gender analysis should be conducted.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the young people who participated in this study.

Competing Interests

The author has declared that no competing interests exist.

Funding Information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

References

Babbie, E. (2006). Teaching and Curriculum Methods in South Africa: A Reflective Model. South African Journal of Higher Education, 3(1): 223–443.

Bandura, A. (1976). Social Learning Theory. Englewood Cliffs, California, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Chiloane-Tsoko, G.E. & Botha, A. (2015). Factors Influencing Urban Youth Entrepreneurship Development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Journal of Problems and Perspectives in Management, 13(4): 230–239.

Collins, P. (2010). Negotiating Selves: Reflections on Unstructured Interviews. Social Work Practice, 39(3): 222–256.

Creswell, J.W. (2007). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed-Methods Approach. London: Sage Publications.

Chauke, T.A & Mudua, T.J. (2019). 'Why Am I Here and What Does South Africa's New Dawn Mean for Me?' Youth Streetism in the City of Polokwane. Journal of Gender, Information and Development in Africa, Vol 8(2): 181–193.

Chauke, T.A & Malatji, K.S. (2018). Youth Experiences of Deviant Behaviour as Portrayed in Some Television Programmes: A Case of the Youth of the 21st Century. Journal of Gender and Behaviour, 16(3): 12178–12189.

Chauke, T.A & Obadire, O.S. (2020). Using Gender Differential Motivation in Youth Entrepreneurship as Economic Survival Strategy in South Africa. Journal of Gender and Behaviour, 18(1): 15202–15216.

Dzomonda, O. & Fatoki, O. (2019). The Role of Institutions of Higher

Learning Towards Youth Entrepreneurship Development in South Africa. Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal, 25(1).

De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B. & Delport, C.B. (2011). Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Services Professions. 4th Edition. Pretoria: J.L. Van Schaik Academic.

De Vos, A.S. (2013). Research at Grass Roots: A Premier for the Caring Professions. Pretoria: J.L. Van Schaik Academic.

Davidson, J.W. (2007). Research Design Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods. 2nd edition. Cape Town: Juta.

Ekpe, I., Razak, R. C., Ismail, M., & Abdullah, Z. (2015). Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition and Youth's Self-Employment in Malaysia: How Far? Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6(4), 150–154.

Ellis, K., & Williams, C. (2011). Maximising Impact of Youth Entrepreneurship Support in Different Contexts – Background Report, Framework and Toolkit for Consultation. Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

Fritsch, M. (2012). Who Starts a Business and Who is Self-Employed in Germany? Jena Economic Research Papers, 2012–001, Friedrich-Schiller-University, Jena.

Herrington, M., Kew, J., &. Kew, P. (2010). Tracking Entrepreneurship in South Africa: A Gem Perspective. University of Cape Town: Graduate School of Business.

Hossain, D.M. (2011). Qualitative Research Process, Postmodern Opening, 7: 143–156.

Justo, R., DeTienne, D. & Sieger. P. (2015). Failure or Voluntary Exit? Reassessing the Female Underperformance Hypothesis. Journal of Business Venturing, 30: 775–92.

King'ori, E.N. (2012). Factors Influencing Sustainability of Youth Group Enterprises: The Case of Small and Medium Enterprises in Nyeri Town Municipality. University of Nairobi, Nairobi. Masters Dissertation.

Klinw, M. (2015). Youth Entrepreneurship in Practice: A Comparative Case Study Analysis. University Honors College. Honours Dissertation.

Kumar, R. (2011). Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners. 2nd Edition. New York: Sage Publications.

Lau, V. P., Dimitrova, M. N., Shaffer, M. A., Davidkov, T. & Yordanova, D. I. (2012). Entrepreneurial Readiness and Firm Growth: An Integrated Etic and Emic Approach. Journal of International Management, 18, 147–159.

Maryam, C., & Thomas, S. (2015). Education and Training Benefiting a Career as Entrepreneur: Gender Gaps and Gendered Competencies and Benefits. International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship, 7(3): 321–343.

Mertler, C.A. & Charles, C.M. (2011). Introduction to Educational Research (7th Ed). Boston: Pearson.

Neuman, W.L. (2011). Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (6th Ed). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Ngorora P.K.G & Mago, S. (2018). Prospects of Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas: A Case Study of Eastern Cape Province Nkhonkobe Municipal Area. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(2): 1–16.

Nassium, B.K, Masasabi, J.M, & Nangulu. (2017). Differential Effects of Gender Groups on Entrepreneurship in a Developing Country Context. Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development, 5(2): 73–94.

National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). (2015) National Youth Policy 2015–2020. Pretoria: National Youth Development Agency.

Osoro, K., & Areba, A.M.D.N.J. (2013). Constraints Facing Women Entrepreneurs in Kenya: A Case Study of Micro and Small Enterprises in Kisii County. Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 16(6): 116–124.

Olugbola, S.A. (2017). Exploring Entrepreneurial Readiness of Youth and Start Up Success Components: Entrepreneurship Training as a Moderator. Journal of Innovation & Knowledge, 2: 155–171.

Statistics South Africa, (2011). Statistics South Africa: Formal Census. [online] Available at: http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2002/ene/vote_13.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2021].

Statistics South Africa, (2019). South Africa Unemployment Rate 2018–2019 Data Chart. [online] Available at: http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/unemployment-rate [Accessed 12 April 2021]

Sandrock, J. (2011). National Report into the State of Entrepreneurship. Economic Growth=Growing Entrepreneurship. [online] Available at: http://scholar.google.co.za/scholar?q=Sandrock.+J.+2020.+National+Report+into+the+state+of+entreprene urship. + Economic+Growth+&btnG=&hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5 Sanyal.

Sharu, H. & Guyo, W. (2013). Factors Influencing Growth of Youth Owned Small and Medium Enterprises in Nairobi Country, Kenya. International Journal of Science and Research, 4(4): 6–14.

Schillo, R.S., Persaud, A., & Jin, M. (2016). Entrepreneurial Readiness in the Context of National Systems of Entrepreneurship. Small Business Economics, 46: 619–637. [online] Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11187-016-9709-x.

United Nation, Swaziland (2013). Opportunities and Constraints to Youth Entrepreneurship. UN Swaziland: Mbabane.

Vhembe District Municipality (2018). Vhembe District Municipality – Overview. [online] Available at: https://municipalities.co.za/overview/129/vhembe-district-municipality [Accessed 12 April 2021]. co.zscholar?q=Sandrock.+J.+2020.+National+Report+into+the+state+of+entrepreneurship. + Economic+Growth+&btnG=&hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5 Sanyal.

Sharu, H. & Guyo, W. (2013). Factors Influencing Growth of Youth Owned Small and Medium Enterprises in Nairobi Country, Kenya. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 4(4): 6–14.

Schillo, R.S., Persaud, A., & Jin, M. (2016). Entrepreneurial Readiness in the Context of National Systems of Entrepreneurship. *Small Business Economics,* 46: 619–637. [online] Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11187-016-9709-x.

United Nation, Swaziland (2013). *Opportunities and Constraints to Youth Entrepreneurship*. UN Swaziland: Mbabane.

Vhembe District Municipality (2018). Vhembe District Municipality – Overview. [online] Available at: https://municipalities.co.za/overview/129/vhembe-district-municipality [Accessed 12 April 20

‘What’s Your Story?’

Building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

By Candice Harrison-Train, Carmel Marock, and Sally Field | Opinion

Abstract

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (EDI) are critical issues for leaders, communities, and organisations. Throughout history, telling stories has been a method for people to make sense of their environment, organise experiences and ideas, and communicate with their community to create shared understanding. Heartlines, a South African centre for values promotion, developed ‘What’s Your Story?’ (WYS) – a simple, yet effective initiative to build greater understanding, cohesion, trust, and reconciliation through the sharing of stories. An external evaluation of the programme used a mix of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods to assess WYS implementation in church communities and workplaces. The study showed strong evidence that being exposed to WYS results in positive changes at the level of the individual, within churches, workplaces or other organisations, and in the wider community. The findings demonstrated that WYS enhanced empathic skills and suggests that this is a useful approach to enhancing appreciation of diversity and building inclusivity.

Introduction

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (EDI) are critical issues for leaders, communities, and organisations. While diversity and inclusion are often treated as synonymous, they are distinct issues that contribute to the climate of equity within an organisation or community. Diversity is defined as having members from broad ranges of demographic profiles within an organisation or community: people of different ages, races, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, and nationality (Ely and Thomas, 2001). Inclusion refers to whether those who are part of an organisation or community feel that their identities, voices, and ideas are accepted (Mor Barak et al., 2016).

There is a myriad of reasons why organisations and institutions seek to build an appreciation of diversity and increased levels of inclusion. The National Development Plan (2030), 'Our Future – Make it Work', emphasises the importance of living the 'rainbow' through appreciating our diversity and by growing inclusivity (National Planning Commission, no date). This is reinforced in reports that highlight the need for diversity to be viewed as an investment opportunity that aligns economic performance with social progress (Deloitte, 2020).

Seeking greater diversity is an important first step towards change. However, the challenge to the system is to create a space where diverse groups feel supported, respected, welcomed, and willing to contribute (Moore et al., 2020). EDI researchers indicate that the literature does not go far enough to provide theory on *how* progress towards more equitable organisations and communities can be achieved. Throughout history, telling stories has been a method for people to make sense of their environment, organise experiences and ideas, and communicate with their community to create shared understanding (Schank and Abelson, 1995). Stories are an important part of social change because they have the power to shape the way people think and feel about their worlds and how they interact within them. In contexts where there are diverse demographic profiles, the sharing of stories has the potential to create bridging connections and foster bonding between people who are different from one another by facilitating across group information flow and support (Putnam, 2000: 22). In organisational development processes, sharing stories or experiences can build trust, cultivate norms, transfer tacit knowledge, facilitate unlearning, and generate emotional connections (Prasetyo, 2018).

Heartlines, a South African centre for values promotion, developed 'What's Your Story?' (WYS) as an initiative to build greater understanding, cohesion, trust, and reconciliation through the sharing of stories. The approach is based on the construct that personal storytelling provides a non-threatening foundation from which to have authentic conversations to build better understanding. Participants are required to share stories with each other in an intentional manner, asking others to share their stories and actively listening when stories are shared.

How Is WYS Implemented?

Heartlines developed a range of user-friendly resources (available online) for using the WYS methodology in different contexts, such as workplaces, churches, and schools. In some instances, Heartlines facilitates workshops with selected organisations and/or communities that have identified an issue pertaining to diversity or inclusion that they wish to address. These workshops engage participants in the WYS methodology and create opportunities for intentional story-sharing and other activities that promote social cohesion. Heartlines also trains community and organisational leaders on the WYS methodology so that they are able to cascade this in their own organisations and communities. The training sessions are experiential and include the opportunity to practise the story-sharing approach. In some cases, these sessions include a viewing of the Heartlines film *Beyond the River*, which was inspired by true events, and is used to demonstrate issues of difference and inclusion as the backdrop for group discussions.

Does WYS Work?

Singizi Consulting Africa conducted an external evaluation to assess WYS implementation in churches and workplaces. Their mixed method approach to data collection included a retrospective baseline survey that gathered data on perceptions of the programme, activities conducted since exposure to the programme, and perceptions of change as a result

of the programme; qualitative in-depth interviews; and eight qualitative case studies.

A key indicator of success for a programme of this nature is whether or not those exposed to it adopt the methodology, be it in their own lives or as champions who begin to cascade it to others. The data showed that there were very high levels of take-up (up to 84% amongst a large group of church leaders). The findings showed that uptake improved when, in addition to an increased focus on ensuring that participants understood the purpose of intentional story-sharing, there was opportunity to engage in an experiential story-sharing interaction at the point of exposure. The findings demonstrate that the approach is accessible, cost-effective, and easy to adopt – enabling participants to continue to use WYS.

The importance of these findings was reinforced by additional data that showed that once individuals have adopted the WYS methodology, the vast majority repeat it more than once. In the final evaluation, 41% of church respondents reported that they had repeated WYS two to five times, while 38% had repeated it six to 10 times, and 18% 11–15 times. All WYS workplace respondents who adopted the approach indicated that they had repeated WYS more than once, with 41% reporting they had repeated the process more than 15 times. Individuals reported that their motivations for adopting WYS included breaking down barriers, addressing racial schisms, addressing religious differences, and understanding the broader community. In the final evaluation, 82% of respondents reported that they believed that WYS was a powerful tool that could effectively be used to change society.

“Respondents interviewed for the case studies discussed how the storytelling process had increased their levels of empathy and supported greater levels of understanding, which helped to resolve negative emotions and even improve relationships at work. Church members observed that WYS was an ‘eye-opener’ in changing their perceptions about other people.”

The evaluation provided strong evidence of positive changes after being exposed to WYS at the level of the individual, within churches, workplaces or other organisations, and beyond these organisations into the wider community. Respondents uniformly reported positive personal changes against values that are identified as central to empathy. These values include curiosity, the ability to be non-judgmental, appreciation of diversity, ability to take perspective, understanding, feelings of connection with others, trust, communication, and collaboration.

Respondents interviewed for the case studies discussed how the storytelling process had increased their levels of empathy and supported greater levels of understanding, which helped to resolve negative emotions and even improve relationships at work. Church members observed that WYS was an ‘eye-opener’ in changing their perceptions about other people. One respondent commented:

‘when I look in the mirror, I only see myself, but WYS makes you think about others. I feel more curious and have more empathy as it makes you realise [...] to put yourself in others’ shoes. WYS helps one to get some perspective and forces one to focus on the needs of others and to look beyond your own problems.’

Respondents also spoke about positive changes within their congregations and workplaces as a result of WYS. In the WYS case studies in churches, respondents reported the deepening of relationships and suggested that it had assisted them to build an appreciation of diversity and, consequently, contributed to increased attendance at church, as members felt more included. One respondent observed:

‘the WYS experience has produced obvious changes in the [church] group. They are no longer just a group; they have become a team. People communicate openly with each other, share their thoughts, opinions and ideas with members of their team; as well as taking into consideration what others have to say.’

Similarly, workplace respondents reported greater levels of cooperation and connectedness and indicated that this is underpinned by greater levels of communication and trust, which are considered central to strengthening team work, building

new forms of relationships in the workplace, and supporting a culture of trust.

In terms of the wider community, data from the church case studies indicated that both church leaders and church members believe that WYS contributed towards churches having a more outward focus and caring about others. This included churches building relationships with other churches in the community, which sometimes involved bringing churches with parishioners who are primarily from different race groups closer together. There are other examples of churches cooperating more within their immediate surrounds.

How Does It Work?

The WYS approach intends to build empathy in participants. Empathy means being able to take another's perspective and feel an emotional bond. There is an important cognitive component in having the capacity to understand others' emotions (Brown et al., 2019). Empathy plays a critical interpersonal and societal role, enabling the sharing of experiences, needs, and desires between individuals and providing an emotional bridge that promotes inclusive behaviour (Riess, 2017).

Empathy can be learned through observation and the reinforcement of experiences. However, of equal importance, is the need to create the right conditions for empathy to be exercised. The value of empathy needs to be understood, a psychologically safe environment created, and people taught to observe and listen without judgement. The WYS seeks to enhance cognitive empathy through action-orientated and collaborative strategies.

Research indicates that multiple types of exclusionary dynamics, such as self-segregation, communication apprehension, stereotyping and stigmatising, need to be overcome to facilitate inclusion within organisations (Bernstein et al., 2020). WYS provides a structure for meeting and communicating and an approach for overcoming stereotyping and stigmatising, thus addressing some of the barriers to inclusion. Further, adaptive learning and attitude change depend on individuals' first experiencing stereotype inconsistency—an inconsistency between a stereotype of a culture and the actual experiencing of particular members of that culture—then working through such inconsistencies by being in conditions that make them willing and able to interact repeatedly with diverse others (Bernstein et al., 2020). Through personal story-sharing, WYS provides the opportunity for people to experience stereotype inconsistency and initiate attitude change, creating a space for unlearning. Unlearning is defined as:

'not about forgetting. It is about the ability to choose an alternative mental model or paradigm. When we learn, we add new skills or knowledge to what we already know. When we unlearn, we step outside the mental model in order to choose a different one.' (Boncheck, 2016)

WYS training provides the foundations for new skills development in intentional story-sharing and active listening, building empathic skills and challenging existing stereotypes through bridging relationships with others.

The evaluation found that one of the key factors that makes WYS successful in building empathy is the simplicity and accessibility of the approach. People of all ages, races, genders, and educational backgrounds can easily use the tool, even without the additional guides and resources that Heartlines has made available. Heartlines refers to the approach as 'Ask. Listen. Tell' – and it appears that this is exactly how participants are using it and, in general, with positive effect. If an organisation adopts the WYS approach with increased opportunity for story-sharing practice during training, they also set up some of the preconditions for facilitating inclusion. These include pursuing an important, shared organizational purpose; mixing diverse members frequently over protracted periods of time and being collaborative; and valuing an individual member's uniqueness and belonging (Bernstein et al., 2020). Implementation of WYS could provide a shared organisational purpose, with multiple trainings and practice sessions creating the opportunity for the frequent mixing of diverse members over protracted time, and the valuing of members' uniqueness through active listening and mutual story-sharing.

However, implementation of WYS is not a magic solution for inclusivity. Research indicates that negative contact, where participants feel threatened

and did not choose to have contact, provides unfavourable conditions for inclusivity (Pettigrew et al., 2011). This was evidenced in the evaluation, which reinforced the importance of ensuring buy-in to enable participants to feel comfortable with using the WYS approach, and highlighted the importance of creating opportunities for participants to have the chance to experience a story-sharing process, in a safe environment, when introduced to WYS.

Findings from the WYS evaluation suggest that WYS is successful in promoting change and that it is a simple and accessible approach. It is an easy-to-use tool that can be implemented without additional guides and resources. The more people share, the easier it gets for others to take the process forward and integrate it into daily conversations and situations in ways that promote increased levels of connectedness and contribute to organisational inclusivity. The WYS approach could be used to address inclusivity on an individual level, to provide impactful voices for equitable change, and to create a basis for understanding diversity practices (Gagnon, Augustin, and Cukier, 2021).

Heartlines encourages people to share their stories. Do you have a story that everyone needs to hear? Are you, or do you know of someone who courageously lives our values such as forgiveness, compassion, acceptance, understanding, or reconciliation? Do you know ordinary people working together in extraordinary ways?

Share your story at **heartlines.org.za/wys/home**

References

Bernstein, R. S. et al. (2020). From Diversity to Inclusion to Equity: A Theory of Generative Interactions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 167(3): 395–410

Boncheck, M. (2016). Why the Problem with Learning is Unlearning. *Harvard Business Review* [online]. Available at: https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-the-problem-with-learning-is-unlearning

Brown, K. et al. (2019). Empathy, Place and Identity Interactions for Sustainability. *Global Environmental Change*, 56: 11–17

Deloitte (2020). The right mind-set: Approaching diversity and inclusion in South Africa. Value Beyond Compliance series [online]. Available at: https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/za/Documents/africa/ZA-Deloitte-Approaching-diversity-and-inclusion-in-South-Africa.pdf

Ely, R. J. and Thomas, D. A. (2001). Cultural Diversity at Work: The Effects of Diversity Perspectives on Work Group Processes and Outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. SAGE Publications Inc, 46(2): 229–273

Gagnon, S., Augustin, T. J. and Cukier, W. (2021). Interplay for change in equality, diversity and inclusion studies, *Human Relations*, p.001872672110022.

Moore, K. J. et al. (2020). Beyond Diversity: Focusing on and Enhancing Inclusion in the Society for Epidemiologic Research. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 189(10): 1042–1046

Mor Barak, M. E. et al. (2016). The Promise of Diversity Management for Climate of Inclusion: A State-of-the-Art Review and Meta-Analysis. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*. Routledge, 40(4): 305–333

National Planning Commission (no date) *National Development Plan 2030: Our Future – Make It Work*. Pretoria. [online] Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/ndp-2030-our-future-make-it-workr.pdf.

Pettigrew, T. F. et al. (2011). Recent Advances in Intergroup Contact Theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(3): 271–280

Prasetyo, Y. E. (2018). From Storytelling to Social Change: The Power of Story in the Community Building, *SSRN Electronic Journal*

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster

Riess, H. (2017). The Science of Empathy. *Journal of Patient Experience*, 4(2): 74–77

Schank, R. C. and Abelson, R. P. (1995). Knowledge and Memory: The Real Story. In R.S. Wyer, ed. *Knowledge and Memory: The Real Story.* New York: Routledge

Global, Continental, and Regional Development Agendas

What Does It Mean to Domesticate or Localise These?

By Lusanda Batala | Opinion

Abstract

The domestication of regional, continental and global development agendas can be confusing, leading to one concluding that these are either an addition to or a replacing of, a country's national development plan. What do these various development agendas mean for a country like South Africa versus the country's domestic development focus as espoused in the National Development Plan (NDP)? What does domestication of the various agendas mean? The key idea to note here is that domestication is not about replacing a country's development agenda with a regional or continental or global development agenda. What is important is to ensure that there is alignment of the domestic plan (objectives, priorities) with those of the rest of the world, the continent and the region. Global, continental and regional agendas are not separate programmes. They are part of the National Development Plan. South Africa's implementation of its own development plan indirectly implements other development agendas.

Introduction

A continuous confusion persists around whether the agreed global, continental, and regional development agendas – such as the United Nations 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)), African Union Agenda 2063, and SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) – are meant to replace or complement individual countries' development plans. After these development agendas were adopted (2030 Agenda in 2015 and Agenda 2063 in 2013), countries were meant to domesticate or localise the agreed goals. This is where the dilemma seems to still exist, with contrasting views in both the public and private arenas. Occasionally, one hears questions about when will South Africa do something or implement either the AU Agenda 2063 or the UN Agenda 2030. Clarity is needed as to what these development agendas mean for a country like South Africa, versus the country's domestic development focus, as espoused in the National Development Plan (NDP). This brief aims to provide some clarity, linkage, and understanding of the various sustainable development plans – global, continental, and regional.

The Origins of Global Sustainable Development

The focus on global sustainable development by the United Nations can be traced back to 1987 when the World Commission on Environment and Development was tasked by the UN General Assembly to come up with a global agenda for change. The task entailed the following:

- A proposal on long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond;
- Recommendations for greater co-operation among developing countries, and between countries at different stages of economic and social development, for the achievement of common and mutually supportive objectives that take account of the interrelationships between people, resources, environment, and development;
- Ways in which the international community can deal more effectively with environmental concerns; and
- Definitions of shared perceptions of long-term environmental issues and the appropriate efforts needed to deal successfully with the problems of protecting and enhancing the environment, a long-term agenda for action during the coming decades, and aspirational goals for the world community.

The basis was that 'the earth is one but the world is not'. We all depend on the same biosphere, but individual communities and countries strive for survival and prosperity with little regard of their impact on others. Some consume the Earth's resources at a rate that would leave little for future generations. Others, many more in number, consume far too little and live with the prospect of hunger, squalor, disease, and early death.

The next key defining moment for change was in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Agenda 21). This conference recognised that 'humanity stands at a defining moment in history'. Global nations began to realise that they were confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations; a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health, and illiteracy; and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which nations depend for their wellbeing. This was the beginning of a global partnership for dealing with environmental and developmental challenges. Worth noting during this shift in global development was the global consensus reached that the 'successful implementation is first and foremost the responsibility of Governments. National strategies, plans, policies and processes are crucial in achieving global development. The role of international cooperation is to support and supplement national efforts.'

In 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted, with eight goals to be reached by 2015 – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs demonstrated a greater focus on development compared to prior discussions. Only one goal, number 7, placed a focus on environmental issues. In 2002, the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development assessed progress since Rio and delivered three key outcomes: a political declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and a range of partnership initiatives. Key commitments

included those on sustainable consumption and production, water and sanitation, and energy. In 2012, in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20), discussion on a new global agenda to replace the MDGs began. The basis of the negotiation was that 'poverty is the greatest global challenge'. In September 2015, the UN adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which traverse various socio-economic issues and bring environmental issues to the centre of development. In all these development processes, it is worth noting that development work happens at the local and national level, and further, in collaborations among countries.

What Does the Domestication of Regional, Continental, and Global Development Agendas Mean?

Is it about replacing a country's development plans? Or is it about mapping the two to see if they converge? Where there is non-convergence, strategies must be devised to close the gap. The issue is not about replacing a country's development agenda with a regional or continental or global development agenda. What is important is to ensure that there is alignment of the domestic plan (objectives, priorities) with those of the rest of the world, continent, or region. The process of domesticating global, continental, and regional development plans starts with finding areas of convergence. Once this is done, it is easier to translate the global targets into programmes and actions that can be implemented locally. Moreover, the process presents an opportunity to identify areas where there are gaps and strategies that could be utilised to close the gaps.

In essence, all development agendas have similar core objectives which aim to tackle the urgency of addressing economic, social, and environmental issues in order to improve people's lives. The plans seek to accelerate the implementation of initiatives for growth and sustainable development, deal with unemployment, eliminate poverty, and reduce inequality. Hence, it is important to find synergies between domestic, regional, continental, and global development agendas. Commitments to global, continental, or regional development plans do not necessarily indicate a replacement of the domestic plan. Just imagine a situation where a country, such as South Africa, which has adopted the National Development Plan (NDP) in 2012 and is already in the process of implementation, has to change gears and focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063, which were approved later. A country must deduce the extent of alignment of the domestic plan with the regional, continental, and global plans. Areas of convergence and gaps must be identified, and where there are gaps, a country needs to devise strategies for how to tackle these. The process of alignment also helps when it comes to reporting on the various agendas.

In the case of South Africa, this alignment process has been done with various agendas, such as the SDGs and Agenda 2063. Below is a snap shot of how the three development agendas (Agenda 2063, SDGs and NDP) align with one another.

Agenda 2063 (2023 Goals)	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	National Development Plan (NDP)
Goal 1: A high standard of living, quality of life and wellbeing for all.	**Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere in the world **Goal 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages	**Chapter 11:** Social protection
Goal 2: Well-educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by Science, Technology and Innovation	**Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	**Chapter 9:** Improving education, training and innovation

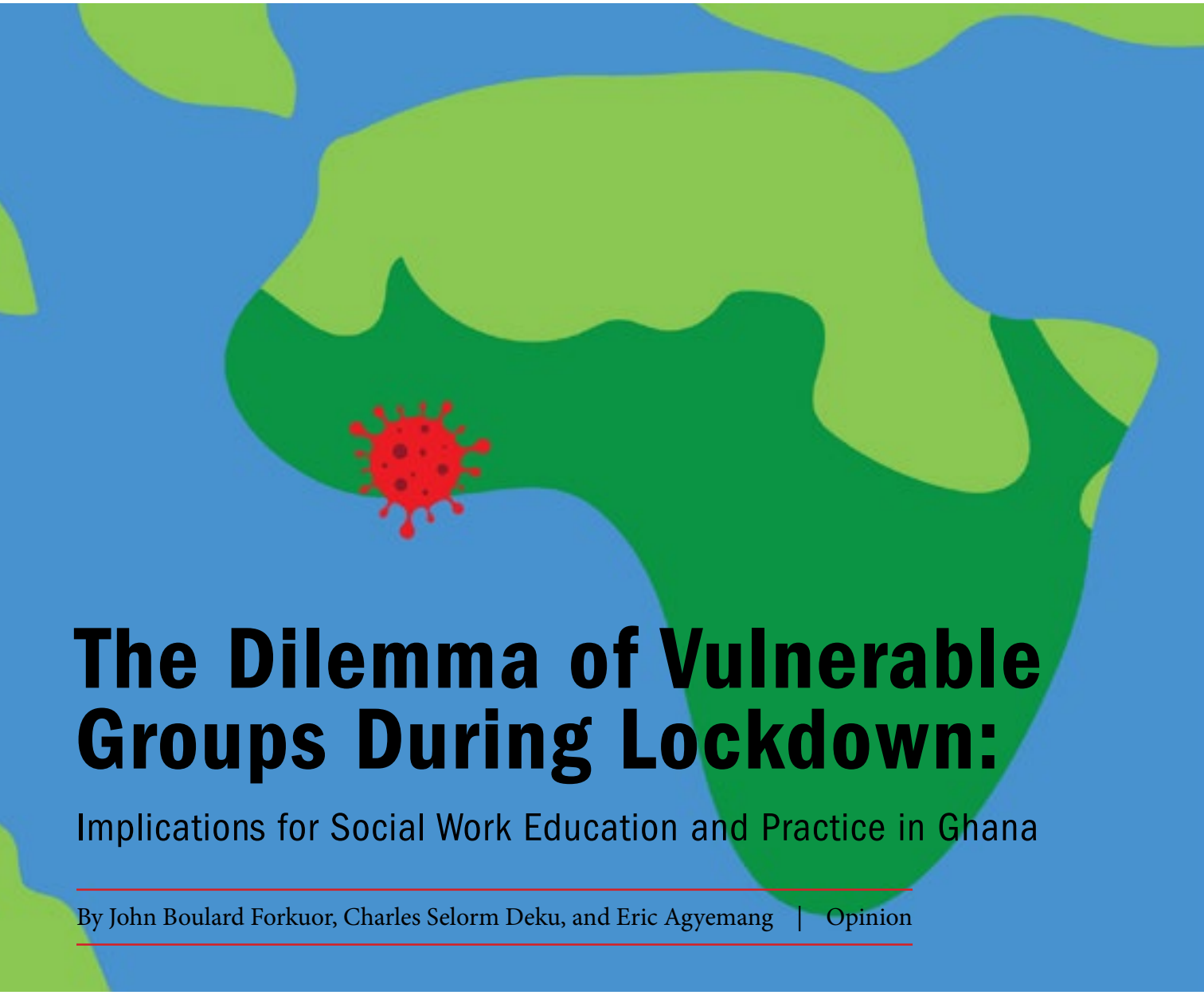
Agenda 2063 (2023 Goals)	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	National Development Plan (NDP)
Goal 3: Healthy and well-nourished citizens	**Goal 2:** End hunger; achieve food security and improved nutrition; promote sustainable agriculture **Goal 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages	**Chapter 10:** Promoting health
Goal 4: Transformed economies and job creation	**Goal 8:** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	**Chapter 3:** Economy and employment
Goal 5: Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production	**Goal 2:** End hunger; achieve food security and improved nutrition; promote sustainable agriculture **Goal 12:** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	**Chapter 6:** An integrated and inclusive rural economy
Goal 6: Blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth	**Goal 14:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	
Goal 7: Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities	**Goal 6:** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all **Goal 7:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all **Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable **Goal 13:** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts **Goal 15:** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	**Chapter 5:** Environmental sustainability – An equitable transition to a low-carbon economy **Chapter 8:** Transforming human settlement and the national space economy
Goal 8: United Africa (Federal or Confederate)	**Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	**Chapter 15:** Transforming society and uniting the country

Agenda 2063 (2023 Goals)	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	National Development Plan (NDP)
Goal 9: Key Continental Financial and Monetary Institutions established and functional	**Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	**Chapter 7:** Positioning SA in the world
Goal 10: World Class Infrastructure crisscrosses Africa	**Goal 9:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	**Chapter 4:** Economy infrastructure – The foundation of social and economic development
Goal 11: Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched	**Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	**Chapter 13:** Building a capable and developmental state **Chapter 14:** Fighting corruption
Goal 12: Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels	**Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	**Chapter 13:** Building a capable and developmental state
Goal 13: Peace, Security and Stability are Preserved	**Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	**Chapter 11:** Social protection **Chapter 12:** Building safer communities
Goal 14: A Stable and Peaceful Africa	**Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable **Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	**Chapter 11:** Social protection **Chapter 14:** Fighting corruption
Goal 15: A Fully Functional and Operational African Peace and Security Architecture	**Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable **Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	**Chapter 11:** Social protection **Chapter 14:** Fighting corruption
Goal 16: African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent		

Agenda 2063 (2023 Goals)	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	National Development Plan (NDP)
Goal 17: Full Gender Equality in All Spheres of Life	**Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	**Chapter 15:** Transforming society and uniting the country
Goal 18: Engaged and Empowered Youth and Children	**Goal 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries	**Chapter 9:** Improving education, training and innovation
Goal 19: Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful co-existence	**Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	**Chapter 7:** Positioning SA in the world
Goal 20: Africa takes full responsibility for financing its developmentv	**Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	**Chapter 7:** Positioning SA in the world

Conclusion

The domestication of regional, continental, and global development agendas does not mean replacing domestic development plans. Rather, the process requires alignment, identifying gaps, and strategizing around these gaps. It is about mainstreaming the global, regional, and continental agendas into national development plans. Global, continental, and regional agendas are not separate programmes. They are all part of the National Development Plan. The effective implementation of the National Development Plan means the effective implementation of the global, continental, and regional agendas. The goals and objectives of the global, continental, and regional agendas are reflected in the National Development Plan. The effective implementation of the National Development Plan will make it easier for the country to meet reporting commitments (progress) in all development agendas. Therefore, it all begins with the country's National Development Plan and its implementation.



The Dilemma of Vulnerable Groups During Lockdown:

Implications for Social Work Education and Practice in Ghana

By John Boulard Forkuor, Charles Selorm Deku, and Eric Agyemang | Opinion

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has created socio-economic challenges for countries globally and has touched lives in some of the world's most remote areas. While other countries have been proactive in addressing these challenges, I fear that Ghana, and to an extent most of sub-Saharan Africa, have failed to adequately prepare for and anticipate these challenges. This reflective essay discusses the paradoxes that the pandemic and the measures used to curb it have created for two vulnerable groups: informal economy workers and women and children in abusive relationships. I introduce the essay with a reflective account of the relevance and practicality of social work education and practice in Ghana in light of the ongoing pandemic. Subsequently, I focus on the two aforementioned vulnerable groups. I present a reflective account of how the challenges that emerged from this pandemic create new opportunities for my work as a social work educator and also for practice with these groups in Ghana.

Introduction

Trained in social work and teaching social work at the tertiary level, I have always had pride in the profession's ability to promote the wellbeing of the vulnerable in society. Every September, I have the opportunity to meet first year undergraduate social work students. I relish these opportunities because I get to share with these students the successes of the profession in Ghana and to whip up their interest in social work and broader social welfare efforts. Since the onset of Covid-19, however, I have had to question my beliefs, especially how we, as social workers in Ghana, have had to observe the intervention efforts from the sidelines. I cannot help but feel that as academics and professionals, we have not made ourselves relevant to our communities and the country as a whole. We have, as a result, failed to influence national policies on social welfare delivery. We have focused on remedial practice and provided reactive services to vulnerable groups. By so doing, we have not properly engaged the public, city authorities, and other professionals in promoting and advocating for preventive public welfare approaches. In hindsight, it comes as little surprise, perhaps as a rude awakening, that in the fight against Covid-19, Ghanaian social workers have not been engaged in the national discourse. Even the Ministry in charge of all social welfare efforts in the country failed to call upon the knowledge of social workers in their attempt to identify and support vulnerable groups in the country. This demonstrates the disconnect between governance, practice and education of social work in Ghana. This pandemic has made me aware of the limitations of my teaching and research approaches; I believe I will be a better educator of future social work practitioners in Ghana and in Africa as whole. In the following paragraphs, I focus on two vulnerable groups, the insights gained during this pandemic, and the implications of these on social work education and practice in Ghana.

Urban Informal Economic Workers and Covid-19

I sat through a student's thesis presentation about a year ago; the student, a sociology major, presented on retirement planning for informal economy workers. At the time, I listened out of intellectual curiosity and never thought of its professional relevance to social work practice in Ghana. How mistaken I was! Today, looking at how this pandemic has affected the livelihoods of workers in the informal economy, I realise that there was a lot of professional relevance to this presentation.

On 19 April 2020, as the President of Ghana lifted the lockdown, there were mixed feelings. Most of the population working in the informal economy were jubilating because they could go back to work again and feed their families and dependants. For most of the formally employed, lifting the lockdown would make the virus spread rapidly and create a greater public health problem. As a social work lecturer, I felt conflicted because I could empathise with both the jubilating group and the lamenting group. For those who are informally employed, available evidence reveals that the public health measures aimed at controlling the pandemic leads to a loss of income (WIEGO, 2020a). For the informally employed, the paradox is that 'they cannot stay home without starving and they cannot work without being exposed to the virus' (WIEGO, 2020d). This paradox has real implications for the ability of nations to effectively deal with this pandemic.

The academic, political, and industrial neglect of informal economy workers is having a negative effect on society's efforts at dealing with this pandemic (Harvey, 2020). Years of neglect mean that governments currently have to focus on both a public health and economic crisis. Working from home, schooling from home, relying on savings, and social distancing (all recommended strategies for curbing the pandemic) are not realistic options for many of the workers in the informal economy (Harvey, 2020). In other words, the lack of job security, health insurance, financial investments and savings, and adequate housing for informal economic workers is negatively affecting the ability of states to deal with the pandemic. One of the realities that this pandemic has laid bare is that a resilient informal economic workforce is not only good for the economy, but may also have important implications for future public health efforts and responses. Thus, if we continue to ignore this workforce in policy development and implementation processes, their condition will have a negative impact on society's ability to fight pandemics effectively. Consequently, we cannot, as social workers and educators, afford to ignore the workers in the

informal economy any longer.

Our focus as social workers operating within the urban sphere in Ghana has been significantly on the vulnerable aged, street children, street beggars, and other urban actors. Our social intervention and empowerment programs have not paid adequate attention to workers in the informal economy. The calls for Developmental Social Work to inform social work practice in Africa (Gray and Coates, 2010; Mwansa, 2011) are becoming increasingly obvious and relevant as this pandemic unfolds and affect millions of people in Africa's informal economy. The informal economy and its workers therefore present specific challenges to social work efforts in Ghana and in Africa from here on. It is important, given the challenges that workers in this sector have faced during this pandemic (WIEGO, 2020a, 2020c, and 2020d), that we assist in creating more resilient homes and households for informal economy workers. This, I believe, should be one of the priority areas for social workers in urban Africa and the rest of the developing world. For me, as a social work lecturer, a clear path ahead is apparent. No longer will I passively listen to discussions about informal economic workers, their access to social protection, social security, and retirement plans. As a lecturer and researcher, the urban informal economy should be a necessary part of my lessons. Social work students within African and other developing contexts should graduate with a clear understanding of the challenges that informal workers face and the strategies that could be used to build the economic and social resilience of this group. It is relevant that the student who sits in my class understands how important workers in the informal economy are, and the best way of improving their wellbeing. This will help the profession make meaningful contributions towards promoting the wellbeing of informal economy workers. Through this, we not only make a relevant contribution towards the wellbeing of Ghanaians, but also enhance the practical and contextual relevance of the profession in Ghana. From my lecture halls, I will be the change that I expect to see in social work education and practice in Ghana. I will endeavour to train students in ways that will make them relevant practitioners and prepare them to contribute meaningfully to emerging public health concerns in Ghana.

"Children confined to their homes are exposed to violence and the psychological distress that comes with it. As Higgins puts it, for the victim of abuse, there is the 'fear of the aggressor indoors and the virus outside' (2020: 1). This is much like the paradox faced by informal economy workers: the choice between starvation indoors and the virus outdoors.

Prior to this pandemic, I – as a researcher and academic – did not critically examine the existing measures we have in Ghana for dealing with domestic violence."

Abuse and Violence During Covid-19

Since the start of the pandemic, I have read of several instances of increase in abuse (physical, emotional, financial, and psychological) during this period as countries implement lockdown measures. In some cases, the abuse has led to the death of spouses, mostly women (Addadzi-Koom, 2020; Higgins, 2020; Kelly and Morgan, 2020). Lockdown measures instituted globally have created a conducive avenue for abusers (by isolating their victims from family and friends), while limiting escape options for the abused (Kelly and Morgan, 2020). Children confined to their homes are exposed to violence and the psychological distress that comes with it. As Higgins puts it, for the victim of abuse, there is the 'fear of the aggressor indoors and the virus outside' (2020: 1). This is much like the paradox faced by informal economy workers: the choice between starvation indoors and the virus outdoors.

Prior to this pandemic, I – as a researcher and academic – did not critically examine the existing measures we have in Ghana for dealing with domestic violence. However, the emergence of this pandemic and the strategies put in place by other countries have made me question our own commitment and the effectiveness of our approach towards protecting victims of domestic violence. Like some welfare officers and practitioners in Ghana, I have often assumed that the Department of Social Welfare and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service are an adequate avenue for addressing abuse. However, what I have learnt from the actions of other global actors is that the mere existence of these institutions is of little comfort to women and children trapped in abusive relationships. In addition, most of

our focus in Ghana has been on women walking in or calling to report abuse. While these strategies may work under certain circumstances, they are highly inadequate during this pandemic, considering the close control that abusers exert on the abused. Such strategies also do not consider the challenges faced by victims of domestic violence who have hearing impairments.

During this period of global suffering, I have read with optimism about the innovative strategies that other countries have adopted to assist persons living with abusive partners. Collaborations with community pharmacies in establishing codenames (such as 'Mask-19') where women can safely indicate the existence of abuse and the need for assistance is just one of the approaches (Higgins, 2020). As a Ghanaian social work academic, this pandemic and the emerging stories and strategies has lit a bulb of awareness in my head. I feel that I have been dormant and too comfortable in my role as an academic, without critically analysing and trying to improve existing strategies in Ghana for the vulnerable. While I do not suggest an adoption of the strategies that are being used elsewhere, I do believe that it is high time for the profession in Ghana to find context-relevant strategies that will enhance the safety and protection of women and children in abusive relationships, measures that go beyond walk-in reports and phone calls. The pandemic and lockdown measures have taught us that this approach is not sufficient in addressing the challenges that victims of abuse face. Furthermore, the potential increase in domestic violence cases has implications for our teaching and practice. Perhaps anger management and stress management techniques should be taught not only in classrooms, but also to the public. As a matter of urgency, we must promote the public education of such approaches, in addition to non-violent conflict resolution techniques. We, as a profession, must go beyond setting up helplines and help agencies, most of which are reactive institutions. Rather, we must put in place preventive measures that can help reduce aggression, especially among people who must, of necessity, share a limited space with other abusers.

Concluding Comments

As Africa urbanises, the informal economy will play a significant role in enhancing the socio-economic wellbeing of urban residents. In addition, the breakdown of the extended family as a social control and safety mechanism, and increasing anonymity and individuality in urban areas, will have serious implications for abused persons. Social workers, with the aim of promoting the wellbeing of people within sustainable environments, can no longer afford to sit on the sidelines. The ongoing pandemic and the challenges that informally employed actors and persons in abusive relationships have faced must make us take an active interest in promoting the wellbeing of these urban actors. As social work academics and practitioners in Ghana, we must strive to develop preventive measures rather than react to emerging social problems. We must anticipate and train our students to contribute meaningfully to society's efforts at improving the quality of life for vulnerable populations in all times and under all circumstances. We have to remember our public advocacy roots and play a leading role in preventive healthcare provision for vulnerable groups in urban areas. We have to go beyond writing about developmental social work to actually implementing developmental social work approaches in our country. For me, this is an important time for self-assessment and insight, and the need for a different and more context-relevant approach to social work education and practice in Ghana has never been clearer.

References

Addadzi-Koom, M.E. (2020). Locked Down with Abusers: COVID-19 and Access to Justice for Domestic Violence Victims in Ghana. [online] Institute for African Women in Law. Available at: https://www.africanwomeninlaw.com/post/locked-down-with-abusers-covid-19-and-access-to-justice-for-domestic-violence-victims-in-ghana [Accessed 25 May 2020]

Gray, M. and Coates, J. (2010). 'Indigenization' and Knowledge Development: Extending the Debate. *International Social Work*, 53(5): 613–627.

Harvey, J. (2020). How cities can support informal workers: COVID-19 and beyond. [online] Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). Available at: https://www.wiego.org/blog/how-cities-can-support-informal-workers-covid-19-and-beyond [Accessed 25 May 2020]

Higgins, N. (2020). Coronavirus: When home gets violent under lockdown in Europe. [online] BBC News. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52216966 [Accessed 13 April 2020]

Kelly, J. and Morgan, T. (2020). Coronavirus: Domestic abuse calls up 25% since lockdown, charity says. [online] BBC News. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-52157620 [Accessed 6 April 2020]

Mwansa, L.K. (2011). Social Work Education in Africa: Whence and

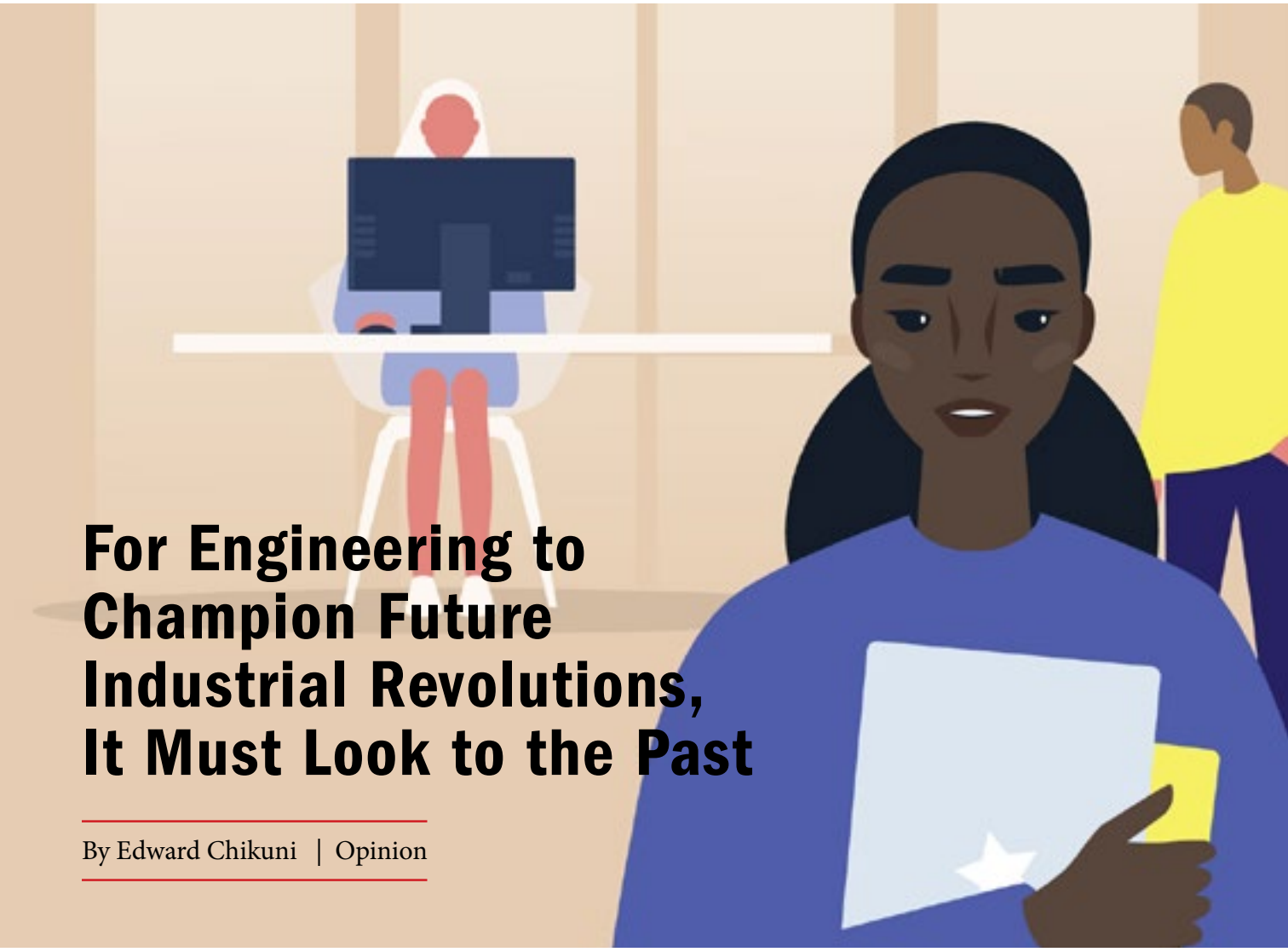
Whither? *Social Work Education*, 30(1): 4–16.

WIEGO, (2020a). Impact of public health measures on informal workers' livelihoods: Rapid assessment [online]. Available at: https://www.wiego.org/resources/impact-public-health-measures-informal-workers-livelihoods-rapid-assessment [Accessed 25 May 2020]

WIEGO, (2020b). COVID-19 Health Guidelines for Informal Traders [online]. Available at: https://www.wiego.org/sites/default/files/resources/file/WIEGO_COVID19_SVs_whatssapp_24April.pdf [Accessed 25 May 2020]

WIEGO, (2020c). Market, Street Traders & Headload Porter's Health and Safety [online]. Available at: https://www.wiego.org/sites/default/files/resources/file/WIEGO_HealthSafety_Infographic_AccraSV.pdf [Accessed 25 May 2020]

WIEGO, (2020d). COVID-19 and the World's 2 Billion Informal Economy Workers [online]. Available at: https://www.wiego.org/COVID19-Platform [Accessed 25 May 2020]



For Engineering to Champion Future Industrial Revolutions, It Must Look to the Past

By Edward Chikuni | Opinion

Abstract

[This article first appeared in Engineer Magazine Botswana on 16 February 2021]

This article discusses Engineering and the Engineer in an informal way intended to attract the attention of engineering educators, industry professionals and students. By tracing the definition term "Engineer" to ancient Greek which translates to genius, it is hoped that those of us who are engineers or those that intend to become engineers will be made aware of the respect and reverence which National Leaders have had bestowed upon them, through all industrial resolutions. Indeed, Some National Leaders have been Engineers and Scientists themselves. The article gives some early examples of geniuses of ancient Egypt and latterly those in Europe, Asia and the United States. The article discloses that what we call STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) was in fact not new and gives examples of Thomas Edison and Benjamin Franklin of the United States. With these examples, it is hoped that Engineers will embrace roles in public life and national governance. The article goes into particular depth the importance of a broadened curriculum, bemoaning the present trend of overspecialization. Here the article gives an example of the curriculum he himself followed in the 1970's. In what can be called an autobiographical sketch, the article describes his own experience as a Trainee / Graduate Engineer with the National Railways of Zimbabwe, which had a solid training reputation, especially during the 1980's. In this sketch, the importance of humility, order, and adherence to professionalisms are recommended as part of the repertoire to a future successful Engineer.

In Early History, Engineering, Art, Philosophy, and Politics Were the Same Thing

The first engineer (i.e. genius), from 2600 BC, was an African: Imhotep of Memphis, Egypt. Imhotep was an incredibly wise and clever man, architect, astrologer, Chief Minister and spiritual adviser to Pharaoh Djoser (reigned 2630–2611 BC), the second king of Egypt's third dynasty. He designed the 61m, Step-Pyramid of Saqqara. Italian Leonardo da Vinci, born 15 April 1452, was also undoubtedly a genius. He was an inventor, designer, painter (of the Mona Lisa fame), sculptor, architect, scientist, musician, mathematician, engineer, writer, anatomist, geologist, astronomer, botanist, palaeontologist, and cartographer. Da Vinci was clearly a genius and very clever. There were several other very clever men and women throughout history. Benjamin Franklin was one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Franklin was a leading scientist, inventor, journalist, writer, printer, politician, diplomat, and Post Master General of the United States. Another great engineer was Thomas Edison, owner of over 1000 patents which included the electric light, electric train, and telephony. Among Edison's employees were Henry Ford and Nikola Tesla. Tesla was the inventor of the Alternating Current Electric Motors (which replaced horse and donkey power) and the technology of what we now call robotic drones. So far, we have only spoken of the achievements of men. Women also achieved. Hertha Marks, inventor of electric arc light, qualified for a degree at the University of Cambridge. She had to settle for a certificate, however, since women could not be given degrees. In the US, Mary Engle Pennington completed the requirements for a BS degree in Chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania in 1892, but was given a certificate of proficiency instead. I suspect that men were involved in these kinds of regulations.

Enter the Late Modern Period (1750–1945)

Engineers like Da Vinci lived in what is called the Early Modern Period. This was the period of the Renaissance, the Age of Discovery (or Exploration), the Age of the Sail, the Reformation, and the Qing Dynasty of China which lasted almost 300 years. The Early Modern Period was followed by the Late Modern Period, associated with revolutions and wars. One of these revolutions, the Industrial Revolution, was obviously less deadly than the political revolutions associated with this period. It was the Period of German-born King George II of Great Britain. The present Queen Elizabeth II is a descendent of George II. Her husband, Prince Philip, was born in Greece. The first steam engine was designed by an African, Hero of Alexandria, whose lecture notes span the fields of mathematics, mechanics, physics, pneumatics, and cybernetics. The well-known Stephenson's Rocket Locomotive was invented much later in the Late Modern Period. At this time, the definition of 'engineer' was a *man* who could build a steam engine *with his own hands*. A genius of note from the Asian subcontinent was Indian Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, FRS, who authored almost 4000 theorems. It took several Cambridge mathematicians, among them Godfrey Harold Hardy, FRS, to actually understand some of them. His country understood and recognised him even less. He got a job as a clerk, Grade III, at the Accountant General's office, which paid him 20 rupees (about 5 Pula) a month. Surely, 5 Pula, 40 US cents per month, is not a living wage. Ramanujan died at the age of 32. In almost no time, the proper definition and attributes of 'engineer' – genius and cleverness – were lost. In the United States, an engineer is a locomotive driver; even here in Africa, if you say you are an electrical engineer, you will find people dropping off broken electric kettles and irons at your doorstep. We see in this period that the open and freethinking genius of Da Vinci and Imhotep vanished.

The Organisation of Engineering

The freethinking, inventiveness, and genius of engineers soon became both an asset and a threat during the wars. Many German scientists were lured to 'free world' countries such as the United States. One of them was Albert Einstein, a Nobel-winning scientist and philosopher who after graduating with a Doctorate from the famous ETH of Zurich, Switzerland, failed to land a lecturing position there, ending up as technical assistant at the patent office in Bern, the capital. It was perhaps at ETH that he experienced the ugly face of homophobia. Einstein was born in Germany. Later, Einstein was offered the position of President of Israel, and he declined. Engineering, as we know it today, is largely the decimation, at best,

dilution of genius. Worse than that, science, which was integral to it, transformed itself into a discipline, with engineering becoming a mere cousin. Engineering became more of construction. There was more division! A class of engineers called civil engineers was formed, to distinguish themselves from military engineers. In Norway, the 'civil engineer' is a protected title and an umbrella of all engineering programmes: perhaps more like a tree under which all can shelter from extreme heat. Ask the kombi bus *Loading Tout,* (they call them 'MaWindi' in Zimbabwe) and he would say: 'A kombi is like a tree, everyone has a place under its shade'. And so: a 14-seat kombi can accommodate over 20. Outside of Norway, civil engineers today are more associated with construction. Look at us now: civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, electronics, control, mechatronics. The list goes on. There is now a plethora of degrees programmes and a clamouring for even more new engineering programmes.

The Consequences of Engineers Forgetting Art and Philosophy

The distancing of science from engineering was indeed unfortunate, but the two have remained cousins. The separation of art from engineering was the most unfortunate. The general perception among engineers was that art was second best. At the University of Zimbabwe, where I used to teach, it was said that the premier professions were Medicine, Engineering and Law. Medicine, which it is claimed paid most, was the hardest to get into: you needed three As. Some of those who couldn't make it into Medicine would enrol into Engineering; if not, then into Science; if not, then into Art – typically, Political Science and Administration. To their surprise, the engineers found that these 'Poly-Admins' became their bosses, selecting them for positions in the industry and determining their salaries and conditions of service. Many years ago, men like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, and Rolls Royce realised that to be in control, you need to own and control your own enterprise. In the case of Thomas Edison, Charles Rolls and Henry Royce, they made sure that their products would bear their names. Perhaps they remembered the misfortunes of Napoleon. For all his exploits and fame, there is not a single street in Paris named after him. We see here that the free and exploring minds of ages and decades have been split into pieces, often competing pieces. To see that the battle is not completely lost, let us go to America.

Coming to America

Over 20 years ago, I was confronted with a situation when I observed that our son was more inclined towards motor mechanics than to academics. One day, to my horror, I found that he had taken down the gearbox and steering rack of our broken car all by himself. Through an internet search, we spotted a community college in Kentucky. He excelled in Mechanics, getting 95% or more. Why not? His grandfather, my father, was a renowned mechanic in the district. In no time, he had mastered the course. Computers and Computer Networking were becoming the fields to be in, and so he enrolled into that Associate Degree Programme. One day, I was looking at his transcript. There was so much time spent on subjects such as English, Literature, History, and the Customs of the Mountain people of Appalachia. My son soon completed the Associate Degree and enrolled for a full Bachelors. When he graduated, we were very happy. To our surprise, he was made commencement (graduation) speaker. Where did he get the English and the confidence from? I now know that American universities make sure that the graduate is 'whole'. My secondary school studies were at the local school run by Canadian, American, and British missionaries. We studied Maths, Science, Latin, and English and English Literature. I liked Latin and Literature a lot and can still recite some of the poems we learned. My English teacher even thought that I should pursue English before Science.

Now back to America. My second visit to the US was as Visiting Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (an Ivy League University) *Wisconsin Electric Machines & Power Electronics Consortium* (WEMPEC) in 1996/1997. My host Professor, Thomas Lipo, is an illustrious researcher and a very affable man. He is a world authority of the electrical machines and their control. Shortly after my courtesy call, Prof. Lipo issued instructions to have me taken care of. I was given an office and a Visitor Programme. I have made at least four academic visits to the US and have learned that Americans make sure that you become as busy as they are; you always get a Programme. WEMPEC is an innovation and research hub that creates technology for efficient power electronic control electric motors. During the time I was there,

corporates like GE, ABB, HITACHI were vying for know-how to give them a leading edge. On one of the days, I was scheduled to meet Professor Robert (Bob) Lorenz, co-director of WEMPEC. I was directed to the department of Mechanical Engineering. 'I am Professor of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering here,' he said. WEMPEC is an innovation hub which registers scores of patents per year. Bob Lorenz, now late, was one of the most prolific inventors. 'Right now, I am working on a system to control induction motors without sensors,' he told me. 'My invention is based on examining the patterns and signatures which result from their operating currents. I am Professor of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, but in all my inventions, I start from Mathematics and Physics.' This conversation with this illustrious Professor reminded me to go back to the past, even to my own past as a student and young engineer. My visit to the University of Wisconsin-Madison ended in good spirits, almost literally. I was invited to join the full complement of WEMPEC researchers at the university pub. This was also an experience. Draft beer was placed in a very big jug, from which everybody gulped. The jug was passed around and replenished along the way. So, these Americans were Africans too!

The Bad Replacing the Good and the Dangers of Overspecialisation

The Bachelor of Engineering (BEng.) curriculum we followed at Fourah Bay College, the first University in Africa, South of the Sahara, was based on that of the University of London. The topics included Drawing, Physics and Mathematics (taught by two Catholic Priests and one Egyptian Professor), Thermodynamics, Strength of Materials, Fluid Mechanics, and Electrical Networks. Electronics and Communications, which were my clear favourites, were towards the end of the curriculum. First year students were accommodated in former military barracks and on the first night you learned what it was like to be dined upon by mosquitoes. There was therefore a very compelling reason to pass the first year. Multi-disciplinary programmes such as these, however, pay off. At RIIC in Kanye they made me in charge of the Power House, as well wood and metal workshops. That in addition to my substantive title of Research and Development Engineer.

In this article, I am making the proposition that we must now seriously embrace STEAM. STEAM reminds me of the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), the last place in the world to have steam locomotives in commercial service. The Rhodesia Railways (RR) preceded it. Before Botswana Railways (BR), the RR ran the train from Bulawayo, through Mahalapye, to Mahikeng. I was interviewed for a position in the NRZ in Newcastle, England, by Merz & McLellan, engineers for the Kariba Hydro Power Project. When asked which branch of railways I preferred, I said 'Signals', because it was the most electronics and communications intensive branch. Bluntly, I was told there was no position there. I passed the interview easily and started off at the Railway Training Centre. We were called Trainee Officers. The Railways of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe have had many notable employees: Joshua Nkomo, late Vice President of Zimbabwe; Sir Roy Welensky, last Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland; and Sir Frank Edward Hough, former Chief Mechanical Engineer. The designation 'Officer', I later learned, arose from the tendency for the organisation to employ military General Managers, especially during times of crisis. This practice has continued to this day. Col. Henry Everard, OBE, was one of these General Managers. I got the sense that Sir Everard had some followers in the Training Centre. The Railways had devised a two-year training program for us and the first part of the training involved metal working and machining. We were placed under Mr Field. After safety training, we got to our first task, which was to file a brass cube into a perfect sphere. Our first thought was to resist. We were 'Officers'. We complained to the Training Centre Manager, saying that we were being abused, since we were Electrical Engineers. He said he would

"'My invention is based on examining the patterns and signatures which result from their operating currents. I am Professor of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, but in all my inventions, I start from Mathematics and Physics.' This conversation with this illustrious Professor reminded me to go back to the past, even to my own past as a student and young engineer."

investigate. Soon enough, we realised what he meant by *investigate*. Mr Field told us that after filing the cube into a sphere, we should file the resulting sphere back into a cube. It was not easy to satisfy Mr Field. After you thought you were done, he would come to measure the sphere in every direction with a micro millimetre calliper. Of course, it was not easy to satisfy Mr Field, also a former military man. He was the only machinist in the country hired by the National Parks to make precision darts for immobilising elephants. You can imagine what would happen to the shooter if the dart failed to immobilise the elephant. What else did Mr Field teach us? He taught us that after working at a bench, you must clean up. Further, trainees must clean up the whole workshop. Officers, clean up! Today's students don't know that they should clean up their area of work. When all initiation at the Training Centre was complete, we progressed within the organisation to become Chief Engineers. In my position, the Training Centre and several other departments fell under me. We still applied the same rigor and strictness that Mr Field had taught us. I try and do this to this day (however, I admit that I have become softer with age).

What Are We Saying?

Super achievers like Da Vinci and Edison operated before we became formerly organised. During this process of becoming 'organised', the more creative parts of our brain were narrowed. In designing new curricula, let us remember that genius is the sum and embodiment of the thinking about everything around us. You would think the engineer-geniuses that preceded us were thinking outside the box; actually, I believe, they were thinking without boxes. Today, we talk about Industry 4.0; others are already talking about Industry 5.0. No, let's think Industry X.0.

A Critical Review of the Roles and Functions of Traditional Leaders

By Gladys Nkareng Klaas-Makolomakwe and Tanusha Raniga | Opinion

Abstract

The epitome of pre-colonial African history and culture is embedded within the institution of traditional leadership. Yet, this institution is still mired by much controversy and the cloud of being seen as not fitting the principles of democracy, while needing to remain relevant to its subjects. Having survived both the colonial and apartheid eras in South Africa, it still faces legislative control in the post-1994 era. The discourses presented in this paper advance the contested views regarding the legislative control by the state over the institution of traditional leadership. Within rural areas, the institution is perceived by local citizens as independent and a valuable institution, upholding gender justice and cultural rights. Providing focused attention on the abuse of women, this paper offers insights from empirical evidence in KwaZulu-Natal on the prominent role played by senior women traditional leaders in addressing women abuse in rural communities.

Introduction

The outright rejectionists argue for the total irrelevance of the institution of traditional leadership and validate the uncivilised and barbaric nature lens through which it was branded by colonialists (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014). In the same breath, the predisposed colonised detractors assume a position of labelling it backwards (Moodley, 2012) and unable to move with the times. However, the institution of traditional leadership has since pre-colonial times acted as a beacon of hope and serves as an exemplar of upholding African 'history, culture, laws, values, religion, and communitarian governance espoused during pre-colonial sovereignty' (Ray, 2003: 5). The institution remains relevant for people living in rural areas of South Africa as it maintains Afrocentric traditional and cultural interests (George and Binza, 2011; Tshitangoni and Francis, 2016; Matshabaphala, 2017). Traditional leaders are valued for encouraging democratic styles of leadership, facilitating conflict resolution, and being 'representatives of community identity, unity, continuity, and stability' (Logan, 2013: 355). If these are qualities embraced as a lifestyle, then who is better placed to cast a judgement and thereby take intentional exclusionary steps towards supressing locally resonating management systems.
In the post-1994 era, the branding of tradition and culture practiced by Black Africans has clouded even the judgement of intellectuals who sit and contribute to public policies drafted for congenial adherence to the democratic state. Within the de-colonial agenda, there needs to be concerted efforts by policy makers to critically reflect on the restoration of traditional and cultural practices that in the past successfully maintained law and order within rural communities. Even in contemporary times, the role of traditional leaders continues to resonate as a reliable source that offers critical support to people in rural areas (Mathonsi and Sithole, 2017).

While deemed relevant to people by its nature of business and constitutional grounding, the institution of traditional leadership cannot shy away from the developmental changes that affect South Africa. In the past, 'the ethos of traditional society was enshrined in an oral, legal, religious, and literary tradition through which the community transmitted its customs, values, and norms from generation to generation' (Nobadula, 2013: 39). In contemporary times, the innovative transformation realised by the country demands fast-paced changes that would allow for the prosperous existence of the institution, as opposed to obstructive and ambiguous developments that would keep it stagnant in the past. The authors of this paper reject the pathological view that the institution of traditional leadership is resistant to the ANC-led government changes. Based on insights from an empirical study, the paper presents the argument that senior women traditional leaders (SWTL) play a critical role in addressing the abuse of women within rural communities in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Historical Prominence Given to the Institution of Traditional Leadership

Prior to colonialism, traditional leaders were perceived as a symbol of unity and functioned as religious leaders, guardians of culture, and judges of the people (George and Binza, 2011). These qualities amplified the unifying ability essentially embedded within traditional leadership. During that era, Africans understood traditional leaders to possess massive power and authority and drew gratification from such leadership qualities (Dodo, 2013). The similarities born of leadership were such that even at the dawn of misunderstandings and condemnation, abandonment and parting from the traditional leadership that one belonged to was unlikely (Dodo, 2013). Parting ways in itself would risk leaving behind one's family graves, which were central and symbolic to everyday communal life with the ancestors (Dodo, 2013). Thus, Africans enjoyed a sense of belonging (Akyeampong and Fofack, 2014) and association which influenced most of their actions and behaviour. Thereby, institutions such as marriage were utilised to promote friendly ties and mutual respect (Koyana, 2013). Marriage also promoted peace, tolerance, and interrelations beyond traditional geographic and cultural boundaries, which in turn ensured that governance was not autocratic and therefore did not rest with traditional leaders.

According to Twikirise, prior to being altered, African 'ways of helping and solving problems [...] were largely informal, micro-level operations carried through the family, kinship, and local chiefdoms and based on mutual aid and collective action

facilitated by traditional customs and culture' (2014: 76). In this way, life was inclusive and made easy, but demanded accountability and valuing from everyone. Retrospectively, this means that African communities (men and women alike) relied on each other to solve their problems. Such a lifestyle ensured that community values of 'sharing; mutual aid; caring for others; interdependence-relying on each other for the fulfilment of one's needs; solidarity-unity that is based on shared interest, feelings and aspirations; reciprocal obligation and social harmony are respected' (Lawrings, 2016: 735).

The succession through the male blood-line within the institution of traditional leadership for the inherited positions of senior traditional leaders has been a practice over the years. According to Chauke, 'the institution of traditional leadership was founded and grounded in the patrilineal system, whereby only the firstborn male children were afforded the opportunity to succeed their fathers' (2015: 35). However, this stance has never precluded women from becoming leaders within the institution. Colonial and apartheid definitions, and the subjection of women to an inconsequential status in relation to men through patriarchy, mislead many views (Chauke, 2015). As such, the focus has been misdirected to take attention away from the important roles and responsibilities of men and women within the institution. Sesanti (2016) firmly opposes biased views that African culture marginalises women, instead of highlighting the historical African cultural and traditional practices that shared and maintained power within women's and men's respective roles of power.

Pre-colonial African life honoured women and their power was permeated within communities. According to Weir, women in those times were powerful, and 'their leadership took a variety of forms, sometimes military, but more often economic and religious' (2006: 4). Women's leadership went beyond fulfilling social functions and providing labour and formed an integral part of essential systems. Thus, African traditional leadership was lawful (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014) and women were not excluded (Twikirise, 2014). A study conducted in the Baswelu village of Tanzania indicated that the abuse of women was averted through rituals, taboos, songs, and proverbs which were traditionally believed to have been used to protect women from abuse in pre-colonial times (Kanyamala, 2010). Such findings confirm the various strategies that were used to prevent the abuse of women.

The thinking that democracy must be praised for harmonising male primogeniture with equality in South Africa (Chauke, 2015) stands to be disputed on the grounds of first regaining accurate pre-colonial African lessons on how women were treated within the institution of traditional African communities. It can be argued that succession disputes within the institution of traditional leadership were not necessarily targeting women but have been the order of the day even when rightful heirs were known. As Matshidze (2013) argues, there has never been outright automated succession within the institution of traditional leadership.

This invalidates the claim made by Ncapayi and Tom that 'the inclusion of women in traditional government structures by the democratic government adds democratic value and credibility to the institution of traditional leadership, which for many years remained essentially male-dominated' (2015: 88). There is evidence to corroborate the critical role of women within traditional leadership. The core failure needs to be associated with little consideration given to the strides of women within positions of commanding power and leadership. Research conducted by Dodo notes that 'women have always been part of the traditional leadership though they have been behind the scenes' (2013: 29). Thus, African literature does not downplay the support women have given to men despite men accruing all accolades of wisdom and fierce decision-making abilities (Dodo, 2013).

"The thinking that democracy must be praised for harmonising male primogeniture with equality in South Africa (Chauke, 2015) stands to be disputed on the grounds of first regaining accurate pre-colonial African lessons on how women weare treated within the institution of traditional African communities. It can be argued that succession disputes within the institution of traditional leadership were not necessarily targeting women but have been the order of the day even when rightful heirs were known."

This denotes that women have maintained powerful influence behind the leadership positions occupied by men within traditional communities. Dodo (2013) also noted leadership positions in which women's capabilities surpassed that of men. For instance, Ndlovu (2008) recollected the roles and functions of the Zulu Regents Queen Mkabayi *[sic]* who ruled ebaQulusini and officiated over the annual first fruits ceremony. Queen Mkabayi was celebrated for her capacity to solve problems, her fearless and confrontational fight against corruption, and her direct participation in war within the Zulu Kingdom (Ndlovu, 2008). Similarly, her twin sister Queen Mmama oversaw enTonteleni and commanded respect, where the launching of military campaigns prior to consulting with her was prohibited (Ndlovu, 2008). These are contrary representations of feeble women given the suggestive evidence of decisiveness towards protecting the Zulu Kingdom. Thus, Sesanti (2016) and Kasongo (2010) advocate for total blame on colonialism for seizing the cultural practice of respecting women and replacing it with rendering African women vulnerable. Women were respected even beyond their graves. During the times of King Shaka, punishment was ceased once culprits sought refuge at the graves of Queens Nqumbazi and Mkabayi (Sesanti, 2016). The respect of women has always been an inherent African cultural practice (Segueda, 2015). It is therefore a misleading assumption that the abuse of women is peculiar to African traditional communities.

Despite imposed Western cultural ideologies within the institution of traditional leadership, Africans still rely on their culture and tradition to match life expectations (Kang'ethe, 2014). SWTL in KwaZulu-Natal relied on old African practices when intervening in cases where women had been abused. Despite the modern controversy surrounding virginity testing and boys' circumcision, respect for women, virginity testing for girls, and the circumcision of boys were strategies applied to ensure that order and peace were maintained. SWTL stressed that respect has been an important cultural practice accorded to women within African communities. Respected not only for their roles but also as individual human beings, the scourge of women abuse was believed to have been fuelled by the loss of such an important trait.

Early interventions through virginity testing of girl children and circumcision of boy children were suggested to play a critical role in detecting abuse in girls and diverting perpetration of women abuse by boys. Virginity testing assisted in detecting unreported sexual abuse. SWTL had the power to intervene and prioritise girl-child wellbeing by reporting abuse matters, particularly in situations where it was difficult for the mothers of victims to report. With regard to male circumcision, SWTL would encourage older men to engage with young boys and discourage the abuse of women. Older men were viewed as important anchors and role players in the socialisation of young boys.

Men and women's forums were also viewed as powerful platforms for use in early intervention. As a shared responsibility to address the abuse of women, SWTL saw it fit that in their areas, men talk as men and women talk as women on this issue, prior to the occurrence of incidents of abuse.

Disruptions over the Institution of Traditional Leadership

South Africa experienced the harshest colonial and apartheid regimes that subjected African people to suffering as their traditional and cultural ways of life came under siege and had to adapt to foreign control and alteration. A key strategic point of disruption in order to get to the people within traditional communities was the institution of traditional leadership, which according to Tshitangoni and Francis (2016) had been entrusted with leadership since pre-colonial times. The distortions exerted onto the institution were conceptualised by the colonial regime, which passed the baton to the apartheid regime, which then intensified the targeting of traditional administrative and governance structures (Ehrenreich-Risner, 2013). Power and privilege were not the only infiltrations of both colonialism and apartheid over the institution of traditional leadership, but leadership reform against local traditional community expectations formed an integral part of intentional divisions created between leaders and local communities.

Burns (2002) considers that Africa had no peace during the pre-colonial era and that its liberation depended on its submission to colonialism. This assertion ignores the dynamics of co-existence and assumes irresponsibility. Colonialists solidified their ideology of portraying Africa as a violent and

ungovernable continent. Other contributions, such as that of Stauffacher (2013), postulate Africa as having had a long history of autocratic leadership. Such perceptions, according to Ray (2003), fuel Western hegemonic relations with Africa and suggest a mockery of the roles and functions of the institution of traditional leadership as a system of governance.

It was during colonialism that land and property, and subsequently culture and dignity, were taken away from Africans. Deliberate weakening strategies were introduced to render institutions ineffective when peace institutions were impossible to destroy (Mohamed, 2018). Colonialism taught Africans from a young age to reject the tenets of African knowledge as both barbaric and superstitious (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). As Twikirise (2014) suggests, colonialism is the architect for Africans' identity crisis.

In his novel *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe (1958) expounds a clear transition and abandonment of the gods and ancestors by Africans who marked the beginning of embracing an imposed ideology. As a result, African practices struggle to occupy their initial central position among Africans (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014). This remains a challenge that influenced the loss of many important cultural practices (Kang'ethe, 2014). The roles occupied by traditional leaders, women, and customary law are among the many that were effectively weakened (Sesanti, 2016). While maliciously birthing patriarchy by depicting African males as oppressors of women, colonialists repudiated the humanity of women and rendered insignificant their position within African communities (Mutua, 2016). The result of this move can be seen today, where communities and families are breaking and the grip of families over conflict resolution is disappearing. Due to 'a poisonous mix of culture, colonial-era laws, and religious practices,' African women and girls are atrociously subjected to 'domestic violence and exclusions from land and property ownership' (Dodo, 2013: 39). Colonialism not only introduced moral decay, but also weakened customs, rituals, tradition and culture, thereby causing irreparable damage to African life.

Taking over from colonialism, apartheid was a segregation regime that advanced legislative measures to ensure that any African traditional forms of leadership and governance were suppressed (Houston and Mbele, 2011). Racialised legislation was introduced to further dismantle African traditional leadership as a core African structure, using the institution as its implementation agent (Ehrenreich-Risner, 2013). Apartheid's advancement of a colonial agenda (Williams, 2010) dismissed and ousted rebellious traditional leaders (Houston and Mbele, 2011). As a result, apartheid gave birth to the dark cloud of disputes that continues to engulf the institution of traditional leadership (Ehrenreich-Risner, 2013) where royal families now demand for rightful heirs to be recognised. The circumstantial irony is that liberty has been created to enable dragging the institution into common law court battles as attempts are made to restore and redress legitimacy issues. Traditional leadership is rendered ineffective to manage its affairs. Not only do such court battles disparage the position of the institution within traditional communities, but they also create lasting divisions within royal families.

Sizani (2017) writes on the continued control of apartheid legislation over the functioning of traditional courts, imposing limited criminal jurisdiction and function under the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. By implication of Section 39(2) of the Constitution of South Africa, traditional courts, tribunals, or forums can develop customary law in traditional communities (Moodley, 2012). However, institutions within traditional leadership are non-judicial bodies and have no jurisdiction to develop customary law (Moodley, 2012). Although Moodley (2012) pins the probability of the traditional court qualifying as a judicial body to develop customary law, traditional courts do not preside over landmark cases such as that of Shilubana vs Mnwamitwa (SA 66 (CC), 2008). The guilty verdict of the case of King Buyelekhaya Dalindyebo of the AbaThembu in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa was also bent from a common law court and never tried on the merits of any traditional body. Again, the institution of traditional leadership was deprived of the possibility of first constituting an *AmaXhosa* traditional court relevant to his clan stature or comprising the Nguni tribe at large. It is clear that when tradition and common law are at crossroads, common law takes precedence. The power exercised by traditional leaders is therefore illegitimate because it originates from the state, rather than from traditional communities (Williams, 2010).

In contemporary African government, influence is

derived from Eurocentric ideology in exerting some degree of external control on traditional leadership (Du Plessis and Scheepers, 1999; Moodley, 2012; Williams, 2010; Dodo, 2013; Sizani, 2017). Modern African states, as stated by Igboin (2016), install traditional leaders and various new expectations that affect the nature and rule of the institution are imposed (Williams, 2010). At varying degrees, several African countries have adopted Eurocentric control of the institution of traditional leadership. For example, the confirmation and endorsement of traditional leaders in Zimbabwe is a function entrusted to the state (Dodo, 2013). The Kenyan government treats traditional leaders in a manner similar to civil servants, through appointments and compensation, while the state in Botswana has rendered traditional leaders powerless (Dodo, 2013).

A rod cannot be spared for the current democratic South Africa which commenced in 1994 following the first democratically-held elections. According to Ray and Reddy (2003), the democratic era also bears contributory traits towards eroding important aspects and disregarding traditional leadership. Failure has in particular been identified around the inability to fully embrace and restore the lost functions and strengths of traditional leadership that would enable a meaningful contribution to development in rural areas. As pointed out by Bikam and Chakwizira (2014), democracy is hailed for recognising and giving constitutional effect to the institution through Chapter 12 of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996 as amended) but it has equally failed to practically restore the responsibilities of traditional leaders. The current roles and functions of traditional leaders are legislated through the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (Act 41 of 2003) (George and Binza, 2011). However, the state has the questionable objective of transforming the institution as outlined by the Department of Traditional Affairs (2011).

“While this objective is pitched at a level of enhancing cooperation between the state and the institution of traditional leadership, it contains a subtle management implication by the state. Thus, control measures that were put in place during colonialism and apartheid are still being legislatively advanced.”

While this objective is pitched at a level of enhancing cooperation between the state and the institution of traditional leadership, it contains a subtle management implication by the state. Thus, control measures that were put in place during colonialism and apartheid are still being legislatively advanced. For instance, while the recognition of the institution of traditional leadership is a Constitutional mandate implying its autonomy, the repeal and amendment of positions and the regulation of customary law is done by statute (Du Plessis and Scheepers, 1999). Through the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (Act 41 of 2003), the state also tampers with the roles of traditional leaders (Williams, 2010). Traditional leaders are expected to perform roles where they ‘provide order and security, solve disputes and allocate land in the community’ (Williams, 2010: 7). However, unlike in the past practices, traditional leaders are expected to issue permission to occupy certificates for land allocations and are limited in the types of court cases they preside over (Williams, 2010). In the past, court decisions taken by traditional leaders were announced verbally and were based on the principles of trust and mutual respect. Apartheid laws introduced the handing over of certificates to traditional leaders as proof of their positions (Ehrenreich-Risner, 2013), and this performance is currently legislated in South Africa as per the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (Act 41 of 2003). Thus, the post-1994 democratic government continues to control and endorse the recognition and appointment of traditional leaders and traditional councils (Sizani, 2017) who are regarded as illegitimate until their recognition and appointment is sanctioned by the state. To seal the deal, the state offers salary remunerations for traditional leaders.

Conclusion

The disruptions injected on the institution of traditional leadership during the colonial and apartheid regimes still stand ground during democracy in South Africa,

given the intentional crises mode these were set at. Interrogation of the current legislative prescripts suggests continual control maintained by the state over the institution of traditional leadership. At the rate at which Africans are still adhering to their tradition and culture, agenda setting to fight the abuse of women needs to aim at treating the institution of traditional leadership as an equal contributor to finding solutions. Efforts that tap into old traditional African cultural practices served as important contributors applied by SWTL when addressing the abuse of women. Thus, policy interventions for this heinous crime need to incorporate culture and tradition in order to resonate and become useful for fighting the scourge within traditional rural communities.

References

Achebe, C. (1958). *Things Fall Apart*. London: Penguin Books

Akyeampong, E. and Fofack, H. (2014). The Contribution of African Women to Economic Growth and Development in the Pre-Colonial and Colonial Periods: Historical Perspectives and Policy Implications. *Economic History of Developing Regions*, 29(1): 42–73

Bikam, P. and Chakwizira, J. (2014). Involvement of Traditional Leadership in Land Use Planning and Development Projects in South Africa: Lessons for Local Government Planners. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4(13): 142–152

Burns, S. (2002). The Samaritan Strategy. In: T. Schirrmacher, and K. McCall, eds. *A Life of Transformation from Politician to Good Samaritan*. Hamburg: BoD, 17–29

Chauke, M. T. (2015). The Role of Women in Traditional Leadership with Special Reference to the Valoyi Tribe. *Studies of Tribes and Tribals*, 13(1): 34–39. DOI: 10.1080/0972639X.2015.11886709

Department of Traditional Affairs (2011). Capacity Building Strategy for the Institution of Traditional Leadership (Draft). Republic of South Africa

Dodo, O. (2013). Traditional Leadership Systems and Gender Recognition: Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Gender and Women's Studies*, 1(1): 29–44

Du Plessis, W., and Scheepers, T. (1999). House of Traditional Leaders: Role, Problems and Future. Paper delivered at the Colloquium: Constitution and the Law, 03 November. Potchefstroom

Ehrenreich-Risner, V. (2013). The Effect of Apartheid's 'Tribal Authorities' on Chieftaincy and the Zulu People: Separate Development in Mtunzini District 1950–1970. *History and African Studies Seminar*. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal

George, K., and Binza, M. S. (2011). The Role of Traditional Leadership in Promoting Governance and Development in Rural South Africa: A Case Study of the Mgwalana Traditional Authority. *Journal of Administration*. 46(2): 947–962

Houston, G. F., and Mbele, T. (2011). *KwaZulu-Natal History of Traditional Leadership Project*. Pretoria: Human Science Research Council

Igboin, B. O. (2016). Traditional Leadership and Corruption in Pre-Colonial Africa. *UP Journals*, 42(3): 142–160

Kang'ethe, S. M. (2014). The Need to Resuscitate the Cultural Rite of Virginity Testing as a Tool to Strengthen the Campaign against HIV/AIDS and Moral Decadence in South African Region. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(8): 484–489

Kanyamala, M. A. (2010). Exploring Sukuma Traditions That Protected Women Against Intimate Partner Violence: A Case Study of Baswelu Village in Mwanza Region, Tanzania. (Unpublished MA Dissertation). Dublin: Kimmage Development Studies Centre

Kasongo, A. (2010). Impact of Globalisation on Traditional African Religion and Cultural Conflict. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*, 2(1): 309–322

Koyana, D. S. (2013). The Indigenous Constitutional System in a Changing South Africa. *Speculum Juris*, (1): 66–101

Lawrings, C. C. (2016). Exploring the Role of Culture in Governance and Leadership within Institutions in Ghana: A Study of the Civil Society. *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research (IJIR),* 2, Issue 10: 734–749

Logan, C. (2013). The Roots of Resilience: Exploring Popular Support for African Traditional Authorities. *African Affairs*, 112(448): 353–376

Mathonsi, N., and Sithole, S. (2017). The Incompatibility of Traditional Leadership and Democratic Experimentation in South Africa. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(5): 35–46

Matshabaphala, M. D. J. (2017). Traditional Leadership and a Simpler Way to Accountability in Local Government. The 2nd Annual International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives. 26–28 July, Tlotlo Hotel, Gaborone, Botswana: 288–293

Matshidze, P. E. (2013). The Role of Makhadzi in Traditional Leadership Among the Venda. (Unpublished PhD Thesis). Durban: University of Zululand

Moodley, I. (2012). The Customary Law of Intestate Succession. (Unpublished PhD Thesis). Pretoria: University of South Africa

Mutua, M. (2016). Africa and the Rule of Law: The Problematic Rebirth of Liberalism in Africa and Why the Rule of Law Must Be Reconsidered to Achieve Sustainable Development. *International Journal on Human Rights* (SUR) 23, 13(23): 159–173

Nobadula, V. (2013). No Glory Without Sacrifice. *The Thinker*, 48: 38–39

Ncapayi, F., and Tom, B. (2015). Democratisation of Rural Local Government: Perspectives from Civil Society on Local Governance in South Africa. *Trust for Community Outreach and Education*, 87–93

Ndlovu, S. (2008). A Reassessment of Women's Power in the Zulu Kingdom. In: B. Carton, J. Laband and J. Sithole, eds., *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*. London: Hurst and Company: 111–121

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2014). Global Coloniality and the Challenges of Creating African Futures. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 36(2): 181–202

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2013). Why Decoloniality in the 21st Century? *The Thinker*, 48: 10–15

Ray, D. I. (2003). Rural Local Governance and Traditional Leadership in Africa and the Afro-Caribbean: Policy and Research Implications from Africa to the Americas and Australasia. In: D. I. Ray and P. S. Reddy, eds., *Grassroots Governance? Chiefs in Africa and the Afro-Caribbean*. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press: 1–30

Ray, D. I., and Reddy, P. S. (2003), (eds.). *Grassroots Governance?*

Chiefs in Africa and the Afro-Caribbean. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press

Republic of South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 108, 1996

Republic of South Africa. Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 41, 2003

Segueda, W. E. (2015). Imported Religions, Colonialism and the Situation of Women in Africa. *Schriftenreihe Junges Afrikazentrum*, 3: 1–21

Sesanti, S. (2016). African Philosophy for African Women's Leadership: An Urgent Project for the African Renaissance. *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 9(9): 94–107

Sizani, R. (2017). Are powers and functions of leaders sufficient, in a republican and democratic dispensation, especially in its current character? If not, what needs to be done? Presentation at the Traditional Leaders Indaba, 28 May–02 June. Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

Stauffacher, R. W. (2013). Christian Leadership in a Malawian Context: A Practical Theological Evaluation of African Bible College (PhD Thesis). Stellenbosch University

Tshitangoni, M., and Francis, J. (2016). Pillars of Resilience of Traditional Leadership in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. *Journal of Social Science*, 46(3): 241–250

Twikirise, J. M. (2014). Indigenisation of Social Work in Africa: Debates, Prospects and Challenges. In: H. Spitzer, J. M. Twikirise, and G. G. Wairire, eds., *Professional Social Work in East Africa: Towards Social Development, Poverty Reduction and Gender Equality*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 75–90

Weir, J. (2006). Chiefly Women and Women's Leadership in Pre-Colonial Southern Africa. In: N. Gasa, ed., *Women in South African History*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 3–20

Williams, J. M. (2010). *Chieftaincy, the State, and Democracy: Political Legitimacy in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) In Africa

Challenges and Prospects

By Kennedy Mahlatsi | Opinion

Abstract

The implication of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development is that Africa's structural transformation must be anchored by the principles of sustainable development. It is noted that Agenda 2030 does not provide political economy approach to understanding the genesis and cycles of poverty and inequality. The article further noted that Africa lags most significantly behind in its achievement of the SDGs, with a lower percent of countries achieving target by 2030 than any other region. Only limited progress towards achieving human development related SDGs is likely. However, due to their strong inclusivity focus, the SDGs present a better opportunity to involve more effectively different stakeholders. Achieving 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 calls for the African Union to focus more on implementation and follow up mechanisms, using monitoring frameworks that are robust enough to translate strategies into concrete development outcomes. The article argues that neoliberalism undermines the ability of developing countries in achieving sustainable development because of its emphasis in promoting the interest of the market at the expense of social and environment development. The article proposes the sustainable development model, which integrates economic, environmental and social objectives, to fully replace current growth-led models. To achieve pro-poor growth, countries must develop policies that have the potential of increasing growth and reducing poverty simultaneously. The article concludes that it is impossible to eradicate poverty without radically changing the system of global industrial capitalist production. In addition, Africa must develop holistic and all-encompassing approach with a view to achieving of SDGs while reformulating the short-term and mid-term policies during and the post-COVID period. Achieving the objective of eradicating extreme poverty and leaving no one behind by 2030 will be difficult if corruption and other development challenges are not seriously tackled.

Introduction

In this article, an evaluation is made of the experiences gained from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a view to building upon their successes and learning from their failures. The MDGs were mainly for developing countries and were poverty-centric development goals, while the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emerged as universally applicable for all countries and accounted for all aspects of development – social, economic, and environmental. A critical review reveals that the prescription of liberal policies by developed nations as the most appropriate path of development for Africa has in most cases clashed with the developmental objectives and vision of the continent. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Africa's Agenda 2063 include several goals, targets and indicators that capture the three dimensions of sustainable development into national planning frameworks.

This article illustrates that there were instances where African countries reported high levels of growth and GDP per capita, and yet demonstrated an inability to tackle problems such as women empowerment and quality education. Growth in GDP has limited impact on the economic and social development of African countries. Poverty has increased in a number of countries, despite growth in the long run. Neoliberalism undermines the ability of developing countries to achieve sustainable development because of its emphasis on promoting the interest of the market at the expense of social and environmental development. It is impossible to achieve the SDGs without fixing or radically changing the system of global industrial capitalist mode of production.

The African continent is still battling with developmental issues such as poor governance, corruption, unemployment, mismanagement of funds, insurgencies, terrorism, political upheavals, insecurity, population influx, and a depleting economy. These problems faced by African countries are not specifically addressed in the SDGs, and until these issues are dealt with within an African context, achieving these developmental goals in Africa will remain a challenge. Covid-19 will create additional pressure and add to the existing financing gap as countries face a financial crunch in the post-Covid-19 period. The article supports a developmental model that is aimed at benefiting the poor and the environment.

What Are Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

The SDGs were first formally discussed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 (Rio+20). The Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda began in January 2015 and ended in August 2015. Following the negotiations, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015 in New York. The 17 SDGs include 169 targets to meet these goals and 304 proposed indicators to show compliance (Sparks, 2016: 49). According to Armah and Baek (2015: 2), the implication of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is that Africa's structural transformation must be anchored by the principles of sustainable development. All 193 countries have unanimously committed to adhere to and implement the SDGs throughout their 15-year lifespan, up to 2030.

To what extent the SDGs will be able to catalyse meaningful change depends on a range of factors at the national and local levels, including leadership, participation, shifts in mindsets, and abilities to create synergies through cross-sectorial planning. It also depends on the abilities of different stakeholders to recognise that achieving their goals will increasingly depend on their willingness to cooperate with each other (Shivakoti et al., 2015: 11). According to Moyer and Hedden (2020: 2), Africa lags most significantly behind in its achievement of the SDGs, with a lower percentage of countries achieving targets by 2030 than any other region. These authors note that only limited progress towards achieving human development-related SDGs is likely.

However, the Agenda's approach has been criticised for a lack of analysis, since it does not look into the underlying causes of the state of the world. There is no political economy approach to understanding the genesis and cycles of poverty and inequities. The Agenda is oblivious to power relations, both in the sense of the monopolistic economic predominance

of large firms and large nations, and in the societal sense of the power hierarchy between the poor and the rich, women and men, children and adults, dominant communities and those who are politically, socially, culturally, and economically excluded. It is not clear from the 2030 Agenda how poverty is to be eradicated, how inequities are to be redressed, or how sustainability is to be achieved. For example, there are recommendations for social protection measures, but there are no policies that would encourage decent work or income redistribution (Koehler, 2016: 152).

THE 17 SDGS SET OUT UNTIL 2030 ARE:

SDG 1	Eradicate poverty in all its forms everywhere.
SDG 2	Eradicate hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
SDG 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all.
SDG 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
SDG 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
SDG 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
SDG 7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
SDG 8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
SDG 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
SDG 10	Reduce inequalities within and among countries.
SDG 11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
SDG 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
SDG 13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
SDG 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
SDG 15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss
SDG 16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions
SDG 17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

Lessons Learnt from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

There are a number of issues distinguishing SDGs from MDGs. MDGs helped elevate the status of water and sanitation to a basic human right, while the SDGs offer scope for a more practical understanding of its application. SDGs aimed at combating poverty, for the period of 2000–2015. While MDGs were mainly for developing countries and were poverty-centric development goals, the SDGs emerged as universally applicable for all countries and accounted for all aspects or pillars of development – social, economic, and environmental. Although the SDGs are often considered successors of the MDGs, they differ fundamentally in the sense that they are considerably more robust, interlinked, and based on a framework of three pillars of sustainability. This incorporates ending poverty as a core objective, but the 17 goals and 169 targets set out a broader agenda that includes environmental, social, and economic sustainability (Mukarram, 2020: 3; Fukuda-Parr, 2016: 3). The SDGs are meant to achieve some of the objectives that the MDGs failed to address (Chitonge et al., 2020: 216; Munang and Andrews, 2014: 3).

The prescription of liberal policies by developed nations as the right and most appropriate path of development for Africa has in most cases clashed with the developmental objectives and vision of the continent. The design of the targets and indicators of the MDGs can be deemed as being unfair to developing countries, particularly African countries, because the basis of their measurement made it difficult for these countries to progress. Another lesson from the MDGs is that a comparison of countries' performances is made possible by the existence of a harmonised metric. MDGs were denounced on the ground that they were unfair to Sub-Saharan African countries precisely because ranking countries became an immediate by-product of the MDG targets matrix (Chantel et al., 2017: 5; (Durokifa and Ijeoma, 2018: 360). Fukuda-Parr (2016: 2) emphasises that the MDGs were a North–South aid agenda. The goals and targets – such as universal primary education – were mostly relevant for developing countries only.

The simplicity of the targets that set absolute goals served as a strong conduit for state action and guided international funding organisations. The MDGs created a simple narrative, triggering self-fulfilling prophecies: they imagined a future of 'zero hunger', 'half the number of people in extreme poverty', and in doing so shifted expectations and spread the idea that achieving the goals was not only necessary, but – more importantly – possible (Chantel et al., 2017: 5). Fukuda-Parr (2016: 6) observes that the SDGs also include 'means of implementation' as a goal of its own (Goal 17) and as targets for each goal, recognising the need to change policies and institutions if transformative change is to take place. Inequality has a goal of its own (Goal 10), and emphasis is placed on the inclusion of marginalised social groups through the other goals, which include goals for governance (Goal 16). The SDGs also incorporate economic dimensions, on which the MDGs were silent; they include a goal for growth that is sustainable and inclusive (Goal 8). The adoption of a stand-alone goal on inequality (Goal 10) that addresses disparities within and between countries is a significant departure from the MDGs; they explicitly excluded this politically sensitive issue.

Having the benefit of progress made by the MDGs, albeit unsatisfactorily in Africa, the greater emphasis on economic inclusivity under the SDGs is easier to prioritise in policy formulation and to be put into effective operation in African economies than it was over a decade ago. Due to their strong inclusivity focus, the SDGs present a better opportunity to more effectively involve different stakeholders such as policy-makers, civil society, donors, politicians, etc. They differ from the MDGs in their wider focus on interpreting sustainability – economic and environmental – which can involve a wider variety of contributors. In the African context, this is exceedingly valuable, but it will require visionary leadership which can build cohesion between, and identify clear outcomes for, potential role-players (Van Niekerk, 2018: 9).

African Union's Agenda 2063 and SDGs

Two contemporary macro development frameworks finalised in 2015 – the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, containing the SDGs, and the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want – are important instruments to guide Africa in pursuing its developmental agenda. The two instruments complement each other on socio-economic and environmental issues. While the 2030 Agenda is global in scope and has a 15-year

timeframe, Agenda 2063 is Africa-specific and has a time horizon of 50 years. African influence in the process of negotiating the SDGs was supported by the AU coordinating the development and promotion of the Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The CAP, mandated in July 2012, included the creation of a High-Level Committee (HLC) to lead the regional process (Mickler and Wachira, 2020: 52). Agenda 2030, more than Agenda 2063, problematises how the social, environmental, and economic aspects of development go together, acknowledging usually ignored fissures in the discourse of growth (Halvorsen and Higgins, 2020: 15).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as Africa's Agenda 2063, include several goals, targets, and indicators that capture the three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social, and environmental – into national planning frameworks. Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs, as well as the AU's Agenda 2063, were drafted in a collaborative manner, from the ground up, not from the top down (Sparks, 2016: 48; Armah and Baek, 2015: 2). However, Durokifa and Ijeoma (2018: 363) disagree and stress that the premise underlying development is unchanged. They argue that it is still a top-down approach, just like the MDGs, although there were participatory platforms like regional consultations and websites through which people/civil societies could send in their opinions. According to DeGhetto et al (2016: 96), the Agenda 2063 vision is comprehensive, covering issues of identity, self-determination, political independence, and socio-economic development in the context of globalization.

Odusola (2017: 5) writes that achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 calls for the African Union to focus more on implementation and follow-up mechanisms, using monitoring frameworks that are robust enough to translate strategies into concrete development outcomes. Based on Africa's efforts in economic integration, Sparks (2016: 54) argues that Africa's regional economic integration efforts, and particularly the Regional Economic Communities and the Continental Free Trade Agreement, generally are in harmony with the SDGs and Agenda 2063. DeGhetto et al (2016: 94) posit that Agenda 2063 aims to position Africa for growth over the next 50 years, incorporating lessons and experiences from the past. The ultimate goal is to secure three ideals – unity, prosperity, and peace – for all its citizens. They emphasise that critical success factors for Agenda 2063 include the participation of multiple stakeholder groups at all stages, a results-based approach with measurable objectives, and inculcating the right set of African values in line with the African Renaissance, which suggests the transformation of attitudes, values, and mindsets. They opine (ibid., 101) that Africa and the AU member states need to leverage their existing resources and exploit their current cost advantages. The region has valuable resources at its disposal; leaders in the public and private sector need to focus on strengthening how these resources are organized and utilized within and across national borders.

Neoliberal Growth Path Paradigm: A Critical Analysis

The theory of the relationship between sustainable development and transformation can be gleaned from the work of Simon Kuznets who hypothesized that the relationship between inequality and transformation is U-shaped, with inequality increasing in the early stages of development as capital holders become relatively more wealthy due to new opportunities to invest, and subsequently decreasing as the benefits of transformation trickle down to the population, allowing an average level of income to be achieved through notably better wages. The Kuznets theory is in line with the 'grow first and redistribute later' school of thought and is at odds with the current thinking on sustainable development, which requires countries to integrate or decouple greenhouse gas emissions from their growth process even in the initial stages of development. In line with the sustainable development paradigm, there is a growing body of research that suggests that relative to other continents, the potential for economic greening is higher in Africa (Armah and Baek, 2015: 3).

Halvorsen and Higgins (2020: 16) observe that combating climate change and environmental destruction caused by unsustainable patterns of consumption and production will require multiple innovations at the conceptual, policy, institutional, social, and technological levels. The sustainable development model, which integrates economic, environmental, and social objectives, needs to fully replace current growth-led models where the

social and ecological dimensions are mere add-ons. Ogujuiba and Jumare (2012: 54) insist that African countries report high levels of growth and GDP per capita and yet possess the inability to tackle problems such as women empowerment and quality education. Growth in GDP, which is supposed to be the centrepiece of development, has limited impact on the economic and social development of African countries. They conclude (ibid., 59) that sustained poverty reduction cannot be guaranteed by increase in economic growth, thus raising concerns about the possibility of the poor benefiting from long run growth. In order to achieve pro-poor growth, countries must develop policies that have the potential of increasing growth and reducing poverty simultaneously.

Neoliberalism undermines the ability of developing countries to achieve sustainable development, because of its emphasis on promoting the interest of the market, at the expense of social and environmental development. A pro-poor growth approach should be adopted. It will be essential for national governments to divert from the conventional approach of achieving development where the focus is on economic growth indicators such as low inflation, fiscal sustainability, and the balance of payments towards a paradigm where sustainable development does not lead to unemployment, removal, or cuts of social support schemes, deterioration of environment and natural resources – and one that strongly protects the interests of the poor. The specific interventions to achieve these objectives should be designed with adequate consideration to national circumstances. The principal objective of neoliberal policy has been to enhance economic growth and productivity based on the principles of market competition. This belief often tends to overemphasise economic values above social justice goals and environmental concerns. Growth in GDP per capita is largely used as the overriding determinant of poverty reduction and general progress of development (Kumi et al., 2013).

“Many of the approaches and interventions underpinning neoliberalism tend to focus on increasing the rate of growth, with the hope of addressing patterns and the distribution of benefits later. But, the trickle-down logic has failed largely to address the underlying needs of the poor. It only enriches a few and contributes largely to the deterioration of the natural environment. Kopnina (2015: 5) cogently observed that poverty is the symptom of economic growth imperative and high population growth.”

Inclusive economics is a way of empowerment for the whole of humanity to participate in a robust and all-inclusive economic process. Pro-poor growth, as part of inclusive growth, focuses on the effect of growth on poor people's incomes in the context of either relative poverty or absolute poverty. Another component of inclusive growth is broad-based growth. It involves more disadvantaged people in the growth process through employment. Shared growth emphasises that the fruits of growth be shared in a way that eliminates poverty and reduces income inequality. Therefore, the growth process must be expressly non-discriminatory and disadvantage-reducing (Van Nierkerk, 2018: 4).

One of the reasons why neoliberal policies have failed in addressing sustainable development ideals relates to the excessive focus on economic growth as the overriding focus for achieving sustainable development and in particular poverty reduction. Many of the approaches and interventions underpinning neoliberalism tend to focus on increasing the rate of growth, with the hope of addressing patterns and the distribution of benefits later. But, the trickle-down logic has failed largely to address the underlying needs of the poor. It only enriches a few and contributes largely to the deterioration of the natural environment. Kopnina (2015: 5) cogently observed that poverty is the symptom of economic growth imperative and high population growth. Having all people lifted out of poverty without fixing or radically changing the system of global industrial capitalist production will mean more consumption and a greater crisis of resources.

Karl Marx's entire intellectual corpus ought to be interpreted as a critique of the political economy of unsustainable development and its human and natural consequences. The Marxist perspective is that the problem threatening the global environment is the accumulation of capital under the present phase of monopoly-finance capital, and not just economic growth in the abstract. That is, issues of the qualitative nature of development as well as

quantitative development are involved. This raises the question of the ecological value form associated with capitalism in its monopoly-finance phase, geared to the promotion of economic and ecological waste as a stimulus to accumulation. In reality, capitalism can be defined as *a* system of unsustainable development (Foster, 2010; Foster, 2015). The appropriation of surplus value by the owners of capital deliberately leads to the pauperisation of the working class. Capitalism with its requirement to systematically extract natural resources inherently leads to planetary destruction (Koehler, 2016: 152).

Challenges in Implementing the SDGs in Africa

The implementation of both Agenda 2063 and SDG 16 face significant challenges considering the disparity between norm setting and norm implementation by African governments (Mickler and Wachira, 2020: 55). Odusola (2017: 10) maintains that corruption is very high and endemic in Africa and that it has been linked to dramatic economic haemorrhages. He warns that achieving the objective of eradicating extreme poverty and leaving no one behind by 2030 will be difficult if corruption is not seriously tackled. Chitonge et al. (2020: 212) identified disparities between countries—for example, although South Africa and Uganda achieved their MDGs for water in 2010, Zambia failed to achieve this goal by 2015. Other challenges include inadequate infrastructure and funding levels, growing populations (especially in informal settlements where people often live under sub-human conditions), and the effects of climate change which impinge on freshwater availability. They stress that the lack of commitment from politicians and policymakers has contributed to the failure to realise MDGs. Lack of commitment in the context of the SDGs is reflected in the low budgetary allocation given to water services, for instance.

Durolifa and Ijeoma (2018: 363) observe that the African continent is still battling with developmental issues such as poor governance, corruption, unemployment, mismanagement of funds, insurgencies, terrorism, political upheavals, insecurity, population influx, and a depleting economy. These problems faced by African countries are not specifically addressed in the SDGs, and until these issues are dealt with within an African context, achieving these developmental goals in Africa will remain a challenge.

The Impact of Covid-19 on the SDGs

Mukarram (2020: 2) argues that the pandemic is very much poised to impact the SDGs in various degrees in different parts of the world, which in turn will have bigger ramifications on the economy, society, and the environment. He calls for a holistic and all-encompassing approach, with an eye to the overall achievement of SDGs, while reformulating the short-term and mid-term policies during and post-Covid-19. He observes that financing always remains a prime concern for the implementation of any development agenda, and that the SDGs are no exception. An estimate says that even before the current global pandemic started, the financing gap to achieve the SDGs by 2030 was USD 2.5 trillion per year. Undoubtedly, Covid-19 will create additional pressure and add to existing financing gaps as countries face a financial crunch in the post-Covid-19 period. Again, priority sectors like health and agriculture would need increased allocation, which would mean that other sectors which are equally important would lag behind.

Van Zanten and Van Tulder (2020) postulate that Covid-19 increases the complexity of sustainable development governance, as policymakers have to create policies that simultaneously tackle interrelated health, economic, environmental, and social crises. Timely and intelligent policies are needed to steer through these crises and towards long-term sustainability and resilience. Overcoming this hurdle requires governments to integrate long-term policy objectives – like the SDGs – with the short-term interventions required to fight Covid-19 and its socio-economic consequences. Covid-19 led to many governments adopting more active and interventionist roles than they could have ever imagined (on the basis of neoliberal policies, for instance).

Conclusion

This article has contextualised the factors that are impacting on African countries' ability to achieve the SDGs. Africa lags most significantly behind in its achievement of the SDGs, with a lower percentage of countries achieving target by 2030 than any other region. Although Africa may not achieve the SDGs in the next nine years, the Agenda 2030 provides an

impetus and springboard for Africa to be on the right track for the progressive realisation of Agenda 2063. It is clear that political commitment in Africa is a crucial factor to achieve the SDGs.

Neoliberalism has proven that it undermines the ability of developing countries to achieve sustainable development because of its emphasis on promoting the interest of the market at the expense of social and environmental development. A more developmental non-capitalist path is envisaged to address the developmental agenda in Africa. A growth model should be aimed at benefiting the poor and the environment. In order to achieve pro-poor growth, countries must develop policies that have the potential of increasing growth and reducing poverty simultaneously. The failure of neoliberal policies to address sustainable development ideals relates to the prioritisation of economic growth as the overriding focus for achieving sustainable development and in particular poverty reduction. A policy shift from the crisis-ridden capitalist mode of production is required to tackle socio-economic and environmental problems in Africa.

Covid-19 poses challenges for Africa and the world, but it also brings about opportunities as many governments resorted to more active and interventionist roles in tackling the pandemic than they could have ever imagined. Achieving the objective of eradicating extreme poverty and leaving no one behind by 2030 will be difficult if corruption is not seriously tackled. Covid-19 is creating additional pressure and adding to the existing financing gap as countries face a financial crunch in the post-Covid-19 period. Combating climate change and environmental destruction caused by unsustainable patterns of consumption and production will require multiple innovations at the conceptual, policy, institutional, social, and technological levels.

Governments should integrate long-term policy objectives – like the SDGs – with the short-term interventions required to fight Covid-19 and its socio-economic consequences. The continent is facing a number of challenges which need to be addressed if the SDGs are to be achieved. In line with the sustainable development paradigm, there is a growing body of research that suggests that relative to other continents, the potential for economic greening is higher in Africa. The sustainable development model, which integrates economic, environmental and social objectives, needs to fully replace current growth-led models.

References

Armah, B. and Baek, S.J. (2015). Can the SDGs Provide Structural Transformation in Africa? An Empirical Analysis. *Development*, 58(4): 473–491

Chantel, L., Hough, A. and Voituriez, T. (2017). *Reducing Inequalities within Countries: Assessing the Potential of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Global Policy, University of Durham and John Willey and Sons. Ltd

Chitonge, H., Mokoena, A. and Kongo, M. (2020). Water and Sanitation Inequality in Africa: Challenges for SDG 6. In: Ramatsindela, M. and Mickler, D. (Eds), *Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals*. New York: Springer

DeGhetto, K., Gray, J.R. and Kiggundu, M. (2016). The African Union's Agenda 2063: Aspirations, Challenges, and Opportunities for Management Research. *Africa Journal of Management*, Routledge

Durokifa, A.A. and Ijeoma, E.C. (2018). Neo-Colonialism and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa: A Blend of an Old Wine in a New Bottle. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, Routledge

Fakuda-Parr, S. (2016). From the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: shift in purpose, concept, and politics of global goal setting for development. *Gender and Development*, 24(1): 43–52.

Foster, J.B. (2010). Why Ecological Revolution? *Monthly Review*, 61(8): 1

Foster J.B. (2015). The Great Capitalist Climacteric: Marxism and 'System Change not Climate Change', *Monthly Review*, 67(6): 1

Halvorsen, T. and Higgins, J. (2020). Growth or Solidarity? The Discourse of the SDGs. In: Ramatsindela, M. and Mickler, D. (Eds), *Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals*. New York: Springer

Kopnina, H. (2015). The Victim of Sustainability: A Challenge to Sustainable Development Goals. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology*, 23(2)

Koehler, G. (2016). Assessing the SDGs from the standpoint of eco-social policy: Using the SDGs Subversively. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 32(2)

Kumi, E., Arhin, A.A. and Yeboah, T. (2013). Can Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals Survive Neoliberalism? A Critical Examination of the Sustainable Development-Neoliberalism nexus in Developing Countries? *Environment, Development and Sustainability: A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Theory and Practice of Sustainable Development*, 16(3): 539–554

Mickler, D. and Wachira, G.M. (2020). The AU's African Governance Architecture and SDG 16: Examining Intersections. In: Ramatsindela, M. and Mickler, D. (Eds), *Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals*. New York: Springer

Moyer, J.D. and Hedden, S. (2020). Are We on the Right Path to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals? *World Development*, 127: 104749

Mukarram, M. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), *Strategic Analysis*, Routledge

Munang, R. and Andrews, J. (2014). The Next Steps: Africa's Sustainable Development Goals and their Implications, *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 56(5): 4–11

Odusola, A. (2017). Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa in the context of complex global development cooperation. *8th Annual Ibadan Sustainable Development Summit*. Ibadan, Nigeria, 22–24 August 2017

Ogujiuba, K. and Jumare (2012). Challenges of Economic Growth, Poverty and Development: Why are the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Not Fair to Africa? *Journal of Sustainable Development*, 5(2)

Shivakoti, B.R., Zusman, E., Bengtsson, M., and Alexksiunaite, I. (2015). Placing Water at the Core of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Why an Integrated Perspective is Needed. *Policy Brief No. 3, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies*

Sparks, D.L. (2016). The Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063: Implication for Economic Integration in Africa. *Macrothink Institute*, 8(4)

Van Niekerk, A.J. (2018). Economic Inclusivity: Africa's MDGs and Lessons for SDGs, *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*, 9(314)

Van Zanten, J. and Van Tulder, R. (2020). Beyond Covid-19: Applying 'SDG Logics' for Resilient Transformations, Journal of International Business Policy, 3: 451–464

Book Interview

Post-Apartheid Same-Sex Sexualities

Restless Identities in Literary and Visual Culture

By Andy Carolin | Books

Leila Hall – a PhD student in the Department of English at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and Assistant Editor of The Thinker – talks to Dr. Andy Carolin, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at UJ, about his recently published book, ***Post-Apartheid Same-Sex Sexualities: Restless Identities in Literary and Visual Culture*** *(Routledge, 2021).*

Leila Hall (LH): Congratulations on your book! Before we talk about it, could you introduce yourself and tell us something about the work you do?

Andy Carolin (AC): Sure, thanks Leila. I'm currently a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at UJ. I have a PhD in English Literature and my research focuses on representations of gender, sexuality, race, and history in South African literary and visual texts.

LH: Your preface describes the events that unfolded at the 2012 Jo'burg Pride and how this gave rise to your book project. Could you describe what happened at this pride event and tell us about the questions that this event sparked for you?

AC: Ever since pride marches started in the early 1970s, there's been a growing conversation around what the purpose of pride marches should be. There's this tension around whether they should be about protest or celebration. And what we saw in 2012 was this tension coming to the fore in quite a violent and unsettling way. In 2012, we saw the organisation the 1 in 9 Campaign – a feminist, anti-rape movement – staging a protest as part of the Jo'burg Pride parade and demanding a minute of silence to draw attention to the specific vulnerability of Black lesbian women. Part of the protest was what they called a 'die-in', where they arranged their own seemingly lifeless bodies with life-like mannequins on the ground, in order to disrupt the progression of the parade. It was this that generated threats of violence and intimidation, with many of the white pride organisers shouting aggressively at the Black protestors, saying things such as 'this is our route', 'go and find your own', and the insistence that the protestors 'go back to your *lokshins*' [locations], which of course evokes such an incredibly disturbing racial history of spatial planning.

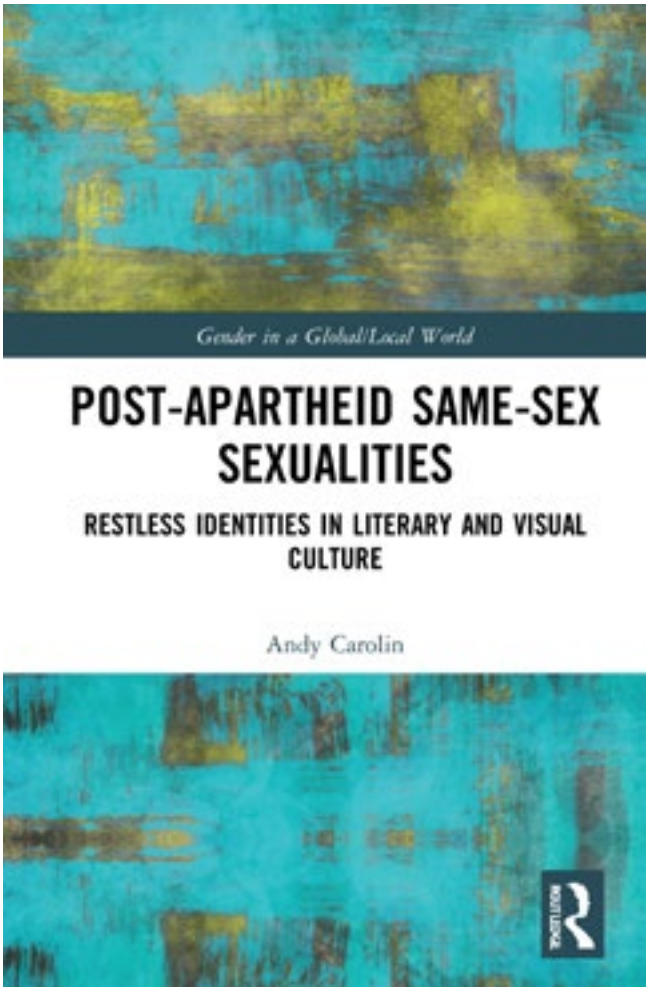
Obviously there was significant commentary in the press for two or three weeks afterwards. Much of the critical response to this event relied on the same, sometimes quite obvious, historical tropes of racism and sexism that shape much of the post-apartheid imaginary. There was almost a sense of 'well, of course it would happen here'. But I had a feeling that there was just something too easy about this analysis – it was too insular and too obvious. So I started to consider what it would mean to think about this particular event as a local instantiation of a transnational sexual politics. This moment in time was not isolated, but was rather the convergence of countless cultural flows that are simultaneously past and present, local and transnational. That's what started coming up for me.

There is a pervasive attitude of being 'post-race' among many white people, an attitude that so many of the party-goers embraced at that Jo'burg Pride in 2012. And I kept thinking to myself that this moment has a history, and that history can be linked back to colonialism and apartheid, sure, but it can also be linked to the type of post-race whiteness we see in publications such as *Gay Pages*, which draw their visual repertoires from cultural flows in the Global North. These might be a contemporary circulation of specific images of wealthy gay men, but it is also the result of historical processes that have shaped the raciology of post-apartheid cultural life. So, these were some of the complexities that I wanted to start unpacking. At the time I had no idea where it would go and now, about eight years later, we have the book.

LH: This book is published in a series by Routledge – 'Gender in a Global/Local World' – and at the heart of your exploration is trying to understand the relationship between the global (the transnational) and the local in the making and representation of same-sex cultures in post-apartheid South Africa. Can you tell us more about this?

AC: What I wanted to do was to start undoing some of the binary thinking that we have around the homophones 'routes' and 'roots' – playing with Paul Gilroy's formulation. I wanted to think through the binaries of both local and global, on the one hand,

and past and present, on the other. It was important to understand how historical cultural flows have a bearing in the present, even if those historical cultural flows seem at first to be quite rooted and embraced as some form of authentic timeless essence. Actually, of course, those cultures that have the appearance of timelessness are themselves the result of myriad cultural flows in the past. So, for instance, in the one chapter titled 'Same-sex sexualities and the idea of Africa', I focus on the truism that same-sex sexualities are 'unAfrican'. I try to trace the connections between what it means to talk about sexuality in Africa in the present, not only contrasting it with the past but also showing how the past in fact shapes the present in sometimes unexpected ways. It is of course homophobia and institutionalised heteronormativity that were brought to Africa as part of the colonial project, rather than same-sexualities themselves – and I think that's been attended to quite successfully in recent scholarship. But I wanted to go further and



> "...we can read many of these discourses not as grounded in a South African exceptionalism, but instead as the result of global cultural flows that are characterised by transnational ideas around Christianity, essentialist claims to nationalist African identities, and liberal internationalist human rights discourses."

trace, for example, the peculiar dalliance between notions of fundamentalist Christianity and 'authentic' African tradition. Many social conservatives articulate, in the same breath, both Christian values and a seemingly timeless 'tradition' to define the borders of what constitutes moral and 'authentically' heterosexual African identities. And I found this to be a fascinating relationship, given the centrality of Christianity during colonialism. Homophobia was institutionalised in Africa through the colonial project, and now homophobia has been institutionalised in much of post-colonial Africa through some of the anti-colonial movements themselves. By historicising this, I hope to show that the homophobia that we see in South Africa today has a history of being deployed for ideologically expedient purposes.

One text that demonstrates this is the film *Inxeba (The Wound)*. The film was read by many commentators and critics as being a very uniquely South African event – I say 'event' because of the practices of reception, the legal action, and the protests that surrounded the release of the film. Similarly, the debates surrounding the film and the tensions between different claims to rights-based discourses were seen as uniquely South African. And yet, if we take a step back, we can read many of these discourses not as grounded in a South African exceptionalism, but instead as the result of global cultural flows that are characterised by transnational ideas around Christianity, essentialist claims to nationalist African identities, and liberal internationalist human rights discourses. These factors certainly have a specificity in the South African context, but they can't be separated from global discourses. I found that what the film was doing – rather than offering us a uniquely South African event

– was offering us something far more complex, and a way of thinking through how cultural flows come to constitute a very specific notion of the local.

What I try and do in the book is theorise 'restlessness' to try and bring together these two almost disparate axes – that of space, so the relationship between the local and the global, and that of time, the relationship between the past and the present. And through this notion of 'restlessness', I try to bring them together in a coherent analytical frame. To go back to your question around this particular Routledge series, which speaks to thinking through gender in a global/local world, what I wanted to bring to this was an emphasis on transnational cultural flows that can be both contemporary and deeply historical.

One of the issues that I look at is around the constitutional recognition in 1996 of the right to equality and the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. I raise some concerns about the historiography through which 1996 and the adoption of the Constitution has almost become the defining moment in our sexual rights history: the point towards which everything moved, and the point from which everything henceforth flows. Popular histories in South Africa have developed certain mythologies about 1996 that are ahistorical and that don't map the longer cultural movements that are specific to South Africa, but are also deeply tied to transnational histories of advocacy and identity. So I argue that what the notion of restlessness does is it complicates how we think about the cultural forces that produce same-sex sexualities in South Africa, highlighting transnational resonances and historical trajectories that might not have been immediately visible.

LH: The idea of 'restlessness' is something you refer to throughout the book. How would you explain this term to someone who's never come across this concept?

AC: 'Restlessness' as I theorise it in the book would recognise that identities are produced through the intersection of multiple cultural flows, that are related both to geopolitics and historical temporalities. Cultural studies scholars have done such important work arguing that identity is always socially constructed. What I'm interested in thinking about is how to make explicit connections between the historical and contemporary cultural flows that produce those identities, and that become visible once we start scratching the surface. In the book, I theorise it in the following way: 'To refer to restlessness is to point to a range of cultural flows that are simultaneously rooted and transnational, disparate and uneven, precarious and contingent, historical and contemporary, and orientated more towards connections and movement than any inward-looking ossification of the nation-state' (Carolin, 2021: 2).

LH: The intersections between race, gender, and sexuality are central to your study. Could you talk about these intersections in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa, with some examples from the texts you analyse?

AC: There are sometimes surprising continuities in how gender is constituted and performed in different settings, and how circulating discourses about race impact on this. So, one particular chapter looks at how white masculinities were produced both during the apartheid period and in the present, exploring the different race politics that underpin these constructions. Another chapter unpacks how masculinities can also be rooted in an African nationalist framework. In the book, I try to tease out both the differences and continuities between these iterations of masculinity. So, for instance, while I locate the masculinities that might be depicted in the magazine series *Gay Pages*, or Michiel Heyns' novels *The Reluctant Passenger* and *Lost Ground*, within discourses of whiteness, I also try to highlight how these very notions of masculinity have echoes with the ones depicted in films such as *Inxeba (The Wound)* and *Ibhokwe (The Goat)*. I try to show how idealised notions of masculinity are themselves mobile forms that can be expediently packaged and deployed for political and ideological purposes. One of the points that I make in the book is that these continuities can sometimes be deeply unsettling for us. We start to see potential overlaps between how white apartheid-era masculinities were produced, and certain essentialist formulations of masculinity rooted in problematic notions of 'authentic' Africanness.

Similarly, one chapter focuses on women in the Indian diaspora, and draws on the novels *Saracen at the Gates* and *The World Unseen*. Another chapter

“To put it simply, inequality in South Africa continues to be deeply racialised. Sceptical of the post-race whiteness advanced by publications such as *Gay Pages*, the book set out to confront the ongoing raciology of post-apartheid cultural life, even as this raciology is mapped historically and transnationally.”

focuses on photographs of Black women. Across these chapters, I point to recurring discourses of cultural authenticity that position same-sex sexualities as somehow unAfrican or unIndian. I try to show how the very notion of 'cultural authenticity' is a fiction that is produced and deployed in the service of a conservative patriarchal project that, even if it isn't universal, certainly has powerful resonances across contexts, across cultural histories, and across texts.

While race is a social construct, of course, it's a construct that – given the specific histories in South Africa and in many other places around the world – continues to have a significant material impact on how people have access to certain resources. To put it simply, inequality in South Africa continues to be deeply racialised. Sceptical of the post-race whiteness advanced by publications such as *Gay Pages*, the book set out to confront the ongoing raciology of post-apartheid cultural life, even as this raciology is mapped historically and transnationally. The book is divided into very specific chapters that theorise and argue in relation to race itself: there's a chapter on whiteness, another on the Indian diaspora, another on Black women. So, in many ways, the book itself stages a conversation with historical and contemporary circulations of race.

What emerged for me during the study was the importance of reflecting more critically on the complicity of some white gay men during apartheid. For instance, there was the Law Reform Movement in the 1960s that advocated against oppressive intensifications of state policing of same-sex sexualities. The Law Reform Movement was dominated by white men. But it was fundamentally a conservative project because it didn't challenge the underlying raciology of apartheid; it didn't draw attention to the brutality and systematic discrimination that millions of South Africans experienced on the basis of race. Instead, the Law Reform Movement presented itself within terms of an acceptable middle-class whiteness that advanced sexual rights even as it remained largely silent on race. There was also the Gay Association of South Africa's refusal in the 1980s to explicitly support Simon Nkoli when he was imprisoned as part of the Delmas Treason Trial. This organisation also tried to insist that it was somehow apolitical in relation to apartheid – a political strategy geared towards securing for itself a certain privileged position in the social order. Another example is the 1987 elections for the Hillbrow Constituency. The local gay press at the time – as well as many gay voters – supported and advocated for a National Party candidate, who eventually won the election, simply because this candidate promised reform on gay rights. So, what we saw in the final years of apartheid was white gay men and women voting in their own interest – for the very party that operationalised apartheid – despite the fact that there were progressive anti-apartheid candidates on the ballot who were not caught up in the same evil history of the National Party. So, if we think about this history cumulatively, we see that white gay men have a complicated relationship to the apartheid state apparatus that is not entirely separable from complicity. While many white gay men might acknowledge the histories of homophobia and sexual moralism, I don't think that many of us are willing to acknowledge how local efforts towards sexual rights may have contributed to the legitimisation of what was a crime against humanity.

LH: In the book, you also talk about the difficulties of addressing race: how to talk about its continued social impact without normalising and perpetuating racialised discourses. Can you speak a little more about how you approach this in your study?

AC: I think we have a certain responsibility to fight against the 'post-race' whiteness that we see in publications such as *Gay Pages*. We need to develop analytical tools to complicate how we think about the circulation of discourses about race. The question you ask about the importance of a nuanced approach to race is relevant for my book, but it's also important for a broader progressive politics: around the world we're

seeing a global reckoning with race and histories of racial oppression. An explicit focus on race allows us to engage with and expose the ongoing privileges of whiteness in multiple contexts, hopefully contributing in some way to the work of anti-racism. This has implications for campaigns such as Black Lives Matter in the United States, as well as Rhodes Must Fall in South Africa and the UK.

While this book is a study about sexuality, it is probably equally a study of race. I'm hoping that the discussion of race and the idea of restlessness will have resonances in other contexts too. For example, there's currently an ongoing debate about the New York City Pride Parade and the decision by the organisers to exclude police officers from marching as part of the event for the next few years. This decision has been taken to recognise the experiences of many queer people of colour in the United States who have experienced police brutality. This marks a particular intersection that draws together transnational discourses about human rights and visibility with context-specific histories of racism that have powerful resonances in the present. I would hope that ideas such as restlessness could enrich the analyses of these sorts of social phenomena and the recognition, through an intersectional lens, that history and the ideological mobility of sexual identities are far more complex than they may initially have seemed. By really going to the roots of these contestations, we will hopefully bring new relations into view that will at least complicate how we think about, for example, the relationship between policing and sexual rights activism in the United States. So, it's my hope that inasmuch as this book is a study of the post-apartheid moment, that it also offers a way of thinking through this broader global reckoning with race.

LH: That leads perfectly to my last question – in general, what do you hope this book will achieve in terms of scholarship and our thinking around issues of sexuality and race in post-apartheid South Africa?

AC: One of the things is its emphasis on a dynamic historicity. The book resists the impulse to focus only on 1996 and the adoption of the Constitution's Equality Clause. Across the book, I look at multiple texts that engage with sexual rights and same-sex sexualities outside of the hegemony of this historical moment. So, for example, the novel *The World Unseen*, which is set in 1951 and depicts the relationship between two women in the Indian diaspora in Pretoria, operates outside of the traditional ways of thinking about sexual rights histories in South Africa. Furthermore, this setting also falls outside of the high point of the post-Stonewall sexual rights movement. In an earlier chapter in the book, I also look at the relationship between the sexual rights and anti-apartheid movements between the 1970s and the 1990s. I use the selected cultural texts to resist the idea that sexual rights in South Africa were somehow inevitable – an argument that many scholars have made, and which oversimplifies many of the cultural forces at play. A focus on a restless historicity reveals that whether to recognise sexual rights in South Africa was caught in the crosshairs of volatile and intersecting cultural forces – and certainly far from inevitable.

LH: Thanks so much. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

AC: One of the things that I hope this book achieves is to bring attention to some of the really impressive work being done by authors, photographers, and filmmakers in South Africa, who are contributing to a more complex cultural history of sexuality. For instance, there is Oliver Hermanus' beautiful film *Moffie* (which had an underwhelming release due to Covid, but has now been picked up by an American distributor). There is also the aesthetically innovative and bold film *Kanarie*, the extraordinary photography of Siphumeze Khundayi, and Zinaid Meeran's award-winning, though largely neglected, novel *Saracen at the Gates*. It is these works and many others that make up the rich archive of same-sex public culture that forms the basis of my book.

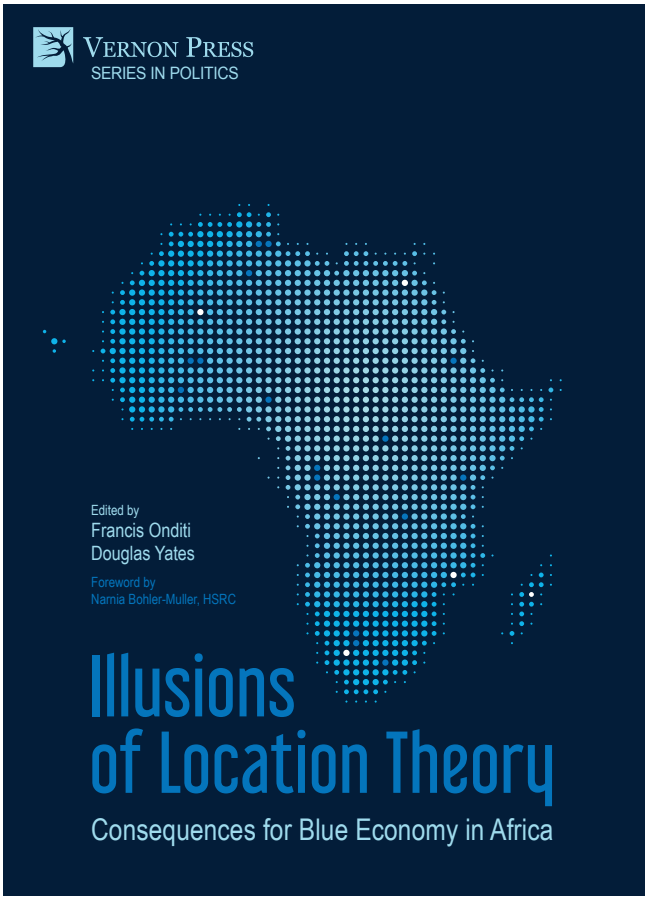
New Book

Ideas and Actionable Steps for Scaling Africa's Blue Economy Strategy

By Francis Onditi, Douglas Yates, and Narnia Bohler-Muller | Books

Introducing the New Book

Ilusions of Location Theory: Consequences for Blue Economy in Africa, a new book edited by Dr. Francis Onditi and Prof. Douglas Yates, with a foreword by Prof. Narnia Bohler-Muller, is finally published and can now be ordered from global leading platforms, including Amazon.



The subject of the blue economy is fast emerging both as a concept and practice. Within the African Union development envisioning, the blue economy ecosystem is considered as a strategy towards revamping the Agenda 2063. Due to its expansion in the policy realm and the academy, the scope and debate have considerably widened. This evolution has triggered fundamental questions: What does it mean for environmental sustainability? What does it mean for inclusivity in the exploitation of the blue economy ecosystem? These are some of the questions the current blue economy framework and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) (established in 1982) seek to address (Bueger, 2017). However, there is more to the shareability and exploitation of the blue economy than these policy and legal frameworks, an extra dimension that can be housed in the geopolitical and diplomatic works that showcase the experiences of landlocked states and how states are/or aren't resolving disputes emerging from the changing boundaries and resource locations triggered by natural forces and environmental change. Though some anecdotes and books on the blue economy have already been published, we felt we needed a book which could provide a comprehensive framework on the blue economy regarding territorial contestations, maritime disputes, vulnerabilities of landlocked states, and expansionist policies, as displayed through spatial organisational regimes. The current blue economy framework is overly environmental and economic resource focused (Attri, 2016), unduly focusing on comparative advantages of distance. However, to cope with the widening nature of debate and demand from the academic community and the demands from the implementation of the 2019 *Africa Blue Economy Strategy*, it became necessary to expand the framework of debate by introducing new dimensions and enlarging existing ones. Some new ideas building into the framework included: SMART technologies, the power of mental mapping in spatial decision making, diplomatic approaches, and portal hegemony. Thus, the book puts forward an argument: 'the harmonious relationship between states, and efficient exploitation of the blue economy ecosystem in ways that promote peace between states lies not only in the structural transformation of markets, but also, in bridging the spatial and social *divide* between the coastal and hinterland societies.' Thus, this work proffers possibilities for a holistic regime for managing Africa's coastal-hinterland continuum through the aforementioned innovative strategies within the broader framework of what we coin as the Maritime, Security, and Blue Economy Continuum (MASEBEC). Many important model frameworks such as IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association) (Doyle, 2018), as well as lessons for the African regional integration story have also been included in the new book.

We are confident that the combination of theoretical and empirical analysis, buttressed by in-depth case studies of what works and what does not in the management of the blue economy ecosystem, makes this volume ideal for researchers, students, and practitioners interested in African regional studies, African political economy, political geography, international relations, strategic military studies, the governance of seas and oceans, and maritime science/diplomacy. Thus, this book shifts the debate from the question of sustainability and inclusivity to geopolitics and diplomacy.

The Exploitation of the Blue Economy Ecosystem and Relations Between States

When we look at the African blue economy with our eyes on the future, that is, on the entire duration of the 21st century, from a vantage point of remote sensing imagery from outer space – the infrastructural gutters that drain African resources to the ports, the foreign fleets that destroy fisheries, drill and spill oil, attract pirates, marginalise local communities, exhaust beach sands, the bleached reefs, the hurricanes and typhoons – the need for international cooperation may look, from that airy vantage point, like something of an afterthought. If we leave this to the great powers, we have the lessons of history to teach us what to expect. Neither the Chinese nor the Americans will come to the assistance of the continent, although they will frame their pursuit of their national interests in the old language of development assistance and aid. But everything that has ever happened that was good in Africa was created by Africans. The solution to these largely foreign brought problems will surely come from below. Therefore, a local explanation is required to explain how a '*global opportunism'* works and not necessarily cause-effect explanations. In explaining the validity of such an explanation to the discipline of international relations, it is important to consider how much each state and community occupying the coastal and hinterlands can benefit, and not how much global explanations exclude local explanations or typologies that could also provide an alternative explanation of how human behaviour is altered by changes in location or distance from global opportunities or lack thereof. In any case, such a perspective may provide useful explanations for the undisclosed aspects of international relations and political geography. Before we outline the various themes discussed in this book, we shall briefly revisit the characteristics of the emerging African coastal-hinterland continuum, and take note of their linkages to various geopolitical processes: maritime disputes, access to port facilities, landlockedness, as well as the utilisation of the blue economy ecosystem.

In this volume, we interrogate continuities and change within the coastal-hinterland spaces of Africa and neighbouring geographies. We observe that the risks of increasing the exploitation of planetary resources is not limited to economics and sustainability. The transnational nature of development continues to create inter-state tensions and contestations over unclear boundaries and the responsibility to protect the environment (R2PE). The ongoing Kenya-Somalia diplomatic spat over the 42,000-square km piece of maritime space within the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) continues to elicit controversy between the two states. Moreover, the lack of mechanisms in burden sharing of liabilities incurred during exploitation of marine resources increases the likelihood of inter-state tensions and risks of what we frame as the '*blue economy wars*.' But also, the notion of *hinterland* has become a contested space among states, with some scholars predicting uncertainties in the future relationship between land-locked and portal states (Lahiri and Masjidi, 2012).

In spite of the interconnectedness of coastal areas to global opportunities through ports and other modern facilities, the spatial and social inequalities continue to deepen (Boone and Simson, 2019). The persistent economic disparities between the coastal regions and hinterlands of African countries raises pertinent questions as to whether the visualisation of global opportunities is an observed reality or simply a *theoretical* construct? To a large extent, this work aims at addressing this conceptual question by drawing mental maps of the communities inhabiting African coastal and hinterland spaces to evaluate the locational significance of the region versus perceptive images of opportunities. Mental maps are important in visualising geographies and social settings, including attempts to have efficient utilisation of spaces based on their cultural branding. In some cases, *mental mapping* may create spaces with limited statehood.

The 'expansionist' policies and the politics of 'containment' are important considerations if Africa were to develop a comprehensive framework of maritime diplomacy (Wilson, 2009), blue economy, and geopolitics. From this standpoint, geopolitics is therefore the means for states to enhance diplomatic cooperation within the broader regional and international economic framework. As such, the blue economy cannot continue to be defined and framed in the narrow margin of economics, but should encompass geopolitical dimensions – power, control, environment, and military strategy – in a network of relationships. As aforementioned, militarism is at the core of the relationship between blue economy and maritime surveillance and enforcement requirements

“In other words, the blue economy model was designed to complement the ‘green economy’ movement. However, as this volume has demonstrated, this approach is a minimalist token to handle the contemporary global politics around seas and oceans. To address these concerns, the editors of this volume decided to assemble a group of scholars who approached the issues from interdisciplinary perspectives”

(Bueger and Stockbruegger, 2016). A befitting framework will therefore have both the military and civilians addressing multiple threats. It is therefore inadequate for states to establish economic links through the blue economy model without considering protection of such wealth through various means: military and other diplomatic cooperation strands.

Hence, ignoring the political power of geography in the future of Africa’s international relations debate is like a farmer who drives his livestock into a hyena-infested area without any guard (Rimmer and Ward, 2016). In other words, the blue economy model was designed to complement the ‘green economy’ movement. However, as this volume has demonstrated, this approach is a minimalist token to handle the contemporary global politics around seas and oceans. To address these concerns, the editors of this volume decided to assemble a group of scholars who approached the issues from interdisciplinary perspectives including international relations, strategic studies, military science, policy, law, history, political geography, spatial geography, anthropology, sociology, as well as political science.

Contributors’ Ideas and Actionable Steps

The introductory chapter provides a critique of the classical locational theoretical framework, and links this to an analysis of the three key ingredients that define African coastal-hinterland space. The central dilemma is the peril of envisaging the future of Africa on a narrow conception of the blue economy, without consideration of the geopolitical contours shaping this relationship. Instead, a number of principles are proposed that seek to challenge the notion that the exploitation of resources or access to such resources is largely determined by locational factors. Potential channels of reconfiguring the coastal-hinterland relationship proposes an integrated approach: linking together maritime diplomacy, geopolitics, and the blue economy. This renewed configuration is the conceptual framework guiding contributors to this volume.

In Chapter 1, Francis Onditi proposes the central plank of the reconfiguration discourse as the need to relook into the conceptual framework of the blue economy. In practice, this configuration is dependent on a radical shift in the structure of the blue economy as key to the evolution of the coastal-hinterland space. In other words, the blue economy cannot thrive in the absence of geopolitical and diplomatic considerations. The link between political geography and international relations is further explored in Chapter 2 by Christiane Rafidinarivo, who utilises the principles of territoriality to understand why and how people do not benefit from contested territories and their resources. However, as Valensisi and Munisso in Chapter 3 note, despite the technological advancements witnessed in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), landlocked and island economies are disadvantaged, and international patterns of trade squeeze them further into vulnerabilities. In Chapter 4, Vuyo Mjimba identifies multiple barriers to the transformation of the blue economy in the developing world, including complexities associated with global production networks, the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and supply chains.

The rationale for the development of the geo-economic assets analysed by Raymond Fonseca in Chapter 5 lies in the reality that critical geopolitics and maritime space are conceived by states according to a logic of territoriality. The dilemma of the coastal-hinterland divide, reinforced by spatial inequality and obstructed by frozen mindsets, is also well illustrated by attitudes of resource (mis)management on the Kenyan coast, as demonstrated by James Moronge in Chapter 6. A common response to this sort of ‘resource curse’ and ‘spatial inequalities’ is reconfiguring the structure of the blue economy to include mechanisms for interactions with the global system. Mental maps are crucial tools for insights into the ability of ordinary people to make sense of the world. This visualisation is directly linked to the efficient utilisation of spaces

based on their cultural branding and perceptive factors. In Chapter 7, Onditi illustrates how the mental and physical struggle for space is part and parcel of the global social organism, where species and human activities compete for space.

In Chapter 8, Edmond Were introduces the concept of 'contested portal hegemony', to illustrate how the competition over the perceived and projected dominance of sea ports in the provision of maritime services has expanded in the advent of the hinterland, becoming less captive to the dominant Mombasa port. The economic structure of the hinterland is drastically changing due to the increase in foreign direct investment flows and the discovery of high impact natural resources. Despite these infrastructural transformations and the renewed development initiatives on the continent, the coastal-hinterland divide continues to widen, as revealed by Shadrack Kithiia's discussion in Chapter 9. An analysis of location choices as it relates to economic integration is also key in understanding why some countries experience skewed concentration of industrial production, regardless of whether or not they have rights of access to the sea or ocean; Chapter 10 addresses this issue through the lens of the UNCLOS. Ken Walibora, in Chapter 11, grapples with the question of space contestation, and unravels the various excitements, resistances, and identity issues along the Kenyan coast. Yet again, for states to harness the assets of the continental waters, they must have a maritime security strategy (Larsen, 2015). However, as demonstrated by Atisa in Chapter 12, although coastal spaces are endowed with rich natural resources, communities on the Kenyan coast continue to languish in abject poverty due to poor planning and the (mis)management of resources.

Today, many industries produce products whose raw materials are not necessarily extracted in the vicinity. In other words, Weber's model did not consider other variables, such as the influence of technology in bridging the gap between time of production and distribution. On this account, Smith-Godfrey in Chapter 13 argues that deploying appropriate technologies, coupled with effective Marine Spatial Planning, can revolutionise the entity of the blue economy. In Chapter 14, Douglas Yates underlines that the strong and complex connections at the intersections of energy-led development, urban growth, and energy are particularly useful in moving beyond resource-dependency. Kuwali, in Chapter 15, takes a legal perspective to understand the Malawi-Tanzania border dispute, linking it to customary international law and noting that, by engaging instruments of maritime diplomacy, this dispute could be resolved through a peaceful and pragmatic resolution mechanism for the benefit of communities from both sides of Lake Nyasa. The analysis of ecumene and the *emptiness* of space goes beyond Africa, as exemplified by China's awakened interest in Africa. In Chapter 16, Onditi and Nyadera coin the term *geostrategic axis* to image the future relationship between China, Africa, and the GCC. This conceptualisation of future global relations challenges the theory of location by suggesting that the future of international relations does not necessarily depend on geographical proximity as much as on the ideological orientation of states.

Conclusion:
Thinking Through the New MASEBEC Framework

A holistic Maritime, Security, and Blue Economy Continuum (MASEBEC) framework will require international cooperation, which is one of the hardest things to do in a world of sovereign states who accept no common power. International law has been the main instrument for large scale multinational cooperation in maritime matters, from the earliest days of serious writings on the 'freedom of the seas' by Hugo Grotious, to the UNCLOS convention in force today (Gordon, 2008). However, geopolitical considerations clearly still take precedence over international agreements, as the world system turns in the widening gyre of American imperial decline and the peaceful rise of China. The marine space is punctuated with illegal activities of pirates and dominant multinational corporations (MNCs), threatening elusively mapped national maritime boundaries, poorly regulated fish-factory fleets, and global armadas of merchant marines. In the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, the thinly dispersed blue water navies are incapable of effectively protecting the sea, either due to a lack of legal instruments or to capacity issues. These kinds of systemic challenges have been the subject of indigestion for decades. At the beginning of the millennium, Helen Thornton (2004) posits an interesting question: 'how does the nation's sovereignty over the sea affect the freedom

of navigation, trade and fishing for other nations?' Therefore, a mix of idealism and realism in mitigating the effects of geography (location) on the exploitation of blue economy assets is surely in order.

The most realistic idealist, to use an oxymoronic expression, might propose the creation of some regional treaties incorporating the coastal states of the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic, and their counterparts on the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, with their coastal-hinterland spaces integrated as signatory partners, establishing a new type of global naval force, perhaps an international coast guard, legitimised by the UN, AU, ECOWAS, SADC, and EAC, providing collective security with blue water naval forces that, realistically, would have to be provided by the world's great powers who are, after all, the main beneficiaries of Africa's new blue economy. For this, the great powers would have to do some mental mapping of their own, and not the pin-on-the-map kind that the European colonial imperialists imposed when they laid down the fractured foundations of the 'Curse of Berlin' (Adebajo, 2010).

References

Adebajo, A. (2010). *The Curse of Berlin: Africa After the Cold War*. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Attri, V.N. (2016). An Emerging New Development Paradigm of the Blue Economy in Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA): A Policy Framework for the Future. [online] Indian Ocean Rim Association. Available at: https://www.iora.int/media/23838/the-blue-economy-and-iora-2016.pdf

Boone, C. and Simson, R. (2019). Regional Inequalities in African Political Economy: Theory, Conceptualization and Measurement, and Political Effects. Department of International Development: London School of Economics and Political Science. Working Paper Series No. 19–194. London.

Bueger, C. (2017). Concepts in Practice: The Case of the 'Blue Economy'. Cardiff University.

Bueger, C. and Stockbruegger, J. (2016). Pirates, Drugs and Navies. *The RUSI Journal*, 161(5): 46–52.

Doyle, T. (2018). Blue Economy and the Indian Ocean Rim. *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 14(1): 1–6.

Gordon, E. (2008). Grotius and the Freedom of the Seas in the Seventeenth Century. *Williamette Journal of International Law and Dispute Resolution*, 16(2): 252–269.

Lahiri, B. and Masjidi, F.K. (2012). Landlocked Countries: A Way to Integrate with Coastal Economies. *Journal of Economic Integration*, 27(4): 505–519.

Larsen, J. (2015). Towards Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean: The Case of Seychelles. *Island Studies: Indian Ocean*, 3: 50–57.

Rimmer, J. P. and Ward, G. (2016). *Geography, Power, Strategy and Defence Policy: Essays in Honour of Paul Dibb*. Edited by Desmond Ball and Sheryn Lee. ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

Thornton, H. (2004). Hugo Grotius and the Freedom of the Seas. *International Journal of Maritime History*, 16(2): 17–38.

Wilson, B. (2009). Naval Diplomacy and Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean. *Strategic Analysis*, 33(4): 488–497.