

The Thinker

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A PAN - AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS

ANVER SALOOJEE ON USING GRAMSCI AND LACLAU TO UNDERSTAND CONTEMPORARY POPULISM



**GARTH LE PERE ON
THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC PLATFORM:
WILL AFRICA'S DAVOS SUCCEED?**

**ADEMOLA ARAOYE ON
NIGERIA STOKING THE
WATTAGE OF NATIONHOOD**

SOUTH AFRICA R29.90



Donald Ramotar **William Gumedu** Mzingaye Brilliant Xaba **Monty Roodt**
Thando Ntlemeza **Thabang Makwetla** Mashudubele wa Mamabolo **Themba Moleketi**
Bhaso Ndzendze **Mammo Muchie** Mohau Bosiu

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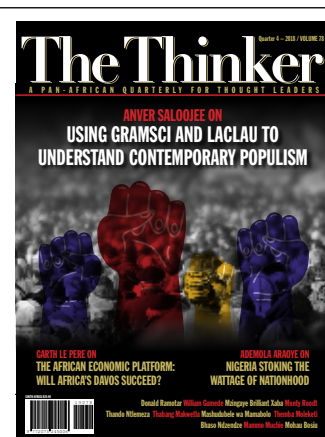


**SOCIO-ECONOMIC
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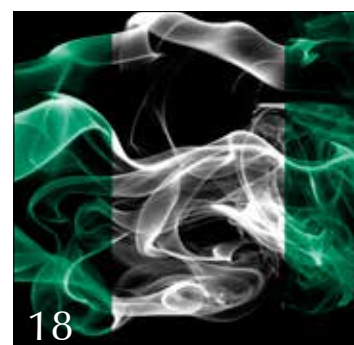
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On the Cover:

Political extremism on the left
or the right, is dangerous.

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BRICS and FOCAC strengthen international co-operation and multilateralism

The 10th BRICS summit was held in Johannesburg at the end of July, 2018. South Africa, led by President Cyril Ramaphosa, was a good and hospitable host.

The BRICS countries, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa account for 24.46% of the world's land and 42.58% of the world population. The IMF calculates that it accounted for nearly a quarter of the world's GDP in 2015. To that, let us add that more than 50% of global economic growth in the last decade was contributed by the BRICS countries. Admittedly the major contributors were China and India.

Just prior to the summit President Xi Jinping, on a state visit to South Africa, committed \$14.7 billion (R193.8bn) to the South African economy. This is a new commitment adding to already existing bi-lateral agreements.

With the agreement of the other members, South Africa invited a number of African leaders as well as Recep Erdogan of Turkey to participate in the important summit.

The participation of Erdogan and African leaders is a strong indication that sooner rather than later BRICS could emerge as 'BRICS plus'. Such an extension would strengthen and deepen the role, place and functions of the developing South in world trade, international finance and investments as well as multi-lateral institutions such as the UN, World Trade Organisation, and even the World Bank and the IMF.

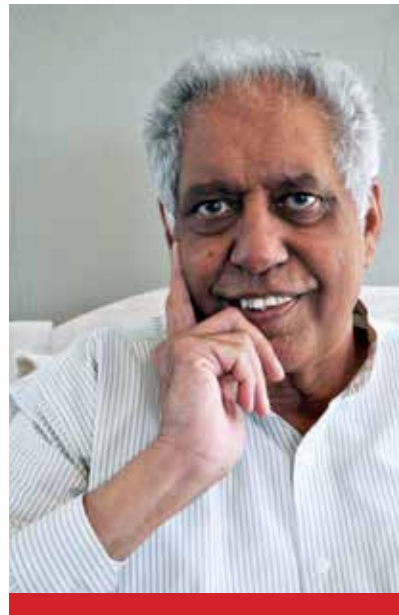
The New Development Bank has already undertaken to disburse \$3.4 billion to its constituents. Moreover as Sanusha Naidoo points out "BRICS has created the contingent reserve arrangement, aimed at ensuring liquidity for member states when they're confronted by short-term balance of payment crises" (*Mail and Guardian* July 27).

The Trump administration is pursuing with vigour, force and intimidation the policy and practice of 'US first'

and 'US exceptionalism'. By doing so Trump's administration is seeking to destabilise international trade, disrupt the WTO by its protectionist policies, especially against China, and to impose a regressive unilateralism on a multi-polar, multilateral universe.

To counter the dangerous and negative 'US first' narrative, BRICS can and should be a force for resistance, change and mutually beneficial international political and economic relations. One cannot but agree with Dattesh D Prabhu Parulekar when he writes "the credibility and stature of BRICS would shine through, not just through its ability to be more vocal on global issues, including reform of the United Nations, but also through its ability to lead by example in a solutions-based approach, investment-based trading arrangements and relationships, developmental diplomacy anchored in capacity building, imparting sustainability to the developmental approach and sovereign equality and respect" (*The Star*, 25 July, 2018).

“The imbalance in trade between China and a number of African countries has to be reversed by exporting more than just primary products. To do so African countries need to investigate with their Chinese partners what value added products and manufactured goods can be exported to China at rates mutually beneficial.”



Forum for China-Africa co-operation (FOCAC)

The Seventh Forum of FOCAC was held in Beijing from September 3 and 4 2018. To the consternation of leading political figures as well as sections of the media and academia in the developed west forty-eight African heads of state attended that meeting.

The previous summit was held in Johannesburg in 2015 at which gathering China pledged \$60 billion to assist in the growth and development of our continent.

To demonstrate its continuing commitment and good-will to the continent China once more pledged \$60 billion in the form of grants, concessional loans, development financing, interest free loans including \$15 billion for a "special fund for financing imports from Africa". This latter commitment is an important departure and should be utilised by African countries to export not only raw minerals and oil but also value added agricultural products, value added commodities and manufacturing goods. The imbalance in trade between China and a number of African countries has to be reversed by exporting more than just primary products. To do so African countries need to investigate with their Chinese partners what value added products and manufactured goods can be exported to China at rates mutually beneficial.

Over the last decade China emerged as the second most powerful economy in the world as well as an important force in international politics and world affairs.

As China systematically and purposefully developed mutually beneficial trade, economic and political relations with Africa, strident and dire warnings came from politicians, and some sections of the media echoed by some commentators in Africa and academia in the developed west that China is the “new imperial, neo-colonial power”. We are advised to beware of the “debt-trap” and “safeguard your independence and sovereignty”.

But from whence come the dangers?

As Garth le Pere points out in a working paper to the Commonwealth Secretariat (2017):

Africa's main traditional trading partners, the EU and the USA, still exercise an inordinate influence and control over the pace of growth and development of African trade through their institutionalised trade and co-operation frameworks, which, in many ways, are antithetical to the letter and spirit of Agenda 2063's emphasis on self-determination, self-reliance and pan- Africanism. Moreover, the system of global governance is hardly emancipatory or co-operative but provides the types of perverse incentives which reinforce the hegemony and dominance of developed countries in shaping the discourse of international relations. And, to repeat the point, at a time of declining EU and US trade, China and India have gained significant trade and investment traction across the continent.

The African response to the dire warnings from the West was swift and unequivocal. Both Cyril Ramaphosa, the outgoing co-chair, and Macky Sall of Senegal, the incoming co-chair, rubbished the negative sentiment and commended China for its involvement in promoting socio-economic developments, peace and security in the continent as well as enhancing Africa's role in world affairs.

The summit adopted two major documents, the “Beijing Declaration toward and Even Stringer China-Africa Community with a Shared Future” and the “Forum on China-

Africa co-operation Beijing Action Plan (2019-2021)”. These documents should be studied, scrutinised and critically analysed by African political leaders and activists, civil society, trade unions, business people, students, academics and intellectuals.

The discussions and agreements were well summed up by Xi Jinping at a meeting with the press, together with Ramaphosa and Sall.

Xi Jinping said:

We agreed that China-Africa relations have stood the test of time and international changes and embarked on a distinctive path of win-win cooperation. China-Africa relations are at their best in history. The two sides will enhance synergy between strategies and policies, advance cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative, and pool the strength of this

“The African response to the dire warnings from the West was swift and unequivocal. Both Cyril Ramaphosa, the outgoing co-chair, and Macky Sall of Senegal, the incoming co-chair, rubbished the negative sentiment.”

Initiative with that of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations, and national development strategies of African countries. The focus will be on the implementation of eight major initiatives, namely, industrial promotion, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, green development, capacity building, health care, people-to-people exchange, and peace and security. It will provide more opportunities and give even stronger impetus to China-Africa cooperation.

We agreed that China-Africa relations have demonstrated unprecedented solidarity, vitality and creativity, which offers significant opportunities for the development of each side. China is the

biggest developing country, and Africa the continent with a large gathering of developing countries in the world. The two sides will stay committed to strengthening unity and cooperation and working with each other along the path of win-win cooperation and common development. China will continue to act in the principle of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith and of pursuing the greater good and shared interests. Together, China and Africa will draw on the strength of our profound friendship and mutual trust, keep to the right direction as practical cooperation flourishes, and work for solid, steady and sustained growth of the China-Africa comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership.

We agreed that Africa is entitled to achieving development and invigoration. This requires both the hard work of African countries and their people, and the support from the international community. China-Africa cooperation, as part of the international cooperation with Africa, follows the principle of mutual benefit, openness and inclusiveness. We hope that Africa's international cooperation partners could learn from each other, leverage their respective strengths, build synergy and jointly contribute to peace and development in Africa. While conducting cooperation with Africa, all parties of the international community need to respect the sovereignty of African countries, listen to Africa's voice, take Africa's stance seriously and deliver on the promises made to Africa.

The meeting has completed all items on the agenda. Chinese and African leaders have reached significant common ground and spoken with one voice on all major issues. The Beijing Summit has achieved great success and produced significant outcomes. It has opened a new chapter in the history of China-Africa relations and set a new milestone for South-South cooperation of our times.

The successful outcome of the FOCAC summit should be utilised to continue the endeavours for a safer, better world driven by multi-lateralism and people to people exchanges as well as for re-shaping and cementing China-Africa relations on the basis of co-operation not co-optation. ■

TAX INCREASE IMPLICATIONS: HOW IT AFFECTS YOU

Commentators have repeatedly referred to the balancing act that was performed through the tax proposals announced in the Budget, but how does that translate into rands and cents for you? .

VAT

Let's start with the major tax proposal – an increase in the value-added tax (“VAT”) rate from 14% to 15% from 1 April 2018. It is anticipated that this will raise R22.9 billion in revenue; a significant portion of the budgeted revenue shortfall of R48.2 billion for 2017/2018. While the increase was widely anticipated and considered unavoidable, it caused consternation for many tax-payers, leaving them wondering how the increase would impact their disposable income. It warrants mention that South Africa's increased VAT rate is lower than global and African averages; and we should not forget the 19 basic food items which are zero-rated for VAT purposes (including various grains; all fruit and vegetables; milk products; vegetable oil; pilchards; and eggs). The zero-rated food items, together with the proposed zero-rating of items of necessity such as sanitary towels, goes some way to refute the argument that increasing the VAT rate would have a regressive impact upon the most financially vulnerable in South African society.

The increase in the VAT rate will also be counter-balanced by an above inflation adjustment to social grants. Old age, disability and care dependency grants will increase on 1 April 2018 from the current R1,600 to R1,690; and by a further R10 to R1,700 on 1 October 2018; and child support grants will increase from the baseline of R380 to R400 on 1 April 2018; and to R410 on 1 October 2018. Approximately 17 million South Africans are supported by social grants.

FEE-FREE TERTIARY EDUCATION

R324 billion has been allocated to expenditure on higher education over the next three years, including an additional R57 billion to cover fee-free tertiary education. This constitutes significant progress towards breaking the cycle of poverty and tackling youth unemployment. The cost of tuition for new first year students attending universities and Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges from households with a combined annual income of R350,000 or less, will be fully funded; and returning students on the National Student Financial Aid Scheme will have their loans converted to bursaries from 2018 onwards.



PERSONAL INCOME TAX

Regarding personal income tax, with effect from 1 March 2018, lower than inflation (approximately 3%) adjustments will be made to the bottom three personal income tax brackets. This means that if you earn up to R423,300 per annum and you receive an inflationary remuneration increase; you will effectively incur the tax rate of a higher tax bracket only to the extent of the difference between the lower than inflation adjustment, and the rate of inflation. This will give individuals earning up to R423,300 annually some measure of protection against bracket creep. Taxpayers earning in excess of R423,300 per annum, will be exposed to bracket creep.

TAX THRESHOLDS

Tax thresholds have been increased across the various taxpayer age groups meaning that if you are younger than 65, the first R78,150 of your income will be exempt from income tax; if you are between the ages of 65 and 75, the first R121,000 of your income will be exempt from tax; and if you are 75 or older; the first R135,300 of your income will be exempt from income tax.

TAX REBATES

The primary, secondary and tertiary annual rebates, which you deduct from your tax liability, have also been partially adjusted for inflation and increased as follows:

R14,067 for all individuals;
R 7,713 for taxpayers aged 65 and older; and
R 2,574 for taxpayers aged 75 and older.

To illustrate, a 65 year old taxpayer will be entitled to deduct R21,780 (primary + secondary rebates), from his/her tax liability, while a 75 year old taxpayer will be entitled to deduct R24,354 (primary + secondary + tertiary rebates) from his/her tax liability.

DWT

If you earn dividend income from a South African resident company or a foreign company, such dividend income remains subject to dividend withholding tax (“DWT”) of 20% on the dividend paid (unless you hold in excess of 10% of the equity in the foreign company, in which case you may either qualify for a reduction in the rate of; or a complete exemption from DWT).

TAX-FREE SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Since Treasury introduced tax free savings in 2015, many South Africans have benefitted from the merits of this product. Over the next year, your annual contribution of R33, 000 up to your life time limit of R500, 000 remains unchanged. All returns earned in a tax free savings product are free of income tax and capital gains tax. Opening a tax free savings account to include as part of your overall savings portfolio is fundamental and one of the smartest decisions you will make when building your wealth. Oasis and our network of financial advisors will assist you with opening a tax free savings account, if you have not already done so, and guide you through the process of investing with one of the Oasis social and ethical tax free savings products.



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Dr Garth le Pere is visiting Professor at the University of Pretoria and a Senior Associate of Gabriel and Associates. He received a BA from Rutgers University (USA) and did post-

graduate work in political science at Yale University from which he holds MA, MPhil and PhD degrees. His areas of interest include international relations theory, multilateral trade and emerging markets, South African foreign policy, the politics of Africa and the Middle East, and China's increasing role in the world. He has just completed a book, *China's Global Emergence: Reconstructing Power after the Cold War*.

Thabang Makwetla is South Africa's Deputy Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, responsible for the Corrections portfolio. He has a long history of involvement in the ANC and its military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). He served as commissar of MK and was the commander of the ANC's military and political underground activities operating from Botswana. Simultaneously, he also served as Treasurer of the South African Communist Party (SACP), Botswana region from 1986 to 1988. Makwetla was elected to the ANC's Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) in Mpumalanga Province in 2002. He serves on the National Executive Committee of the ANC.

Mashudubele wa Mamabolo has a degree in Political Sciences from the University of Pretoria, an

Honours degree in Development Studies from the University of Limpopo and an MA in International Policy and Diplomacy from Staffordshire University in the UK. He is currently completing an MSc in International Development Studies at the University of Portsmouth (UK). He works for the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. From 2008 to 2011, he served as a First Secretary: Bilateral Affairs at the South African Embassy in Vienna, Austria. He now serves as a Councillor: Bilateral Affairs at the South African Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria.

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Professor Mammo Muchie is a member of the South African Academy of Sciences and the African Academy of Sciences. He is a Professor at Tshwane University of Technology, adjunct professor at the Adama Science and Technology University in Ethiopia and a senior research associate at the Technology and Management Centre for Development at Oxford University. Since 1985 he has produced 365

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Bhaso Ndzendze is a Research Coordinator at the University of Johannesburg Confucius Institute, where he is also an assistant lecturer on a course on the international political economy of Africa-China Relations. His areas of research also include African democracy and Africa-US relations, elections and corruption. He writes for various publications including *The Sunday Independent*, the *Cape Times* and *Modern Diplomacy*. He is the author of *Africa: The Continent we Construct* (2015).

Thando Ntlemeza holds BA and LLB degrees obtained from the University of Cape Town. He was active in student politics and was deputy speaker of the Student Parliament. He joined the Public Service through the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Development. He currently works at the Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Before joining the Public Service, he was the ANC's Senior Researcher in Parliament. He has contributed articles to the ANC's *Umrabulo* and the AWCYL *Hlomelang* publications as well as *The Thinker*.

Donald Ramotar is a member of the Central and Executive Committees of the People's Progressive Party of Guyana. He joined the Party in 1967 and moved through the ranks. He served as its General Secretary from 1997, following the death of Dr Cheddi Jagan, until 2013. He was the Party's successful Presidential candidate in 2011. He served as President of the Republic from November 2011 to May 2015. He represented the PPP on the editorial council of the *World Marxist Review* from 1983 to 1988. He has published articles in both the local and international press.

Professor Monty J Roodt is a lecturer/researcher in the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University in Grahamstown. His main research interest is in rural development, specifically land reform. He is a board member of the Border Rural Committee, a Section 21 company that focuses on rural development and land issues. He worked for the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights for two years. He recently published a novel entitled *Dead Man's Land*.

Professor Anver Saloojee is Assistant Vice-President of Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada. He was formerly President of the Ryerson Faculty Association and Vice President of the Canadian Association of University Teachers. Between 2005 and 2008 he was a Special Advisor in the Presidency, Government of South Africa. He has authored many articles in reputable journals and contributed chapters to a number of books.

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Using Gramsci and Laclau to understand contemporary Populism



Progressive populism has to reclaim democracy in the name of the people. It has to be unashamedly opposed to neoliberalism. It has to expose the dangers of exclusion so deeply embedded in right wing populism. Unless it can do all of this progressive populism will concede the political terrain to right wing populism.

By Anver Saloojee

Many contemporary analysts who reflect on the rise of 21st century populism around the world are ahistorical and lack a critical perspective which would allow them to distinguish progressive populism from reformist and right wing populism. They do not take a step back to look at the rich and textured body of critical literature on populism as an ideology and as a political movement.

The past few years has seen the growth of a huge body of literature on populism seeking to explain the rise of populist movements and leaders around the world, and in particular in Europe and the United States of America (USA). There is no doubt that globally we are in a political moment of populist upsurge and it can be argued this is very much a response to globalisation and the globalisation of the crisis of capitalism occasioned by the 2009 global economic collapse. Populists have been victorious in numerous countries including Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, Andrej Babiš in the Czech Republic, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey. In Italy a deal was struck between the far-right Northern League and the populist Five Star Movement and again migration was used as a significant electoral issue by the political parties on the right.

Populism is often linked to the notion that leaders and parties speak for “the people” against elites. Examples of this include the election of Donald Trump, with his “drain the swamp” rhetoric; the UK’s vote for Brexit and Nigel Farage’s claim that it was a victory for the people against the elites. The use of migration as a serious wedge issue in electoral politics in Europe and elsewhere, the rise of the anti-migrant sentiment, xenophobia, Islamophobia and racism in much of Europe (and the USA) have all prompted serious reflection on contemporary populism. Recently the right wing Freedom Party in Austria was successful in contesting the presidential elections. Its candidate Norbert Hofer challenged his opponent with the claim “You have the haute volée [high society] behind you; I have the people with me.”

In the United Kingdom there is Nigel Farage railing against the

corrupted "political class, calling for a "political tsunami", by a "people's army" to support "democracy" and reclaim "their country". In India Prime Minister Modi claimed his electoral victory his 2014 electoral victory was the victory of "the will of the people" blessed by the Hindu god Lord Krishna (janata jan janārdan); while in South Africa the Economic Freedom Front articulates both leftist rhetoric and racist and chauvinist sentiment as mechanisms to secure gains in the 2019 elections. On the left Podemos, the populist Spanish party, wants to give immigrants the right to vote, while on the other end the President of the USA wants to deport undocumented immigrants. This notion of speaking for the people against a real or imagined 'others' finds expression in many countries.

The elections that elevated these leaders and movements have been met with shock in many parts of the world, and particularly among the world's democratic establishments. They are perceived to be a threat to the core of democracy and its institutions. Is the current populist political moment a forerunner of a more sustained age of populism where the disaffected, the disenfranchised, the marginalised and all those deeply impacted by the 2009 economic crisis are drawn to the rhetoric of populism (of both the progressive and the right wing variants)? There is no doubt that 21st Century populism is directly linked to the democratic deficit and political disenchantment with institutional democracy, growing inequality within nation states and across regions, unprecedented technology change, economic stagnation, the erosion of the historic post war capital/labour compact (and the restructuring of those relations beyond the level of the nation state) and deindustrialisation. All of these have had disastrous consequences of the working classes and the middle classes in the European Union and in North America, Latin America and parts of Asia.

However, much of the recent reflections, analyses and the plethora of books and articles on contemporary populism globally is devoid of historical analysis. Populism is not a new

phenomenon, nor is it a homogenous concept. It has been hotly contested and it behoves us to take a step back and look at the debates on populism so as to get a firmer understanding of its contemporary rise, its differing national manifestations, roots and political expressions.

Surveying the literature on populism, what immediately becomes apparent is the immense confusion surrounding the term. Is it about a leadership style, is it a political movement, an ideology, a regime, or merely a tendency which sporadically appears in diverse types of movements and is it a symptom of political dissatisfaction with traditional democratic institutions and politics?

Certainly populism, given its high level of generality, can be usefully employed to explain the 19th Century Narodniki movement in Russia, the rise in the USA of a radical leftwing political

“Political struggle is not just class struggle; it can also be the struggle of the people against other forms of oppression.”

party that called itself "Populist" which swept much of the country in the 1890s and Peronism in 20th Century Argentina. And I would argue that, in the case of South Africa, it can explain the simultaneous existence of both the ANC and Inkatha during the Apartheid era.

The fluidity of a populist movement coupled with the open identification of the movement with a charismatic leader (Nasserism, Peronism, Vargism) lead many to be skeptical and mistrustful of populist movements. Populist movements do have certain similarities – charismatic leadership; an organisational form that revolves around the leader; a hierarchical order; an appeal to the "people"; and, initially at least, an ideology that reflects a heterogeneous mass base.

Despite appearances to the contrary there are important differences in the

movements, leaders and ideologies that can be labelled populist. The differences are to be sought in their genesis, the forms the movement takes, their modus operandi, their specific appeals to the "people" and the content of their ideologies. In spite of a core of similarities, populism manifests itself differently in different (and in some cases such as Apartheid South Africa, in similar) historical circumstances. A superficial treatment of the different manifestations of populism obscures the significant similarities and contributes much to the confusion around the use of the concept, leading many to search for an all embracing definition of populism.

Analyses of populism can be largely grouped into four strands. The first focuses on the class basis of populism. It can be seen as a response by the petit bourgeoisie to ever changing capitalist relations of production. In 19th Century North America it was an expression of small farmers; in Russia the peasantry; in Latin America, either the "disposable" mass or more commonly the middle class and alienated elites.

The second strand – the modernisation approach – sees populism as a response to the problems generated in the developing world undergoing transition to modern industrial countries in the context of globalisation. The third approach is the descriptive shopping list which enumerates the features of populism as movement and ideology, and then proceeds to ascertain which movements and ideologies meet their criteria. And the fourth approach, largely applied to the post World War 2 developing world locates populism in the context of underdevelopment.

A more sound theoretical approach to populism that allows for nuanced interpretations of contemporary forms of populism requires drawing on the Gramscian notions of hegemony, crises and organic intellectuals and the Laclauian notion of the fusion of popular democratic and working class demands. The significance of this approach is that it links populism to crises and vice versa and at the same time it highlights the role organic

intellectuals and the leaders of a populist movement play in choosing messages and options which ultimately shape the organisation and its political direction.

Laclau distinguishes between “the people” and a “class” – individuals are, by virtue of their social location simultaneously defined by their class, their race and gender, and being a part of the “people”, the citizenry writ large. Individuals from a variety of class backgrounds therefore can have a similar experience (for example racism or sexism) and therefore constitute the people. Political struggle is not just class struggle; it can also be the struggle of the people against other forms of oppression. The people can and often do make demands that lack a specific class content. The ideological hegemony of the dominant class is that it is able to incorporate popular democratic demands into its ideological discourse and thereby neutralise its antagonism to the state. This has been the success of Trump – the incorporation of the discontent of the white working and middle classes into his discourse and his electoral campaign. These groups have largely been left destitute by the impact of globalisation and deindustrialisation. Understanding this, Trump’s discourse consciously includes being anti-elitism while being a member of the dominant class; the anti-immigrant rhetoric; the return to protectionism and isolationism; an affinity with strong male authoritarian leaders; and sustained attacks on mainstream media.

Populism is linked to the existence of the entity “the people” in such a fashion that the demands of the people are incorporated into the ideology and the everyday rhetoric of the dominant class, so that the latter can rule at the level of institutional democracy. It is only when the dominated classes are able to dislodge popular demands from the ideological discourse of the ruling class that they pose a threat to the hegemony of the dominant bloc. For Gramsci, populism has its origin in crisis. It can result from contradictions between fractions of the power bloc (a crisis of hegemony) and or it can result when the dominant class can no longer

contain the demands of the people (a crisis of transformism).

When the ruling class can no longer neutralise popular democratic demands there is either a hegemonic crisis which opens the possibility of the emergence of right wing populism; or there emerges progressive populism of the dominated classes. It is essential to understand that what is populist in an ideological discourse is the particular incorporation of popular demands in an antagonistic manner. Thus we have Trump incorporating popular demands in a manner different to the way in which similar demands were incorporated in the Brexit vote in the UK, or the way right wing parties incorporated similar demands in Italy and elsewhere.

Two important things emerge from the above – first the relationship between populism and crises and

“This has been the success of Trump – the incorporation of the discontent of the white working and middle classes into his discourse and his electoral campaign.”

second that populism can take a variety of forms. The simultaneous existence of two very different forms of populism on the political terrain and their different responses to the “crisis” suggests that any theory linking crisis and populist responses must be cognisant of the large space open for alternate forms of political leadership, political messages and organisation to exist. Furthermore, the different responses suggest that populist movements do not exist in a vacuum.

The origin of populism (progressive, reformist or right wing) must be sought in the particular conditions which give rise to hegemonic crises within the power bloc, the organic crisis of the state, economic crises of capitalism (the global crisis of 2009-14) and the crises engendered

by the processes of globalisation. These crises heighten contradictions within the power bloc and exacerbate the “people-power bloc” contradictions. The deindustrialisation of the USA, occasioned by globalisation and the economic rise of China and the 2009 financial meltdown created conditions which left the white working class and the middle classes in the so called rust belt vulnerable to the xenophobic messages of Trump. In a similar vein the very slow economic recovery of Europe in the post 2009 era left many of the EU countries vulnerable to populist ideologues who were willing to peddle racist, anti-immigrant and xenophobic messages to secure electoral gains.

Depending on the specific form the crisis takes there will emerge a populist solution (or multiple populist solutions). Whether the specific form of populism developed will transcend its particular range (from progressive populism to socialism or right wing populism to fascism), will depend on a wide variety of socio-political circumstances – among them the exact nature of the people-power bloc contradictions, the nature of the hegemonic crisis, the receptivity of the people to racist, chauvinist and xenophobic interpellations and the response of the state to the dispossessed.

Gramsci’s contribution is that his formulation allows us to go beyond seeing populism simply as an ideology to seeing populism as movement and organisation. Since populist movements can take on a variety of organisational forms and populist ideologies can vary widely, it is imperative to show how popular democratic “interpellations” are articulated into the ideology of the working class in a manner antagonistic to the state and the prevailing ideology. Popular participation predicated on an antagonism to the state requires mediation by politico-organisational structures – mediation (i) between a charismatic leader and a heterogeneous mass base; (ii) of class contradictions internal to the organisation; and (iii) ideological thrusts which stem from internal struggles and conflicts.

A typology of the various forms of populism – progressive, reformist or

right wing, to have than taxonomic or classificatory value, can be understood by looking at the class basis of the movement (not at its rhetoric). However even that may not be sufficient. Many populist movements with the same class composition (petit-bourgeois leadership with a working class or peasant base) have differing political tendencies – they can be authoritarian or progressive (Inkatha and the ANC being cases in point). Since there is no general law linking the type of populist movement with its class composition, and since the class composition of the leadership is insufficient to determine the class character of the movement, we must turn to the formulation by Gramsci and look at the class interests the movement serves. In a period of “catastrophic equilibrium” it is possible for a mediator (a charismatic leader) to “rise above” the class struggle, the social conflict and consolidate power in her/his hands. This consolidation of power in the hands of a strong leader speaks directly to Gramsci’s salient observations about Caesarism being progressive or reactionary. It is progressive when it advances the interests of progressive forces and it is regressive when it advances the interests of reactionary forces in society.

Following Gramsci’s line of reasoning, many populist regimes are potentially Caesarist, for their leaderships often acquire a mediating role to become “separated/autonomous” from their base of support. What distinguishes progressive from right wing populism is class interests. A progressive populist movement is one that:

- incorporates and articulates working class demands in its political agenda;
 - consciously eschews racism, sexism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, ethnocentrism etc. as mobilising tools;
 - has an organisational and membership bias in favour of the working class;
 - incorporates the organic intellectuals of the working class within its decision-making structures; and
 - both challenges the state and the prevailing ideology and provides a coherent progressive alternative to it.
- Right wing populism on the other

hand does not challenge the state but seeks an accommodation with the dominant discourse, rhetorically challenges elites, speaks the language of the people but uses “othering”, racism, chauvinism, xenophobia etc., as tools to mobilise a base of popular support (at the ballot box and beyond) and ultimately uses authoritarianism and political bullying (for example at mass rallies) to maintain its base of support and to deal with any challenges to its authority. Right wing populism in pre-war Germany and Italy, even though it made cross-class appeals, was never able to win significant sectors of the working class over to its side. In fact right wing populism, the forerunner to fascism, rested squarely on the middle strata for its base of support. Where both forms

“The very slow economic recovery of Europe in the post 2009 era left many of the EU countries vulnerable to populist ideologues who were willing to peddle racist, anti-immigrant and xenophobic messages to secure electoral gains.”

of populism exist on the same political terrain and seek to draw support from largely the same constituency, political conflict (and potentially violence) is inevitable.

A reformulated theory of populism as has been briefly developed here, is important to understanding the rise of various forms of movements labeled populist in the 21st Century in Europe and elsewhere. This reformulation begins with looking at the ideological basis of the movement and looks at the form the organisation takes. Central to this is to analyse the very nature of the crisis which gives rise to populism and to recognise as Gramsci does that populist movements, born in response

to crises, will have a multi-class base. Populist movements respond to, but also shape, crises. This formulation alerts us to the potentially different responses populist movements on the same political terrain would have to the continually evolving crisis of the social formation.

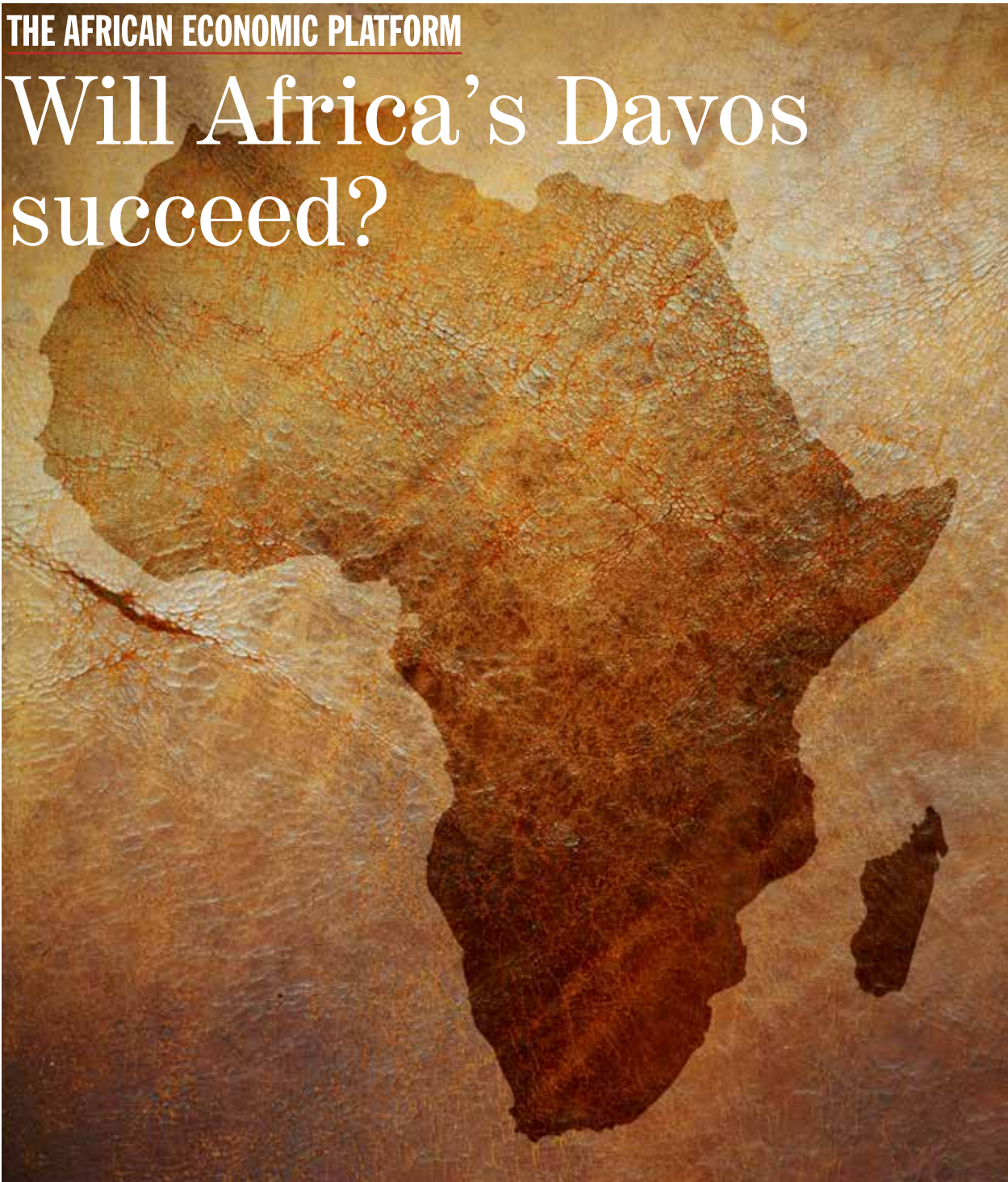
Contemporary populism is about the people expressing class antagonisms through the people/class interpellation. And the relationship between populism and crises suggests that the leadership, including the organic intellectuals, of a populist movement plays a vital role in shaping the messages of political mobilisation. Populist movements are affected by “formative episodes” when objective and subjective factors coincide to open up large spaces for the exercise of creative political leadership. A great deal of the responsibility for political creativity will be left up to the political activists in populist movements – activists who will respond to both repressive state actions and spontaneous and semi-spontaneous political actions initiated by the people against the power bloc.

Political activists in populist movements have to organise politically on what Gramsci calls the “terrain of the conjunctural” which is also the terrain on which the ruling class seeks to hold onto power (and the terrain on which right wing populism would be mobilising its mass base). Populism has exposed deep fissures between capitalism and democracy so the salient question of this populist moment is whether progressive populism can find a way to accommodate the big challenges of the day – among them the return to protectionism; the calls for tighter border controls on the movement of people; the environment; protection for the rights of minorities and the broader political disaffection with institutional democracy.

Progressive populism has to reclaim democracy in the name of the people. It has to be unashamedly opposed to neoliberalism. It has to expose the dangers of exclusion so deeply embedded in right wing populism. Unless it can do all of this progressive populism will concede the political terrain to right wing populism. ■

THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC PLATFORM

Will Africa's Davos succeed?



The AEP's catalytic role is meant to deliver quick wins, have a direct impact on socio-economic development, and win the confidence and commitment of African citizens.

By Garth le Pere

The African Economic Platform (AEP) closely resembles initiatives such as the World Economic Forum (WEF), the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), and the Clinton Foundation. As such, the AEP serves as an organisational mechanism for bringing together Africa's political leadership, its academic community, business leaders, private sector, and civil society in order to collectively reflect on and develop common approaches to the economic transformation of Africa within the context of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs. It was created in 2014 by African Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the African Union Commission (AUC) on Agenda 2063 and got off to an auspicious start with its inaugural assembly of stakeholders in Mauritius from 20-22 March 2017. The AEP will also serve as a lobby and advocacy mechanism to influence the agenda of the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government as well as other global summits for the purpose of accelerating Africa's integration.

The focus and relevance of the AEP thus takes on added urgency when it comes to the transformative vision of Agenda 2063 which is to achieve "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena". The ambition and vision of Agenda 2063 is, therefore, to set the entire continent on an irreversible path of growth and development over the next five decades, with continental integration providing the gravitational pull for bringing regions, countries, and people closer together in this common enterprise. The adoption of the first 10-Year Implementation Plan for Agenda 2063 in June 2015 provides the AEP with the first litmus test to prove its relevance.

The AEP's catalytic role is meant to deliver quick wins, have a direct impact on socio-economic development, and win the confidence and commitment of African citizens. Whereas African leaders often participate annually in the WEF to deliberate on African and global issues, the AEP's rationale is inspired by having a similar platform by Africans, for Africans, and with Africans. It thus represents a strategic intervention and an innovative endeavour by a range

of African stakeholders to develop an ecosystem of opportunities and options that would make a positive and enduring impact on the continent's economic transformation and integration processes.

Such an ecosystem is not only meant to provide momentum for realising the transformative ambition and vision of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs but very importantly, to ensure that the requirements and protocols of development finance for both are met and that the AEP's long-term sustainability is assured.

However, quite crucially there is also an acknowledgement that the vision and ambition of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs cannot be realised through Africa's perennial reliance on external

“Quite crucially there is also an acknowledgement that the vision and ambition of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs cannot be realised through Africa's perennial reliance on external sources of funding.”

sources of funding. Hence, there is an overwhelming imperative for Africa as a continental geo-political entity of 55 countries to finance its own growth and development. It is precisely in this existential context that the AEP has been established as an annual assembly for promoting results-oriented dialogue and frank discussion as a response to the financial sustainability of Agenda 2063 and meeting the 2030 SDGs while ensuring that the AEP itself is able to play a custodial role in this process over the long-term.

Modes of Participation and Organisation

The AEP wishes to follow best practice traditions of similar forums

such as the WEF, the BFA and the Clinton Foundation, but within a distinctive Pan-African idiom that is African-owned and African-driven and which is inclusive and pluralistic. In order to promote robust discussion and dialogue, the annual assemblies of the AEP will take place in a retreat format that strictly adheres to non-disclosure and attribution of views or identity under Chatham House Rules but whose final communique is expected to be endorsed through an AU Summit decision.

Every member state of the AU will be eligible to host the annual AEP assembly. As a platform its uniqueness lies in its convening authority and normative legitimacy which brings together state and non-actors from the continent and abroad. Besides governments and their delegations, the invited assembly includes leading continental institutions, corporate leaders, investors, African financial institutions, civil society activists, and international development agencies.

In order to concentrate the collective minds of these stakeholders, participation is restricted to AU Heads of State and Government, their delegations and representatives of the above sectoral interests. Representation requires a certain symmetry and balance between state and non-state actors as well as geographic representation. The stakeholders will be offered different but yet to be defined categories of membership but only those with an African identity and origin will be offered full membership, with the exclusive right to put items on the agenda for the annual assembly.

In its initial years of establishment, the AEP will be organised by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Foundation and its operational costs will be included in the annual AUC budget. Initial sources of AEP funding will include its membership contributions, and voluntary and assessed contributions from AU Member States. Coordination will take place through the office of the Deputy Chairperson of the AUC and a logistics committee will be chaired by the AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry with the assistance of an inter-departmental organising committee.

As an annual forum, it is important that the AEP also becomes the centre of an Africa-centred knowledge and advocacy community. This will require it to be capable of functioning within a strong capacity enhancement framework in financial, organisational and managerial terms. In this regard, it must play a leading role in developing the capacities for its own strategic governance and organisational management so as to ensure that the objectives of Agenda 2063 programmes and the 2030 SDGs are met, that they are on track, and that they have the necessary traction in purpose, performance, and outcomes.

Some Emerging Challenges

Firstly, from an institutional perspective, it is important that African governments become an integral part of driving the AEP process from year-to-year by growing its footprint as an ecosystem of opportunities and options which is closely aligned and tailored to Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs. This will require both political and financial commitment as well as close cooperation with the AUC in the design and execution of the capacity imperatives that are relevant for a sustainable AEP.

Secondly, as a fresh initiative by, for, and with Africans, the AEP can draw on other best practice experiences of effective stakeholder mobilisation and resource utilisation which are germane to the AEP's support of the structural transformation of Africa through Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs. The structures and processes of the WEF, the BFA, and the Clinton Foundation are instructive case studies which could inform the sustainability of the AEP (which we refer to below).

Thirdly, the AEP could also be considerably strengthened through robust and active participation by the private sector and emerging circles of African philanthropy. In much of Africa, there is too much dependence on external funding for development programmes. This has resulted in political, social, and economic agendas that are not determined by, with, and for Africans, thereby suppressing domestic agency, participation, and ownership. The substantial growth

and expansion of Africa's private sector and the significant scope of African philanthropy as a development resource could contribute to the AEP's sustainability if effectively mobilised.

The AEP in Africa's Political Economy

The AEP could be the catalyst for embedding this opportunity and options ecosystem in Africa's changing and improving political economy. The most critical development in this regard has been the signing of an accord by African Heads of State and Government in Kigali, Rwanda in March 2018 to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). When fully functional it will be the largest trade zone of its kind in the world, made up of 55-member countries, a population of 1.2 billion people, a GDP of more than \$3.4 trillion and with the potential to boost intra-African trade by 52 per cent.

“Representation requires a certain symmetry and balance between state and non-state actors as well as geographic representation.”

As a whole and notwithstanding the impact of the global financial crisis in 2008, Africa has managed to maintain an aggregate growth rate of around 4 per cent up to 2014 (compared to 3 per cent for the global economy) but this slowed down to 2.2 per cent for 2015/2016, then rebounded to 3.4 per cent in 2017 with expectations that there will be further expansion to 4.3 per cent in 2018. Total financial flows reflect the dynamism of Africa's domestic markets where inflows were \$180 billion and remittances amounted to \$66 billion in 2015.

It is also salutary for Africa's integration and the AfCFTA that a combination of economic and demographic factors will result in a significant expansion of wealth over the next 15 years, with Africa's total GDP projected to increase to \$2.6 trillion by 2020 and to \$15 trillion by 2060.

There are also great opportunities for industrial beneficiation which takes advantage of Africa's great bounty of natural resources and human capital and this is in line with the African Union's injunction that 'green' industrialisation should underpin inclusive economic transformation. A further impetus for economic growth is provided by increasing levels of urbanisation and the fast emergence of an African class of consumers: by 2030, 18 of the continent's major cities could have a combined spending power of \$1.3 trillion.

Overall, there have been major improvements in the values and standards of political, economic, and corporate governance, thanks in large measure to the efforts of the African Peer Review Mechanism to which 37 countries now subscribe (as of March 2018). However, we cannot ignore low levels of accountability, deficiencies in combatting corruption, and the mounting challenge of dealing with illicit financial flows (where losses are estimated at \$50 billion per year).

Persistent Systemic Concerns

To add to these and on the reverse side of the ledger, there are significant systemic concerns often associated with scepticism about Africa's rise. To name but a few, these are poverty, high unemployment, unequal distribution of resources, HIV/AIDS, political instability, food and human insecurity, poor governance, weak institutions, and environmental degradation. All these are symptomatic of the skewed ownership of income, assets, and productive capacity but also of a democratic recession and political instability. The main consequences have been restricting the voices of ordinary people in political participation and decision-making and this has had a material bearing on the reversion to authoritarian and repressive forms of rule as well as the rise of religious extremism.

Africa's problematic political and economic fortunes are compounded by persistent neo-patrimonial forms of governance and patronage culture where public resources and power are appropriated for narrow sectarian or corrupt ends. Other structural

problems include a general decline of already weak manufacturing and agricultural sectors; chronically high unemployment rates among Africa's women and youth; and the concentration of growth in the commodity and extractive sectors.

Crafting an AEP Response

In view of these considerations and challenges, Africa's transformation destiny must be predicated on its own agency and the promotion of a narrative that captures its own past and present experiences but with a firm eye on crafting a better future. The AEP could provide the strategic leverage and practical pathways in demonstrating how Africa's multi-layered human and natural development assets could be harnessed as a critical part of this transformation destiny.

This will be profoundly shaped and influenced by how the continent, its regions, countries, and people find a commonality of purpose that draws on four interconnected spheres of environment, economics, politics, and culture. Environmental concerns must be located in the challenges of addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation; economic concerns on promoting welfare-enhancing and inclusive growth and development with a focus on 'green' futures; political concerns with improving governance especially with regard to more effective institutions and better policy implementation; and cultural concerns must take account of how Africa's great diversity of people, language, and belief could be turned into an asset of social development.

How these spheres are brought together in a virtuous circle is the normative equivalent of Africa's 'quadruple bottom line'. Moreover, these interconnected spheres become even more material in the broader vision Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs so as to ensure sustainable futures and social justice for Africa's ever-growing population which continues to be scarred by endemic poverty, political instability, and ethnic exclusion.

The geographic size and socio-political complexity of Africa will demand a level of sustainability of the AEP that is capable of designing and

implementing practical metrics and tangible outcomes that are necessary for realising the letter and spirit of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs and in terms of the opportunities and options ecosystem mentioned above.

Towards a Sustainable AEP

The main challenge for the AEP and its stakeholders is how to maintain its healthy diversity and how to become a productive and resilient component of Africa's transformation destiny in terms of the essential tenets of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs. The sustainability ethos of the AEP should be based on how it could become the essential instrument for the successful implementation of a new development vision for both the continent and its people.

Consequently, its sustainability must

“Its sustainability must be underpinned by its organisational functionality, operational effectiveness, branding credibility, and self-financing ability over time.”

be underpinned by its organisational functionality, operational effectiveness, branding credibility, and self-financing ability over time. This must be accompanied by reachable short- and medium-term milestones that concentrate on putting in place the correct mix of organisational and Africa-wide stakeholder arrangements which are strongly supported by competent human resources and effective financial arrangements.

The AEP sustainability mechanisms must therefore ensure that there is sufficient buy-in and ownership of the platform process among stakeholders such that, on one hand, its annual convening is certain and guaranteed; and on the other, it must be a steering mechanism for prudent and achievable outcomes that are

measurable from year-to-year. In addition, it must demonstrate tangible evidence that there is both necessary and sufficient progress in implementing recommendations and initiatives which flow from the annual gatherings as far as Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs are concerned.

The sustainability of the AEP will thus depend on building the foundations for constructive engagement between governments, political parties, business, professionals, academics, trade unions, religious groups, NGOs youth and women for the purpose of shaping short-, medium-, and long-term targets and agendas around the common themes of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs. The AEP's sustainability must, therefore, be forged in the crucible of developing strategic and innovative partnerships in Africa and globally and defining best practice models and traditions.

The AEP and its *raison d'être* very much represents a form of 'indigenous institutionalisation' and as such it should help to pioneer new forms of domestic resource mobilisation and financing to underwrite its own as well as continental initiatives, with much of this responsibility being borne by African governments. This is the essence of the proclamation of 'The Africa We Want' in Agenda 2063 and the African Common Position on the 2030 SDGs. However, domestic sources for its own operations could be significantly enhanced if the AEP could focus on new forms of philanthropy as part of its sustainability outreach and as a strategic plank in its annual platforms. There is great scope for African business, commerce, and financial sector to support the operations of the AEP.

The Scope for African Finance and Philanthropy

Against the above imperatives for growth, development, and integration, it is something of a sad irony that despite a rich repository of resources, Africa cannot finance its own development. The components of Africa's largesse show that the continent derives \$520 billion from annual domestic taxes and \$168 billion in annual income from its natural resources; has \$400 billion

in international reserves, \$1.2 trillion from stock market capitalisation, and \$160 billion from Sovereign Wealth Funds; and that it can raise \$64 billion in Diaspora remittances, \$20 billion in Diaspora bonds, and another \$60 billion by curbing illicit financial flows.

It is also noteworthy that in 2016 Africa had 700 large companies which were earning revenues of more than \$500 million annually and that many of these companies have a growing Pan-African profile. Taken together, they have revenues of \$1.4 trillion and represent critical and strategic growth sectors in energy, telecommunications, retail, healthcare, transportation, and construction.

Corporate and commercial success is replicated and manifested in the wealth and prosperity of actors in the private sector. In 2009, there were 107 000 individuals who represented Africa's High-Net Worth Population defined by individual base assets of \$30 million (excluding their main residence). By 2013 this population had increased by 30 per cent to 140 000 and is currently around 180 000. It has High-Net Worth wealth of \$1.3 trillion while it is estimated that the potential for High-Net Worth and institutional philanthropy is between \$3 and \$7 billion. However, of the 40 wealthiest Africans on the Forbes list, only 22 had philanthropic programmes while self-reported donations amounted to only \$825 million. (This figure is indicative since there is also a large measure of giving that is informal and not publicised.)

More specifically, the AEP stands to benefit if it is able to take advantage of the expanding landscape of institutional philanthropy. This is characterised by an infrastructure made up of private, corporate, and family foundations; community grant-makers; worker's trusts and pension funds; public foundations; financial services mechanisms; and a range of intermediary offerings. Philanthropic efforts traverse a wide spectrum but are mainly directed towards education and health, poverty alleviation, entrepreneurship, support of community radio stations, scientific discovery, and relief for refugees and displaced persons.

It is worthwhile, therefore, that we

“The AEP stands to benefit if it is able to take advantage of the expanding landscape of institutional philanthropy.”

briefly examine the World Economic Forum, the Boao Forum for Asia, and the Clinton Foundation since they could be informative for the AEP. Space does not allow for more detailed examinations of their institutional and administrative organisation, and the management of their human and financial resources but the sketches below do provide the necessary insights as to their relevance for the AEP.

The World Economic Forum

The WEF has gained global recognition (and even notoriety) for its annual gatherings at the end of January in Davos in the eastern Alps of Switzerland. These gatherings see a coming together of about 2500 top business and corporate leaders, heads of state and government, top government officials and cabinet ministers, heads of regional and international organisations, and leading lights of the academic world, celebrities, and members of the media. At any meeting these participants come from about 100 countries. Every year, the annual meeting will concentrate on a particular theme. For example, in 2015 the theme was the new global context; in 2016, mastering the fourth industrial revolution; in 2017, responsive and responsible leadership; and in 2018, creating a shared future in a fractured world.

“Achieving tangible results has been contingent on Bill Clinton's ability to wrangle rich people's money for poor people's problems.”

The WEF relies on 1000-member companies to fund its activities, most of which are multi-national enterprises with more than \$5 billion in revenue. There is a stratified system of membership according to engagement and participation in WEF activities. In 2011, the annual individual membership fee was \$52 000 while an 'Industry Partner' had to pay \$263 000 and a 'Strategic Partner' \$527 000. These annual fees were raised in 2014 by 20 per cent and this has remained constant to date. Current general admission to the Davos meeting is \$19 000 per person.

Following the rise of anti-globalisation protests in 1999, the WEF began to invite non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and this participation has increased ever since as the WEF has sought to address criticisms that it suffered from a trust deficit; was a purveyor of neo-liberal and market-friendly ideas that increased poverty and destroyed the environment; and that it pandered to a 'Mafiocracy' of bankers, industrialists, technocrats, and politicians.

The Boao Forum for Asia

The BFA, also referred to as the 'Asian Davos', was established in February 2001 by 26 very diverse countries under the rubric of promoting regional integration and growth. The founding members include Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Kazakhstan, Korea, Myanmar, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Tajikistan, Singapore, and Vietnam. It derives its name from the town of Boao in China's southern Hainan province which has been the permanent venue of the forum since 2002. Between 2006 and 2016, three more countries joined, bringing its current membership to 29 countries.

Recently the BFA has been concerned with the implications of anti-globalisation sentiments originating in the West but especially in the United States and how this would affect the BFA agenda on economic integration and trade liberalisation. Such concerns have been compounded by the prospects of trade wars, geo-political rivalry, protectionism, and other neo-mercantilist tendencies. The problems of deteriorating growth and

growing trade deficits in the United States and the European Union have raised particular challenges for the Asian global value chain. This could undermine the inclusivity norm of globalisation and thereby have detrimental effects on members of the BFA, particularly China.

While the BFA does represent an alternate to the hegemonic agenda-setting of the WEF, it has not been able to successfully crystallise or cross-pollenate its ideas into other regional forums in Asia where it could exercise considerable policy influence. This has much to do with the elastic nature of its annual themes, where one is quickly eclipsed and superseded in favour of the next, without due follow up or continuity of purpose. Rather than building its comparative advantage as the bellwether of Asian integration, it reproduces annual themes that make it appear as striving too hard to match the WEF in impact and importance.

The Clinton Foundation

Upon leaving the White House in 2001, President Bill Clinton's vision was to set up an NGO that would be dedicated to addressing growing global inequalities and thereby, deliver tangible outcomes that could improve the lives of people all over the world. He would accomplish this by leveraging the unique capacities of governments, partner organisations, and a range of like-minded individuals. And thus began the work of the Clinton Foundation which through to 2016 has raised around \$2 billion from American corporations, foreign governments, political donors, and a constellation of wealthy groups and individuals.

Achieving tangible results has been contingent on Bill Clinton's ability to "wrangle rich people's money for poor people's problems". By the Foundation's own reckoning, it has improved the lives of at least 430 million people spread across 180 countries and this has been made possible by close to 3000 action commitments made at the Foundation's convened meetings. Initiatives are inspired by the Clintons' commitment to action and are as divergent as improving crop yields in Africa, earthquake relief in Haiti, fighting childhood obesity in the US, doing something about climate

change, and reducing the cost of HIV/AIDS drugs worldwide for 10 million persons.

The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), set up in 2005, is the most prominent of the Foundation's activities and its annual meetings attract a cast of the wealthiest and most influential people in the world, including current and former heads of state, Nobel Prize laureates, leading corporate and industry barons, and representatives of the world of foundations, philanthropy, and the media. After the CGI was set up – almost as the antithesis of the WEF and as "Davos with a soul" – the Foundation's revenue more than doubled from US\$58 million to US\$134 million between 2005 and 2008. By 2009, the Foundation had revenues of

“The analytical messages presented here demonstrate the importance of developing multi-stakeholder participation, commitment, and involvement on the basis of a shared and common enterprise.”

US\$242 million but declining to \$223 million in 2015, with nine branches and independent fundraising arms in Canada and Britain.

An entry ticket to the CGI annual meeting costs \$15 000 and corporate sponsors can pay up to \$250 000 to have their profiles showcased in the meeting's official literature as well as being invited to exclusive receptions hosted by the Clintons. An annual highlight of the CGI is the granting of the Clinton Global Citizen Awards to "outstanding individuals who exemplify global citizenship through their vision and leadership".

Charity Watch has given the work and achievements of the Clinton Foundation an 'A' grade based on the

fact that 89 per cent of its donations have directly funded its initiatives or have gone into Clinton programmes. However, questions have been raised about the transparency of donation sources, especially from governments which are perceived to be currying political favours, for example, like those in the Gulf Region of the Middle East. There has also been the problem of possible conflicts of interest while Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State and ran for the presidency of the US when accepting foreign and politically sensitive donations became a major issue.

Concluding Remarks

The analytical messages presented here as well as the didactic experiences of the WEF, the BFA and the Clinton Foundation, demonstrate the importance of developing multi-stakeholder participation, commitment, and involvement on the basis of a shared and common enterprise. The AEP must therefore be seen as a compact for driving a Pan-African programme that addresses major growth, development, and integration concerns and brings these into a productive and virtuous circle that is capable of uniting the entire African community in the pursuit of the objectives of Agenda 2063 and the attainment of the 2030 SDGs.

Its success or otherwise will firstly and in large measure be determined by its approach and methodology to governing its own structures and processes; and secondly, by how it builds and develops the necessary synergies with its multiple stakeholders and sectors with a view to providing the necessary means of empowering them in advancing the frontiers of growth, development, and integration as these are expressed through Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs. All this effort must be predicated on a realisable and sustainable agenda directed at the structural transformation of Africa for the benefit of all its people.

It has often been said that Africa is the graveyard of grand continental schemes. Let us hope that the AEP is not another false dawn that falls prey to the curse of Cassandra. ■

Nigeria Stoking the Wattage of Nationhood



Most great nations and societies have explicitly codified what are broadly understood as civic theologies.

By Ademola Araoye

President Muhammadu Buhari's recent lamentation over the struggles for ascendancy by different factions of those who perceive themselves as owners of Nigeria is indeed not a completely false narrative. The struggle for the full appropriation of critical spaces: social, economic, cultural, spiritual, political, by diverse social protagonists and antagonistic ideologies is a universal truism; in spite of the paradoxes implicit in this sudden acknowledgement of an open struggle for partisan hegemony, in which the President had prominently participated and is still perceived in many quarters as a major player. These confrontations reflect the lack of an articulated consensual essence of the Nigeria state-nation space. The struggle for the appropriation of every such space:

ideo-political, religious, economic, cultural, class and even on racial and ethnic lines, however remains the permanent motif of history.

In the 1920s, in the search for a universalistic vision and mission class struggle raged all about Europe. Conceptions of the struggle founded on Marxist theory and philosophy dominated not only the narratives around economic, but also the social and political development. Experts note that for Marxists, the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. History is the unending dynamic of the sharp interaction of the oppressor and oppressed in constant opposition to each other. The struggle is sometimes hidden and sometimes open. The challenge then of building anew a whole social order to

emancipate human society from the clutches of the bourgeoisie entailed attempts to elevate the lower classes over the ruling upper stratum of society. The struggle encapsulated the repudiation of religion. With a religious fervour of its own, this secular ideology was in favour of the solidarity of the oppressed in the process of building this whole new Social order. These visions constitute the *raison d'être* of many struggles and the essence of many states and nations mobilised by their secular ideology.

Societies mobilised through idea contestations and therefore successfully articulating competing visions of the altruistic global good or even including the possible unending national pursuit of global loot-contrived dependencies of weak states as well as societies and imperialism, for instance – are often at the vanguard of social evolution. They lead and others follow, irrespective of the moral and value judgments of the consequences of their ascendant vision(s) for the objective wellbeing of their societies in the long term, including even implications of the moral and value choices made by elite societies for the continued sanity of humanity. These conscious choices have come in many myths and terrible civic and secular hues in developed societies. Humanity has been elevated and at the same time deprived by these choices. Apartheid and Nazism come to mind. They are both linked. The false doctrine of superiority of the Aryan race uberall in the Third Reich elicited an overwhelming catastrophic impulse not only for Nazi Germany, but ultimately for the world. Israel was born out of the tragedy of these vulgar Nazi national pretensions and understanding of the essence of the *Deutsch volk*. The essence of Israel lies in its myth as the fulfillment of scriptural encryptions of a covenant of the return to the promised land. Accordingly, Israel's modern reincarnation and creation are perceived as a return home from a Diaspora to a haven of refuge founded on a religious myth. It provides the myth to sustain national coherence, whatever the internal controversies and political prejudices around the morality, justice and fairness of the policies of the State of Israel.

Meanwhile, the rise of ultra-right nationalism associated with Donald Trump's United States, a direct assault on the foundational essentials of the historic secular theology of the American nation, reminds us of the cyclical disjunctions and continuities of history and the centrality of the clashes of partisan and dominant social forces as drivers of the direction of individual states and nations. Emanating from the notion of America as a "shining city on a hill" flows the concept of American exceptionalism that has been the barometer through which the United States of America has gauged the pulse and health of the nation, especially in uncertain times of social turbulence. The concept of shining city on a hill was a vision to brand the emerging and embryonic America early in its colonial evolution. It was introduced in a 1630 sermon by Puritan John Winthrop while still aboard the ship *Arbella*, the lead vessel ferrying the early puritans to the United States.¹

Although Winthrop applied the term in relation to the envisaged character of the future Massachusetts Bay colonists "as a city upon a hill", that would be watched by the world, it was the ideal that the New England colonists placed upon their hilly capital city of Boston. The Puritans' community in New England would set an example of communal charity, affection, and unity to the world. The American nation later appropriated the concept to characterise the national community. America's exceptionalism has been reaffirmed in the twentieth century by American Presidents – from the president-elect John F Kennedy who on 9 January, 1961 acknowledged being guided by the standard of John Winthrop, to President Ronald Reagan who, on the eve of his election in 1980, proclaimed that he had quoted John Winthrop's words more than once on the campaign trail that year. He espoused his belief that Americans in 1980 were every bit as committed to Winthrop's vision of a shining "city on a hill," as were those long ago settlers.

President Reagan later highlighted that the visitors to that city on the Potomac do not come as white or black, red or yellow; they are not Jews or Christians; conservatives or liberals;

or Democrats or Republicans. Despite his stout conservative credentials, President Reagan in his 11 January 1989 farewell speech to the American nation, reiterated that in his mind the shining city on the hill was a tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace.² More contemporaneously, President George W Bush and Barack Obama have invoked America as the shining city on the hill. It is against this background that Donald Trump has been largely perceived by good old grounded Americans as negating the sacrosanct and fundamental premises of the American nation. In 2016, Mitt Romney, a 2012 Republican presidential candidate, using the template of the shining city on hill condemned Donald Trump's 2016

“Every serious nation thus rests on a certain transcendental idea or uncontested national ethos defining its essence. It drives the national process.”

presidential campaign. He noted that Mr. Trump was directing anger felt by Americans for less than noble purposes by creating scapegoats of Muslims and Mexican immigrants, calling for the use of torture and for killing the innocent children and family members of terrorists. Romney further highlighted that Trump cheers assaults on protesters and applauds the prospect of twisting the Constitution to limit first amendment freedom of the press. This, Romney intoned, is the very brand of anger that has led other nations into the abyss.³ Mitt Romney warned that given Trump's temperament and lack of judgment as president, Trump's personal qualities would mean that America would cease to be a shining city on a hill.⁴

With regard to Japan, in a 1920s treatise, David Williams traces Japan's

phenomenal success to the purposeful cast of Japanese national ethos. Indeed Japan's national objectives had to be seen to stand at the heart of the collective enterprise that has characterised modern Japan. Williams notes that the success of Japan, then perceived as a poor country, pointed to an important truth: the chief factor in fostering state power as an act of collective will is the fruitful marriage of clarity of purpose and the vigorous creation of the national institutions necessary to achieve those goals. Finally, Williams advances that the success of Japan had many sources, but the striking feature of her modernisation drive has been the lucidity of her national purpose.

It is to be highlighted that as a collective force, the interaction of partisan forces, mobilised on jousting divergent ideas and visions of society impact the evolution of the system, the direction of its development and the tenor of the life of global humanity. Thus in the beginning was the idea, conceptualised and first articulated in the Word as philosophy of action. Otherwise, in the dictum of Kafka, in the beginning everything was once nothing. Ideas energise while transforming nothingness into concrete and enduring reality, for good or otherwise.

Every serious nation thus rests on a certain transcendental idea or uncontested national ethos defining its essence. It drives the national process. That is the big lacuna in the badly riled and unviable African 56 nation state system where only one or two states, if any, are mobilised on some almost transcendental notions of their concrete being driving the state and serving as the organic glue holding its multinational society together.

Beyond the full and suffocating throttle of dedication to corruption and mediocrity, what is the essence of Nigeria? Extrapolating from the odious character of its public realm, what is its secular ideology or, if you may, its civic theology? A physical throwback to the Hobbesian jungle where anything goes? A national space consecrated to unmediated fraud and malfeasance comprehensively and in the service of the vilest of

human foibles, from unconscionable leadership to depraved followership, from the defiled and polluted sacred to the dilapidated secular? To fake gods and empty religiosity? What are the sublime ideational underpinnings on which the Nigeria state space rests? In the context of this conundrum, Nigeria must be redeemed from a template for various projects of partisan coalitions determined to exploit the floundering state space to death, literally and as a metaphor. The partisan coalition of intent is mobilised more by the personal interests of members in the sharing of the public loot may be contrasted with the ideological or programmatic interests that drive a conventional coalition of political forces.

The political settlement, meaning the nature of subsisting, but constantly interim, agreements on value distribution among the dominant elites across the board, on which Nigerian politics rests is confounding. In the context of the permanent fluidity of every political settlement, the lines of convenient cleavages of the multiple nebulous coalitions are defined in conspiratorial terms of class – the coming together of economic and political elites across the nation determined to exclusively loot and share the common wealth among themselves without a qualm. A great deal of the political structures – political parties – are configured to serve these limited pan Nigerian but anti-Nigerian partisan interests. Lauretta Onochie affirms that the practice has been that Nigerian politicians belong to political parties based on how much money they can gain access to through their political affiliation. Access to oil wells and national wealth in cash and solid minerals is often on the table for sharing. Conservatives, progressives, socialists, liberals, etc. all muddle up in one messy party.⁵

In fact, some have averred that even the former ruling party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), was never a serious party but a group mobilised by corruption.⁶ It may be said to represent a coalition of converging personal intents. Such a coalition revolves around a commonality of intent and interests that, unlike conventional party coalitions, are not necessarily based on

ideological or philosophical principles or even common programming. The intents are often personal and amoral and may have little salience to the public good. Often these intents have deleterious consequences for the projection of the public good, both in material and non-material terms.

The case against former National Security Advisor under the PDP administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, Col Sambo Dasuki, charged with alleged money-laundering and criminal breach of trust, is illustrative. Dasuki, standing trial on a 19-count charge bordering on alleged diversion of N13.6 billion (US\$2.2 BILLION), claimed that the money, ostensibly meant to procure arms for the Nigerian military to prosecute the war against Boko Haram, was distributed to political allies across the country. Dasukigate has seen many prominent

“The success of Japan had many sources, but the striking feature of her modernisation drive has been the lucidity of her national purpose.”

Nigerians across the country indicted as accomplices in the arms deal scandal. This coalition of nebulous intent transcends normally problematic ethno-religious and ethno-regional cleavages in the country.⁷

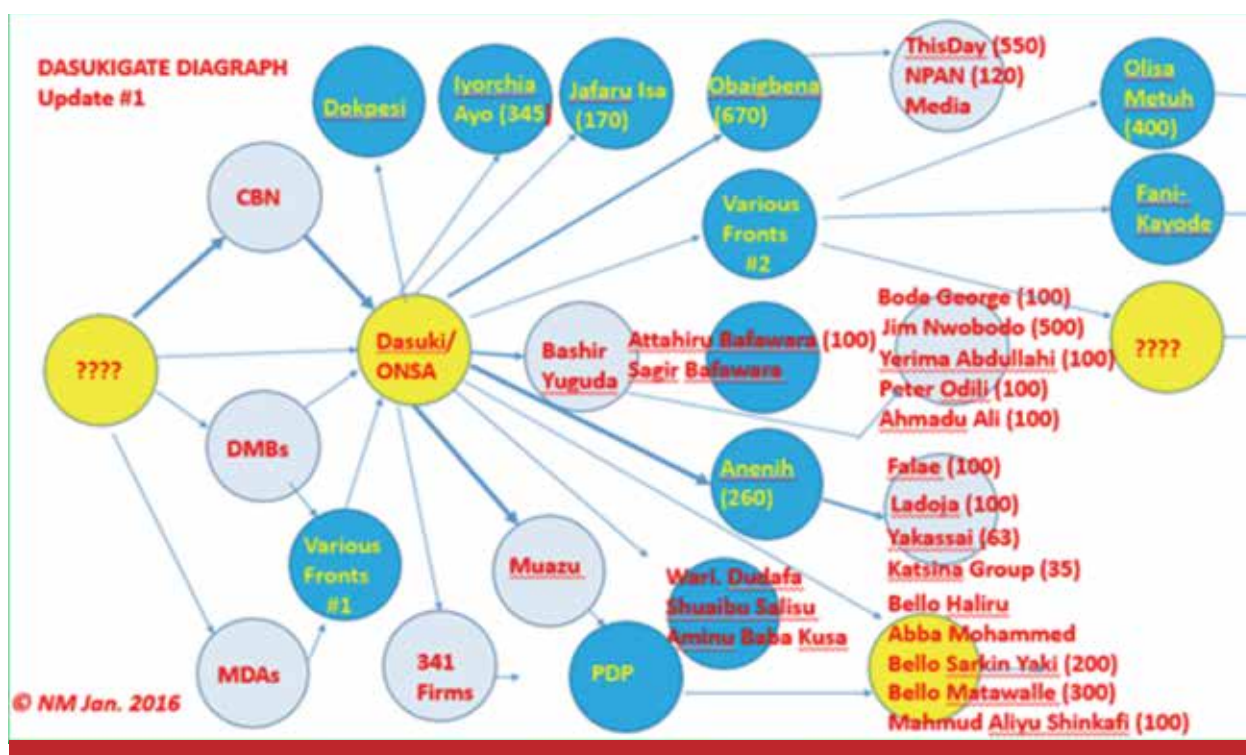
Some have calculated the opportunity cost of Dasuki gate. In 2013, the Nigerian Army manpower strength was 162,000. It can be calculated that if the misappropriated United States \$2.2 billion procured just M762 rifles, each soldier would have had four such rifles, or 25 AK-47, if AK-47 was preferred. \$2.442 billion would purchase 339 T-72 armored for each of the six army divisions and the air force could have had additional 222 AH-1 Cobra choppers or 145 F-7NI bomber jets. It could also have provided the Nigerian military forces with 751, 384 M762 automatic rifles, 4, 070, 000 AK-47

rifles, 2, 035 T-72 armored tanks, 222 AH-1 Cobra helicopters, and 145 F-7NI bombers.⁸

Accordingly, some have observed that apart from the Halliburton saga, no other corruption case in Nigeria has networked individuals previously considered sacred and untouchable the way the Dasuki gate is doing.¹⁰

The Nigerian political elite thus exhibit a key consensus of Pareto's insights on elites – that the members of the elite class will always try to ensure that the non-elites should not influence social, economic and political processes in any manner. And some families are building political dynasties. In spite of the nebulous coalition, in this national configuration is also embedded the struggle along ethno-regional lines in the violent confrontations of those who perceive themselves to be along the margins of power and who strive to dislodge those considered the dominant forces; while the latter seek to consolidate their historic holdings, religious antagonists deploying their platform for ascendance and to attain partisan privilege, the national securo-military gang aligned with some of the hegemonic forces against every other stakeholder in the affairs of the state. In this context, the state and its internal processes have been rendered as instruments of exclusive capture by partisan forces. This genre of state is thus not an end in itself. The fact that the pervasive struggles that characterise the national process are directed at partisan and exclusive appropriation is a direct result of the state's lack of a consensual essence.

Nigeria and its dominant internal contentions reflect the vulgarity of African multi-national states with no clear *raison d'être* (reason to exist). Some have attributed this state of affairs to the inability to rise above the challenges of its antecedence. These would include the motives that drove the amalgamation of the northern and southern provinces and struggles around periodic modifications of the internal construction of the outcome of the contrived union. The almost mercantilistic underpinnings of its founding would seem to have become central to the illog around the



Dasukigate's Diagram of Corruption⁹

national operating procedures of the state of Nigeria. Without consensus on what the Nigerian state stands for, the politics of total partisan appropriation of the socio-economic and political spaces has been the dominant impulse in the struggles and accordingly, the evolution of the state, its structure and its political economy.

The struggle for absolute partisan appropriation of the state space is indeed the norm in Africa – Congo Brazzaville, Burundi, Cameroon, Togo, Liberia, Gambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau... The difference is that Nigeria's size imbues it with a resilience that many of the unviable rag-flag personal fiefdoms and enclaves that arrogate to themselves the status of states in the continent do not have. Yet the crippling pathologies, internal dynamics and the dominant partisan discourses of Nigeria are representative of the pervasive lethargy at interrogating conventional wisdom and, at the same time, the many struggles of a continent that has failed, continues to fail and would continue to fail as contrived to be. Change might come only if Africa repudiates the imposed false and

vacuous pretences, reflected in their contingent sovereignty that have been conveniently appropriated by its elite, as well as the indiscriminate spiritual defections to strange places.

Nigeria and African political entities must address the lack of a *raison d'être* for their existential conditions. The internal geo-physical structure is often designed to support a peculiar political economy in the service of partisan hegemonic appropriation of the totality of the state space. In the ensuing contest, there is neither a national denominated morality gauge nor are there any agreed ethical boundaries in this Hobbesian national struggle for the total partisan appropriation of the spaces. The profusely contaminated and congested national spiritual spaces, as in most of Africa, are congenital. They have also been polluted almost beyond redemption. Nigeria's on-going intensely moral crisis is thus beyond the substantive material and concrete. It is also in the metaphysical realm. It is reflected also in the poverty of ideas or the relegation of logic and profound and critical thinking in the public realm to irrelevance in national processes.

Much of the national discourse is

mere amplified noise and cacophony. And the noise is often focused on fighting immediate brush fires to protect narrow partisan interests. Accordingly, Nigeria has been riled to its foundations by a complete absence of a national civic theology – a lack of a coherent ideational framework around which the nation can revolve. Nigeria has been auto-driven to the precipice by the multidimensional dissonance in its fractious society. The last dimension of this pervading paucity accounts for the absolute absence of a compelling *raison d'être* for Nigeria.

Most great nations and societies have explicitly codified what are broadly understood as civic theologies. Again, this is the case in the United States, France or even Germany. It is why in the United States today, the top echelon of the Republican Party is embarrassed to find a Donald Trump emerged as its presidential candidate. With the likes of a virtually uneducated Sarah Palin and her Tea Party testing the waters in repudiating the core values of the United States in the Senator McCain presidential campaign, Trump's current elevation of unvarnished extremism to a national

presidential platform has threatened the very ethical and moral foundations of America as a nation, state and society. In other countries, national civic theology is implicitly and unshakably consolidated in historic national understandings of what they stand for, as in Great Britain, even the United States, in spite of Donald Trump, and, notably, Japan. Again, some societies have struggled over the centuries as in Turkey to define a national essence to direct it.

Nigeria is thus a state groaning under the weight of a lack of civic theology. It has no transcendental values distilled into a moral and spiritual foundation essential for any modern society. Historically, civic religion was intended simply as a form of social cement or an organic glue, as an instrument to unify the state and society by providing it with civic sacred authority. The end result of this void in Nigeria is the cyclical nature of confused national debates and contentions around the constantly shifting fundamentals, including the basic structure of the state. A vacuum on the fundamentals of a non-existent national consciousness or an attempted consciousness based on a rot of nothingness has percolated down to the grassroots through equally deceptive elite self-serving rationalisations. What is, after all that cacophonous clatter on its dissolubility or non-dissolubility for example, the essence of a Nigeria?

The historic contentions around the expression of the Nigerian state is about revenue allocation and who is placed to appropriate, legally and through other means, not the largest share but the totality of this revenue at the institutional, community and personal levels. Hegemonic and partisan pretenses become instrumental to favorable placement to assure a large morsel of revenue. The acclaimed institutional protectors of the integrity of the Nigerian state, the Executive, the Judiciary, including the Bar, and the military, as with elsewhere on the continent, have always all proven to be false redeemers. The allure of stealing and corruption is central to the internal dynamic of the state. Against this background, it is legitimate to pose the question of what Nigeria, as with the

modal African state, is about beyond sharing and stealing money? And why so?

By February, 2016, *Sahara Reporters* noted that at least 9 out of 109 members of the Nigerian Senate were enmeshed in criminal cases. The nine lawmakers represented 10 percent of the members of the upper legislative chamber. The majority of the cases are related to allegations of corruption, running into billions of naira. The senators, most of them former governors, are accused of misappropriating public funds. About six of the lawmakers have been docked at various courts for trial on fraud charges. Two of the senators, however, are facing charges of forgery and drug offences, respectively, while the last one has been interrogated by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) over alleged fraud.

In the current 8th assembly, no fewer than eight senators and at least one member of the House of

“Nigeria and its dominant internal contentions reflect the vulgarity of African multi-national states with no clear *raison d’être*.”

Representatives have supposedly had a brush with the law, resulting in criminal charges filed against them in the courts.

Among the lawmakers, are the leadership of the Red Chamber, chairs and deputy chairs of sensitive Senate committees.¹⁰ Also, a three-term senator and former governor of Zamfara State, representing Zamfara West Senatorial District in the Senate, who is the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Marine Transport and a member of other committees, including Interior that oversees the police, prisons, immigration and the fire service, was in January 2016 docked on a 19-count charge of corruption by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) at the Zamfara State High Court in Gusau. The commission accused

him of diverting part of the N1 billion project funds for the repair of collapsed Gusau Dam and resettlement of the victims of flood to other purposes.¹¹

Meanwhile, two former governors have been jailed for misappropriation of public funds. These are a two time Governor of Taraba state, Reverend Jolly Tanko Nyame, who was convicted in June 2018 for diverting N1.64 billion during his tenure. Having been dragged before the Court by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on a 41-count charge, the court held that Nyame was guilty of 27 of the 41 charges against him. He was sentenced to two, five, seven and 14 years in jail respectively after he was found guilty of offences including receiving gratification, obtaining public funds without due consideration, and criminal breach of trust. On June 12, 2018 another former two time Governor of Plateau State, Senator Joshua Dariye, was given a 14 year jail term by the same Abuja High Court. He was found guilty on charges of criminal breach of trust and misappropriation of over N1.16bn.¹²

These cases, the trial of the Senate President and the seizure of the assets of a sitting governor have elicited attempts in the Senate to confer absolute immunity on the heads of all legislative houses in the country. The initiatives have re-opened the debate on the propriety of retaining the immunity clause in the Constitution. It is this context that activist lawyer Femi Falana contends that no public officer is entitled to absolute immunity as the beneficiaries of the immunity clause may be sued in their official capacity or made nominal parties in criminal proceedings. They may also be sued to defend their elections, either in court or election petition tribunals or charged with crimes against humanity and genocidal acts before the International Criminal Court at The Hague. In conclusion, he called on the Nigerian people to demand for the abolition of immunity in the struggle for public accountability and transparency.¹³

This situation demonstrates the reality that internal political configuration and entrenched socio-political dispensations in Africa, just as in Nigeria, were designed to advance

a certain extraneous cause and causes far removed from the interests of the peoples of the continent. In the final analysis, the evolution and devolution of the Nigerian state has been driven by illogic. Apparent logics are only rational within specific contexts and challenges in time that place and limit these important developments within particular historical loci. In a longitudinal frame of time they prove ultimately short sighted. A fundamental flaw is seen at work here. The critical challenge is ideational. The common denominating void in the challenge of Nigeria and practically all the non-nation states in sub Saharan Africa is the historic incapacity to formulate a broad consensus on transcendental ideo-philosophical foundations that define the new political space to which all its constituent socio-political communities ascribe.

There is a litany of attempts in this regard. And they may sound paradoxical. Mobutu's Authenticite is an interesting example. As an iconic representation of the very worst of Africa's governance paradigm in his capacity as an unrepentant murderous stooge and proxy of neo-imperialist West in Africa, he was a precursor of life Presidency. He preceded copycats like Pierre Nkunrunziza in Burundi or Paul Biya in neighboring Cameroon or even Sassou Nguesso in the Republic of Congo, or I might even add locally Olusegun Obasanjo's attempt at unconstitutional term elongation. Mobutu Sese Seko had the good sense to attempt to institute a rallying fundamental creed of Authenticite to ground his dubious enterprise of keeping Zaire under his belt.

Leopold Sedar Senghor's strand of Negritude was tragic. His position was consistent with that of his misguided compatriot Blaise Diagne who in 1919 subsumed the salience of the unity of Africans under assimilation into French culture and national life. In 1921, at the Second Pan-African Congress that met in several sessions in London, Paris and Brussels, the only dissenting voices on African Unity were those of Blaise Diagne and Gratien Candace, both French politicians of African and Guadeloupean descent, who represented Senegal and Guadeloupe

in the French Chamber of Deputies.

They both soon abandoned the idea of Pan-Africanism because they advocated equal rights inside the French citizenship and thought the London Manifesto declaration too dangerously extreme. In effect, they effectively denied the unity of Africa as a fundamental condition for black emancipation. Reports of 1919 conference note that it took the combined efforts of Blaise Diagne and WEB Du Bois to navigate around the obstacles by the French government and organise the Pan-African Congress in Paris in February 1919. Diagne's role was crucial to the convening of the Congress. A Senegalese, Diagne was the highest-ranking African in French politics, having assisted France

“Western secular democracy is a particularly troublesome concept for Islamists as for them it implies an essentially atheistic society and state. Islamic fundamentalism also feeds off anti-Western xenophobia.”

in recruiting African soldiers. As a Senegalese deputy to the French Parliament, French Prime Minister Clemenceau approved the Congress as a political favour to them; nonetheless he disapproved widespread publicity for it.

Then came Cheikh Anta Diop, a foremost African philosopher, physicist, sociologist and chemist – a rounded intellectual – from Senegal, who later formulated the seminal work on the economic and cultural basis of a federated continental African state, adumbrated that national problems in Africa were still being met with bureaucratic mentality. He was prescient in noting the lack of cultural policies worthy of the name

and that none of the new states then had adopted a systematic policy of restoration. Finally, in 1987 he observed that there had been no political work accomplished in Africa that might radically have transformed consciences or prepared them for the austere tasks required by true independence. Refusing platitudes and political gratifications, he was thrown into jail by Sedar Senghor. Mwalimu Nyerere's Ujaama, Ivorian Ivorite (as an intellectual rallying point and not the corrupted political deployment of the concept) to hold all constituent nations in the state together, have been attempts at formulating civic theological precepts at the national level. Yet Nigeria has been uniquely placed to develop a national civic theology around a truly emancipatory Afrocentric template.

It is therefore clear that the pursuit of Pan-Africanism expressed in a dedication of a national commitment to the holistic emancipation of black humanity provided one very potent idea to ground the *raison d'être* for the Nigerian state. Nigeria, by virtue of not just its population size, the sheer diversity of its internal constituents of over 250 nationalities and its splay of indigenous and imported hegemonic faiths, is best placed to codify the essence of its large presence and stature as the central continental motor to drive the development and the overall transformation of the place of black humanity in the global scheme of things. Snippets of this have featured in the Afrocentric foreign policy but the average Nigerian is yet to understand the critical place of Nigeria in the historic challenge of black humanity. These represent a potential mine of ideas and ethical imperatives on developing a *raison d'être* for the Nigerian state. If Nigeria would be the shining exemplar of the black nation state, it would then refuse to accommodate and worse still validate the kinds of moral imbeciles, ethical monstrosities, including dubious statesmen, who have laid siege on the state space and polluted and clogged its social and political firmament.

If championing the challenge of Pan-Africanism is unappealing to Nigerians, Nigeria must then craft a

more ingenious reason why it must continue to exist as one indivisible state. This is a basic minimum requirement in an era when minorities everywhere, driven by an assortment of primordial sensibilities, seek self-expression in geo-political terms. Some have concluded that a controversial agenda of forceful partisan expansion of territorial claims by an aggressive minority hegemonic force is at the heart of the bloody war of herdsmen and farmers, especially in the traditional confluences of ethnic boundaries in what used to be parts of the old monolithic North.

The good luck with Nigeria is that the global strategic imperatives demand a bulwark against the potential expansion and conquest of black Africa by radical Islam in its historic confrontation with the West. Yet, the very fact of being perceived as pro West and Christian exacerbates Nigeria's problem. As the Boko Haram phenomenon has demonstrated and highlighted by Zbigniew Brezinski, Western secular democracy is a particularly troublesome concept for Islamists as for them it implies an essentially atheistic society and state. Islamic fundamentalism also feeds off anti-Western xenophobia. Africa is not now allowed to choose, because by repudiating its own authentic spiritual essences and consigning its self to alien spiritual spaces in its massive defection from the self, Africans may have lost the freewill to choose to be itself. There is always a price to pay for choices made. That is why El Shabab and Boko Haram cannot operate in India or Japan. These societies have sustained the integrity of their spiritual essences. There is thus no vacuum in the spiritual realm for exogenous hegemonic faiths to fill.

So, Nigeria is caught in a dilemma of how best to repudiate the script of the main gladiators of co-opting Africa as willing proxies in the contemporary and millennial edition of their historic fight. Boko Haram and its affiliation with the Islamic State and El Shabab are good pointers to this danger for Nigeria. The continued repudiation of black humanity of its own spirituality in favor of hegemonic imports does not augur well for the future. Without any

raison d'être, Nigeria is pilotless in terms of ideational pivots of its continued survival. A cynical perspective would then be that Nigeria would survive only because it serves the interests of the historical rapists of the continent, and not because of its intrinsic value in itself. It is going to be an unpleasant survival for all.

It is against this background that every so often, Nigeria has acquired, in an almost seasonal and a boring mechanical character, the ritual of going through the umpteenth national conversation regarding the structure of the state. The motif driver of the engagement of the same national elite is in relation to the sharing of the national resources. By implication, it is never to formulate common understanding on

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the ingredients of an organic glue to hold together the many clashing and disparate interests in this multi-national and multi religious state. In the absence of what some have described as a civic theology to undergird the concept of the nation-state, personality cults emerge in many African rag-flag states and the ethnic and religious become the dominant emotive parameters in all. But in Nigeria has emerged a deep rooted national consensus among its dubious elite on how to bleed the country to death. And they seem to have succeeded, so far.

Less than a hundred families have brought Nigeria to its knees. The consequences are the rise and daily rise of grass roots based militancy

and irredentism outside the control of a discredited elite. These bodies represent a final repudiation of the status quo, including the odious miasma of unethical axiomatic foundations of the Nigerian non-nation state and society and the entrenched illogic of the standard operating procedures governing the national process. This is an urgent task before the Nigeria state space is shredded and joins the litter of the many hopeless small fiefdoms in Africa. These fiefdoms are led, as in the Gambia, Burundi, Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and others by petty minded or outright mindless illiterate dictators. In aftermath of the death of Nigeria would emerge many more unviable pretend state spaces on the continent. Therefore, warts and all, the permanence and longevity of Nigeria is still the best bet as the nucleus for the struggle for the holistic emancipation of Africa. Just perhaps, this simple idea fortified by rigorous expatiations has a potential to galvanise and give meaning to sacrifices required to sustain a Nigerian state worthy as legacy to bequeath to future generations. ■

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Karl Marx and the Future Society



Lenin developed a New Economic Plan which was essentially an economic plan based on a tri-sectional economy: the state, cooperative and private sectors.

By Donald Ramotar

May 5, 2018, marked the bi-centenary of the birth of Karl Marx, one of the most powerful thinkers of all times. The fact that articles are being written and events are being held all over the world to commemorate this event is a demonstration of the relevance of Marx even today.

This is an important point to make, since his 'death' was proclaimed over and over again since his passing in 1883.

Marx's Theory

Presently there is a debate regarding Marx's analysis of capitalism. Time and time again it has proved to be correct and has stood the test of time.

Marx pointed out that the main contradiction of capitalism was the social nature of production and the private appropriation of wealth. He also predicted that free competition would lead to monopoly. Another very important prediction was that under capitalism wealth would be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands.

Today, the social nature of production that Marx spoke about is not just confined within a country but has become global. Globalisation has led to a global socialisation of production. Monopolies are the dominant feature of capitalism today with many monopoly corporations commanding more wealth than a lot of nation states. Not only do we have monopolies, but transnational corporations as global wealth is essentially social, appropriated privately.

As far as concentration is concerned it has reached unprecedented heights. Figures from many international organisations point out that the wealth held by fifty-eight of the world's richest persons is more than the wealth held by the bottom half of the world's population or three and a half billion people. The concentration is deepening. A decade ago the figure was 300 persons. So life has proven Marx's analysis to be true.

Moreover, Marx's approach in many other areas remains relevant today. His methodology in the study of history is used by all universities throughout the world, even though Marx is not always

given credit for that.

His impact on sociology, philosophy, arts and culture has been very substantial.

Where some social scientists part with Marx is his conclusion that society must develop beyond capitalism.

Marx was not the first to speak about the development of a new communist society. Before him we had Robert Owen from England; Saint Simon from France, among others who propagated this new society.

Where Marx differed from Owen and others was how to get to that new society.

For Owen and company, persuasion was the main tool. They used moral arguments to try to persuade the capitalist to join in the communist project.

“His emphasis again was that production must increase to satisfy people's needs. In that way he felt that the selfishness and greed that bourgeois theoreticians spoke of would be gradually overcome.”

Marx called them utopian. He was of the view that the capitalists could not be persuaded in that direction. He came to the conclusion after his profound study of history that capitalism was a phase in human development. It logically must develop towards socialism/communism. What had to take place was a revolution.

Marx identified the forces that would lead the revolution as the proletariat, which he described as the working class of the 19th century. He wrote that the working class can only free itself from exploitation by freeing society as a whole. Eventually, he argued that such a revolution would lead to a classless society.

Critics claimed that Marx himself was a utopian. They argued that man

was inherently greedy and selfish and, therefore, capitalism cannot be destroyed, only modified.

Marx rejected that argument. For him people are essentially good. It is capitalism and exploitation that has made us selfish. To cure that a revolution is needed.

Bourgeois propaganda has gained some credence because of the developments in the world in recent times. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has collapsed. So too have the Eastern European socialist countries.

Some others who have tried to build a new socialist society have run into many difficulties. Many economies are suffering from serious problems and shortages are pronounced.

To be sure a lot of the problems spoken about above are as a result of enormous economic, political and even military pressures from western capitalist countries, mainly the US and EU states.

Having said that, however, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that many mistakes were made. The mistakes are both theoretical and practical.

It is true that Marx did not write very much on what the new society would be like. However, he did deposit some thought, mainly in the debates he had with some socialists of his day.

However, generally he avoided speaking about how the new society would be. He felt that the future generations would be more intelligent than his generation and it would be their task to find the right strategy and tactics to build the new society.

Even though his remarks were few in relation to the construction of socialism/communism, what he wrote are invaluable and should be looked at again. This is important since time and again the socialist forces have contributed to their own defeat.

The first of Marx's thoughts that dealt with the building of a new society was found in the *Communist Manifesto* co-authored with Frederick Engels. They wrote: "...the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle for democracy..." Significantly, they went

on to add: "...the proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest by degree all capital from the bourgeoisie... and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible..."

This was not some reference in passing. It was a well-considered position by Marx and Engels. As Engels explains in his work, *Principles of Communism*, we see how Engels answered the question "Will it be possible to abolish private property at one blow?". Answer, "No, such a thing would be just as impossible. Hence, the proletarian revolution... will only be able gradually to transform existing society and will abolish private ownership only when the necessary quantity of means of production has been created..."

Following on that question was another, "What will be the course of the revolution?" Here is how Engels put the answer, "In the first place it will inaugurate a democratic constitution and thereby, directly or indirectly, the political rule of the proletariat..." Here he implied that real democracy is only possible when the working people are in power because they are the majority. He went on to identify some methods by which the process of transformation would take place. Firstly, the restriction of private ownership by means of progressive taxes, high inheritance taxes; and secondly, the gradual expropriation of landed proprietors, factory owners, railway and shipping magnates, partly through competition on the part of the state industry and partly directly through the payment of compensation in currency notes" (cash).

Clearly, Marx and Engels had a very realistic opinion on how a socialist revolution would proceed. They were extremely practical with the approach to the economy and to the stages of a successful revolution.

This approach was seen in another work in which Marx had criticised the German Party's programme. This was his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. This programme was authored by Lassalle, an economist, who had considerable influence in the party and among the workers. Lassalle was advocating, among other things, that workers should get "... all of what they produced. This is how Lassalle

put it: "... The proceeds of labour belongs, undiminished, with equal right to all members of society..." Marx was brutal in his criticism of the Programme, showing its impractical side and its obvious errors.

Marx wrote; "What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundation, but on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges".

He was very clear too that it will take time to transform society into becoming more inclusive and harmonious. He said, "Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of revolutionary transformation of the one into the other".

What is clear is that Marx saw the

“People and their leaders tend to move too fast, initiating massive nationalisation and confiscation when the capacity to manage does not exist.”

need for workers to take power as soon as they possibly could. It was important to break-up the old state apparatus and to establish people's power. It is also important to note his emphasis on democracy.

Marx felt that a socialist society must be superior to a capitalist society in every respect, politically, socially and economically.

He clearly advocated a sober and careful approach in dealing with the economy. His emphasis again was that production must increase to satisfy people's needs. In that way he felt that the selfishness and greed that bourgeois theoreticians spoke of would be gradually overcome.

Engels in his *Principles of Communism* put it in the following way: "...large scale industry and the unlimited expansion of production

made possible by it (here he was talking about international trade) can bring into being a social order wherein so much of all necessities of life is produced that every member of society will be able to develop and to apply all his powers and abilities in the fullest freedom..." In other philosophical works Marx spoke about the emergence of the 'new man'.

With abundance and without the exploitative capitalist relations, greed and selfishness can be overcome.

Post Marx Revolution

Clearly, Marx, while not laying out a total blueprint of how the new society would be built, had recognised some important general conditions.

The revolutions which have occurred since the passing of Marx and Engels have made a great impact on humanity and history. Those that collapsed generated much despondency in the left movement. In many ways the left has not fully recovered from the setbacks. It is, therefore, important that we examine some general and a few specific issues that affected the transition to Socialism.

In the first place, revolutions create great enthusiasm. Most leaders of revolutions tend to get carried away and make great mistakes, in particular, in the way they handle economic issues. Often a reckless haste develops that leads to adventurism in economics. People and their leaders tend to move too fast, initiating massive nationalisation and confiscation when the capacity to manage does not exist and when all the traits of capitalism, such as corruption, greed, etc. are still the most dominant features of the society.

On the other hand, some revolutionaries who see the dangers of moving too fast and creating much dislocation go to the other extreme and move much too slowly. That allows the capitalist forces to take advantage and sabotage the process of change.

In between these two extremes, lie other issues that may be described as mistakes.

The Great October Socialist Revolution, led by Lenin, made a tremendous impact internationally.

Internally too it generated tremendous energy and generated great enthusiasm. Feats of labour accomplished were unbelievable. Some of their heroes of Socialist Labour had awards in their names. One such award, the Stakanov Award was emulating the worker, Stakanov, who produced greatly.

Many revolutionaries felt that that enthusiasm would last forever. That, of course, was impossible.

That was a common mistake made by almost all revolutionaries.

The young Cuban Revolution had started a debate led mainly by Che Guevara stating that moral incentives were more important than material incentives. No doubt he was infected by the massive enthusiasm of the revolutions.

Lenin had recognised very early that it was impossible to keep up the momentum by moral incentives. He very early spoke about the need for material incentives. It is important to improve the quality of life of the people on an ongoing basis.

After the October Revolution Lenin realised the mistakes that were being made. It is apposite to recall that he gave back some of the nationalised factories to their Russian owners. He also offered to give back to some foreign investors. However, the Civil War and the invasion of Soviet Russia stopped that from materialising.

Lenin developed a New Economic Plan which was essentially an economic plan based on a tri-sectional economy: the state, cooperative and private sectors. It was more reflecting Marx's ideas of handling the economy in the early period. The reader is also encouraged to read Lenin's work *The Impending catastrophe and how to combat it*.

Unfortunately, Lenin died quite early. The hostility from the West and internal sabotage saw Stalin taking the easy way out. He abandoned Lenin's plan. The Soviet model which most countries followed was based on the state taking over the economy lock, stock and barrel. Forced collectivisation led to serious setbacks in agriculture.

Those same mistakes were repeated over and over again by later revolutions. This approach created shortages, lower levels of production

and in many cases an erosion of living standards.

Some that recognised this mistake went to the other extreme. They moved too slowly to bring about fundamental changes and transformation.

South Africa may be such an example.

In the first place the armed struggle did not come to an end with any side claiming victory. Instead, the Apartheid regime, no doubt with the advice and assistance of Western Powers, sought to negotiate an end to the armed struggle.

The ANC led alliance recognised that the armed struggle would take a long time and cost many lives, so it agreed to negotiate the end of apartheid.

However, in so doing the forces of

“Lenin had recognised very early that it was impossible to keep up the momentum by moral incentives. He very early spoke about the need for material incentives.”

reaction retained a lot of power in the bureaucracy, including the police and army.

The South African revolutionaries, no doubt influenced by the terrible dislocations that Mozambique and Angola experienced sought to avoid that.

Major sectors of the economy were not properly transformed and are still in the hands of a minority of whites. Moreover the land reform programme was haphazard and lacked implementation, leaving many black people landless.

Like many other revolutions that preceded it, the bureaucracy grew. A new class developed mainly the bureaucratic elite which sides with some elements of the old order.

As was the case in many other revolutions, it seems to have run out of energy and while much was

achieved, fundamental transformation in the economic sphere did not occur.

Lenin often said that politics was not just a science but also an art. Therefore, it is important to be able to judge the right time to take action. Going too fast or too slowly have their negative consequences; both exhaust the revolution and prevent it from reaching its goals.

China's Experience

In judging the right moments and the pace of the revolution in its task of transforming the society we should look at the experience of the People's Republic of China.

Having also made serious mistakes at the beginning of the revolution, China, from the 1970s began to relook at their strategies and tactics. The year 1978 was significant in this regard.

Led by Deng Xiaoping, the CPC summed up their experience and made fundamental changes to correct the mistakes of the past. China went back to using all forms of ownership: state, cooperative and private. In 1978, its policies resembled Lenin's NEP.

It balanced very well the issue of material and moral incentives. It applied Marx's concept in the beginning of the construction of socialism: from each according to his/her ability; to each according to his/her needs. China's handling of the economy needs to be studied. Its lessons could be very instructive.

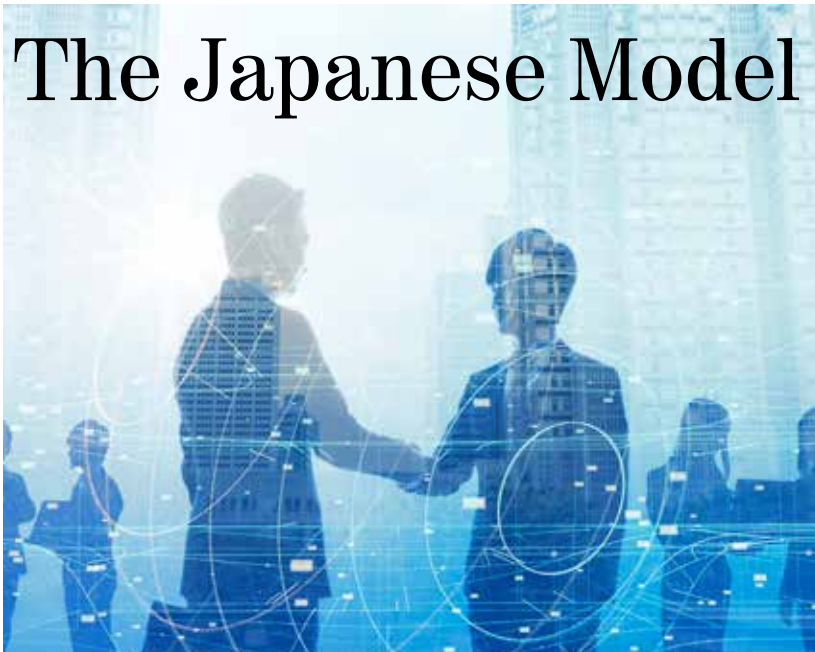
Today, China has been transformed. It is now the second largest economy in the world. It is rapidly catching up with the US. At the same time it is the main driving force of the international economy.

China's experience is the best example of the creative application of Marxism in the building of the new society, which in the process is developing the new socialist person.

Other countries are learning the lessons of China. Vietnam is now rapidly developing, also correcting its initial mistakes.

Marx's relevance in the post capitalist society is being proven in these countries. ■

The Japanese Model



Japanese companies were expected to expand their markets, secure local jobs, and raise wages in line with productivity and profits. The emphasis was put on the “fair distribution of productivity improvements”.

By William Gumede

Japan’s democratic developmental state which delivered high growth, poverty reduction and company competitiveness in the post-Second World War period until the 1990s when it stagnated, still offers African countries an alternative model for development.

In the aftermath of Japan’s surrender in 1945, the Allied Occupation Powers forced it to democratise, demilitarise and open up the economy. In 1946 the Emperor of Japan renounced his supreme power. In the same year, the country adopted a new constitution, pushing Japan to democratise, giving citizens equal rights, bringing formal equality to women and entrenching trade union rights.

The economy was opened up to all. The allied powers pushed for land reform to break the powers of the land barons, giving land to ordinary

peasants working the land. They broke up many of the large firms, called *zaibatsu*, owned by powerful families. Companies had to give shares to the public. This was an attempt to break up the old elite associated with Japan’s imperial ambitions, war effort and militarisation.

Ordinary workers were given greater rights in the workplace, the right to collective bargaining, to organise and to strike. In the 1950s in a fierce national debate, the country rejected rearmament in favour of going all out for economic growth, by developing new economic sectors, with the aim of increasing exports.

Except for steel which is the input for many manufacturing sectors, and copper which the country mines, Japan imports all its raw materials – coal and crude oil, and food, such as corn, wheat and soybeans from abroad.

In 1956, the government issued its Economic White Paper, which argued for growth through modernisation of the economy. The government used cheap state loans, tax incentives and trade protection for infant industries to develop its economy.

When one industry was successfully created, the country moved on to create newer different ones. The aim was to create local industries which the country did not have which could compete abroad. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) was key, identifying new markets abroad, developing local infrastructure and licences for the import of new technology and raw materials to develop local industry.

MITI would steer raw material and technology import licences to industries identified for development. It provided special tax breaks to companies trying to penetrate foreign markets, and gave such companies deductions on profits they earned abroad.

The country’s monetary policy focused on making it easier to promote exports, by keeping the currency low. The country maintained low interest rates to encourage fixed investment. It incentivised individual saving by giving tax breaks to small deposits, especially if they were made through the state-owned postal bank.

The Japanese government have used individual and corporate savings in the postal bank to fund capital investments, social infrastructure and small businesses through a Fiscal Investment and Loan Programme (FILP). The funds are used through the Japanese Development Bank.

The country introduced high tariffs to competing imports and quotas to the sectors it was developing. The JDB provided “policy” loans to industries which provided inputs or services for sectors identified for development. When the government established the IT industry, it invited IBM to set up shop in the country, on condition that it shared its technology with Japanese companies. The Japanese government bought locally produced computers which stimulated the local industry.

The country introduced long terms plans, developed by the Economic Planning Agency, carefully planning

every sector, using statistical evidence and data. The plans set out the outputs, infrastructure targets and social welfare needs. Chalmers Johnson, in his classic work on the developmental state, has described the Japanese government of purposefully orchestrated economic growth.

Japan has been successful in using carefully thought out evidence-based policies, market information and the partnership between the public sector and business to “modernise the production processes” of companies to produce products that can be competitive abroad.

As the economy grew, the plans shifted to improving the quality of life, protect the environment and to improve welfare. By the 1970s when the economy expanded, the government increased welfare, public health and pensions.

The Japanese system of company welfare, including long-term employment, meant that workers often were not only loyal to the company, but felt responsible for the survival, competitiveness and productivity of the company. Company welfare included companies providing housing, skills and pensions for their employees. Companies set up industry-relevant educational institutions.

The country introduced merit within the public and private sectors, equitable access to quality education, health and public services, balanced with company welfare, and later government welfare, which helped to bring relative social peace. Furthermore, the government went all out to provide quality education, combined with the skills training by the private sector, and this fuelled economic growth.

Japan had what is called enterprise-based trade unions, which at the plant level struck deals with management. Independent enterprise trade unions then form networks or partnerships with enterprise-based unions at other firms. Trade unions at one plant consisted of both blue and white collar employees. Every employee who joined the firm automatically became a member of the enterprise trade union. Wage deals depended on the specific conditions at the firm

In 1955, the government launched a society-wide campaign to improve productivity, using Japanese “methods”, called “The Three Guiding Principles of the Productivity Movement”. It argued the “government and the private sector shall cooperate” to “prevent loss of employment”, that labour and management “shall cooperate” to “achieve productivity improvement” “based on the circumstances of the individual corporations” and that the “fruits of productivity improvement shall be distributed fairly to managers, workers and consumers”, according to the “actual condition of the national economy”.

Japanese analyst Sumiko Ebisuno wrote:

Corporations are called upon to act from the standpoint of the national economy and continue

“The country rejected rearming in favour of going all out for economic growth, by developing new economic sectors, with the aim of increasing exports.”

to employ excess personnel resulting from the improvement of productivity. In order to reconcile the improvement of productivity and the securing of employment, two things that are incompatible, corporations, departing from conventional business management principles, came to place a priority on share expansion rather than the maximisation of profits.

As part of the deal, business expanded through creating new markets, rather than cutting employment. “Corporations were not greatly pressed to return to high short-term profits to stockholders; therefore, they could carry out large sales at small profits” instead of focusing on maximising profits at all cost. Japanese companies were encouraged to expand market share and create jobs.

Japanese companies were expected to expand their markets, secure local jobs, and raise wages in line with productivity and profits. The emphasis was put on the “fair distribution of productivity improvements”.

After the Second World War entirely new parties were formed. The Japan Socialist Party (JSP) was formed in 1945, by supporters of smaller pre-war left wing parties. It supports a socialised economy.

In 1955, there was a consolidation of Japan’s parties, with the mergers of left wing smaller parties into the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

The LDP held power uninterrupted since its formation in 1955 until 1993. It has been pro-business and pro-US. It oversaw the implementation of the developmental state.

Between 1967 and 1993, the period of Japan’s high growth phase, the country was dominated by the LDP, either alone or in coalition, but had several large parties competing with it. From 1955 on the JSP was the main opposition party. The JSP was supported by trade unions, especially the public sector unions. A smaller Japan Communist Party has retained minority support, securing 10% averages in the 1970s. The JSP renamed itself the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in 1991.

From the late 1950s onwards the dominant LDP pursued consensus-style politics, offering policy concessions in parliament to the opposition parties, in return for support for its export-led growth strategy. Unlike in Africa, where dominant governing parties often steamrolled the opposition parties, the LDP co-opted opposition, and almost co-governed and co-legislated around a core set of national priorities.

Between 1994 and 1996 SDP chairman Murayama Tomiichi became the first socialist prime minister of Japan since 1948.

Throughout Japan’s high growth period, it had a robust civil organisation space, which embarked on public protests, sit-ins and boycotts over cuts in welfare and attempts to circumscribe democratic freedoms, opposed the adoption of nuclear power as a source of energy, and disputed the country’s close alliance with the US. ■

The populist rhetoric around land acquisition in South Africa obscures a number of significant factors on land reform



The main problem is not the lack of land per se or the lack of sufficient acquisition powers for the state, but rather what happens after land has been identified, offered or acquired.

By Mzingaye Brilliant Xaba and Monty Roodt

Land reform continues to be the most emotive, racially polarising and controversial subject in South Africa (Hendricks, 2013; Hall and Kepe 2017), and generally, an average South African is conscious about the “land question”. Land reform has consistently

been thrown around by some political parties to woo black voters and land has been at the centre of what the ruling African National Congress (ANC) calls “radical economic transformation” (Cousins, 2017). The newly formed political party Economic Freedom

Fighters (EFF), which is a break-away faction from the ruling ANC, has also consistently pushed for “expropriation of land without compensation” (Jankielsohn and Duvenhage, 2017; Zukowski, 2017). The ruling ANC is aware of the feelings of bitterness against apartheid and colonialism on the part of black communities and has hinted on employing a populist/radical approach on land reform by using “expropriation without compensation” (du Toit, 2017). In its December 2017 Conference, the ANC endorsed the “expropriation without compensation” approach, although the newly elected ANC president Cyril Ramaphosa, cautioned that land expropriation should not compromise the economy (Tandwa, 2017). We think that while there is merit in the push for expropriation to hasten land acquisition for land reform, some people have been incorrectly alarmed into believing that the biggest sole problem on land reform is the struggle to acquire land for redistribution.

We argue that what is important on land reform is not just the acquisition of land, it is also provision of smooth transfer of land ownership, provision of support and most importantly, reducing the “red tape” on land reform departments. There are numerous cases wherein land has been acquired, but it takes ages for land beneficiaries to get support or projects to start moving, leading to previously productive land becoming ghost farms (Xaba and Roodt, 2016). The irony is that there is evidence that the South African government is sitting on more than 4000 farms that they have not yet transferred to black claimants, and yet they are still pushing for “expropriation without compensation” (George and Eybers, 2017).

For many black South Africans, the occupation of land by white farmers continues to be a symbol of colonialism, whiteness and oppression (Cousins, 2016:12). Many black South Africans believe that land was unfairly taken from their ancestors and that it has to be given to black people, no matter what consequences. Thus, the occupation of land by white farmers remains a reminder of colonial dispossession, conquest

and defeat of black communities (Cousins, 2016b:12). There is also an impression that “rich” white farmers have derailed land reform with their recalcitrant attitude towards land acquisition, which has deprived poor Africans of land (Zukowski, 2017), while the government or other land based activists and radical opposition parties such as EFF are presented as heroes who are rising to rescue poor Africans (Cousins, 2016b:12). There are also dangerous and overblown talks of “genocide” against white farmers in some quarters spurred on by irresponsible utterances from foreign right-wing governments, without any real understanding of what genocide really means or acknowledging that far more black people than white farmers are killed in South Africa’s townships every day.

Therefore, the calls for “expropriation without compensation”, notwithstanding its good intentions are misleading and misplaced. Most importantly, the populist rhetoric obscures numerous challenges on land reform that do not necessarily relate to land acquisition.

South Africa should be careful not to head towards the same road as Zimbabwe. In the early 2000s, Robert Mugabe’s ruling Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU PF) embarked on a radical and violent land reform to correct the colonial legacy and to woo voters after sensing defeat in the then coming elections in the 2000s. In the year 2000, Robert Mugabe’s ZANU PF lost the constitutional referendum and there were parliamentary elections pending. Sensing defeat, declining support and feeling betrayed by white farmers who were seen to be sympathetic to the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition party, Robert Mugabe sought to punish white farmers and as well as to reward the war veterans with land and to appeal to the larger black majority that was challenging him (Nmoma, 2008). The result was a clumsy land reform which led to terrible economic effects (Makhanya, 2015). The irony is that the calls for expropriation in South Africa are happening at a time when the Zimbabwean government is calling

back white farmers who lost their land during the violent and radical land reform. It is interesting that the South African government appears to be at pains to repeat the mistakes that Zimbabwe made in the early 2000s (Kirsten and Sihlobo).

While we appreciate the importance of land acquisition for land reform, we argue that the main problem is not the lack of land per se or the lack of sufficient acquisition powers for the state, but rather what happens after land has been identified, offered or acquired.

The problem with populism

The populist rhetoric on land reform has been thrown around mainly because of the slow pace of land reform and because there is hardly any real progress on addressing the main goals of land reform (Zukowski,

“Some people have been incorrectly alarmed into believing that the biggest sole problem on land reform is the struggle to acquire land for redistribution.”

2017:77). It is most important to interrogate the populist approach on land reform because South Africa is at a stage where calls for expropriation are growing, while there is less attention on the post-settlement experiences of beneficiaries. Therefore this chorus on land acquisition creates an impression that the struggles of land acquisition are the only problem.

It hides the fact that the ANC government has largely failed to fully use its expropriation powers enshrined in Section 25 of the Constitution and that the government has not been fully tested in the courts on the expropriation powers because of the fear of a negative investor sentiment (SABC Digital News, 2013). Fortunately, the ANC chief whip in Parliament, Jackson Mthembu correctly noted that blaming the Constitution for the failures of

land reform is misleading (du Toit, 2017). The Mala-Mala restitution case wherein the government paid R1 billion to settle the land claim, rather than using the courts to determine the amount of compensation that was “just and equitable” is a classic case that demonstrates the failure of the state to use its expropriation powers enshrined in Section 25 (Joubert and Hofstatter, 2013). This is despite the fact that the Mala Mala case was at the Constitutional Court for the Court to provide some legal clarity on what is “just and equitable” compensation before the then Minister Gugile Nkwinti withdrew the case, opting to pay one white family a massive compensation that wiped out one third of the national budget, and yet the government still persists with the populist rhetoric (Hall, 2018).

Thus, the High Level Panel on the assessment of key legislation and the acceleration of fundamental change, (2017), a parliament initiative that was chaired by former South African president Kgalema Motlanthe, correctly noted that the problem on land reform is not the laws around land reform, but poor implementation, corruption and incompetence on the part of the state. Thus, the populist rhetoric provides “simple answers to complex problems and avoids proper thinking and planning” (Makhanya, 2017).

This radical stance also hides the fact that the South African government has consistently underfunded the land reform department (Atuahene, 2011), and even the PSS (post-settlement support) Directorate, “Recap” has been struggling to fund land reform projects because of low budgets and huge backlogs. Additionally, in 2014, the government had passed the Restitution of Land Rights Act which extended the claims deadline to 2019 before it was struck down by the Constitutional Court, but there was hardly any indication to increase the budget for the restitution claims (Paton, 2013; Cousins, 2016b:6). With so much little financial commitment towards land reform, it is puzzling why the government would push for expropriation without compensation, not that land acquisition is bad per se.

The populist rhetoric also

undermines the plight of many land beneficiaries who have been waiting for support and the many abandoned restitution farms. This rhetoric also creates an impression that South African society is still the agrarian society it was before the passing of the Natives Land Act in 1913, and that if land is to be given to black communities everything will fall into place. Actually numerous studies show that a big chunk of South African society has been “deculturalised” from farming, and most people, especially the youth, prefer to get jobs in cities (Makhanya, 2015), although a few studies have shown beneficiaries who have benefited from land reform (Chitonge and Ntsebeza, 2012; Ncapayi, 2013).

Even if the envisaged 30 percent of farmland was to be miraculously acquired, say in 3 years or so, the bureaucratic nature of land reform departments, infighting amongst group-based land beneficiaries, lack of skills, poor attitudes towards farming will pose serious problem for the land reform projects. The history of the land reform programme is replete with examples of administrative incompetence, petty bureaucratic machination, and lack of inspired and dedicated leadership. The government does have a few PSS strategies, although these often hardly reach all beneficiaries and even if they do, PSS is often slow, due to the bureaucratic nature of land reform directorates and other reasons. In sum, there is small real support that reaches beneficiaries (Cousins, 2016b). Given the problems we have raised, we argue that acquiring more land for land reform will not in our view solve the “land question” in South Africa, rather, it is likely to worsen it. There are serious problems to be addressed before expropriation would have any positive impact.

Mapping a way forward

Land reform does not only require fresh ideas (Cousins, 2016), but also requires honesty on the practicability of the current policies, and not slogans. The state needs to put in new systems of PSS that will guarantee sufficient PSS for every land reform project, a system that integrates the first stages of land reform and its implementation,

and revive collapsed land reform projects. These new systems should be less bureaucratic and provide provincial land reform departments on post-settlement with more funding and more decisive power. These new systems should set an example that land reform is indeed workable and effective before more land is added. Let us not forget that it took over 300 years for the white settlers to grab land as much as they did, and a mere 24 years or political power may not even reverse half of that.

Again, agriculture requires immense support and even the profitability of agriculture during apartheid was guaranteed by massive state support and slave black labour, and when the then apartheid government withdrew state support in the 1980s, the agriculture sector was in serious trouble (Hendricks, 2013; Helliker, 2013).

“The irony is that there is evidence that the South African government is sitting on more than 4000 farms that they have not yet transferred to black claimants.”

When it comes to land redistribution, the state should consider profiling beneficiaries by targeting those black subsistence farmers who have made it without the support of the government. Also, agricultural students and lecturers should be considered for land redistribution programme to practice their skills. When it comes to land restitution: two issues should be considered: firstly, the government should discourage group projects to lessen infighting, secondly, there should be flexibility in awarding land restitution awards. This is because being a victim of land dispossession does not necessarily make one a great farmer, nor does it mean that one would be interested in farming (Aliber, Maluleke, Manenzhe, Paradza and Cousins, 2013). After all, these restitution beneficiaries are now old,

while the children of beneficiaries are rarely interested in agricultural careers (Kane Berman, 2016). ■

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Towards the renewal, rebuilding and unity of the ANC

Our leaders must be the glue that holds the ANC together. They must be defenders of the ANC against anything or anyone, including some in our own ranks, with a potential to undermine the ANC's values and principles.

By Thando Ntlemeza

Revolution is pursued to resolve antagonistic contradictions in society. The National Democratic Revolution is no exception as it seeks to resolve conflict caused by the interrelated contradictions of race, class exploitation of blacks and triple oppression of the majority of women on the basis of their race, class and gender.¹

In pursuing the revolution, a leading movement may face subjective or objective challenges. Conditions in which the revolution takes place may present objective challenges. Subjective challenges result from organisational weaknesses.

Given the negative impact of challenges on the revolutionary movement and the revolution, the revolutionary movement must respond appropriately to the challenges with a view to defending and sustaining the revolution. When faced with the objective challenges, the revolutionary organisation must adapt its strategy and tactics. Subjective challenges that threaten its values, principles and mission require the revolutionary organisation to renew, rebuild and unite itself.

Renewal, rebuilding and unity efforts must be understood in the context of the organisation's evolution. This context may provide the lessons on the manner in which the organisation has over the years responded to the difficult situations that were caused by both the objective conditions and subjective weaknesses. Like many other revolutionary organisations, the ANC has faced challenges that negatively impacted on its values and principles and mission for the country.

Underpinning the ANC are political values such as humility, honesty, discipline, mutual respect, constructive criticism, unity, selflessness and service. These define the ANC's outlook and vision for the country and its people.

The ANC is a product of a given historical period. It was formed in 1912 to unite African people in their struggle for freedom and liberation. Later, progressive sections of other racial groups started to associate themselves with this struggle through various initiatives, leading to the ANC's forging of the alliance with the Communist

Party and Trade Union Movement and the signing of the Three Doctors' Pact (Dadoo, Xuma, Naiker) in 1947, which signified commitment of organisations of other racial groups to support the liberation struggle.

In the mid-1950s, the Freedom Charter formally introduced a non-racial dimension to the national liberation struggle; something which was embraced by organisations that associated themselves with the struggle. Despite their embracement of the Freedom Charter and the non-racial character of the struggle, components of the liberation movement continued for years to reflect the racial and ethnic divisions created by the apartheid regime.² In particular, the ANC remained an organisation for indigenous African people, whilst the Coloured People's Congress was an organisation for the Coloured people, the South African Indian Congress for the Indians and Congress of Democrats for White people.³

As time progressed, the ANC fully embraced non-racialism both as a principle and as a guide to its composition and practice. In 1969 membership of the ANC was opened to the Coloured, Indian and White people. From 1985, Coloureds, Indians and Whites were allowed to be elected into and serve in the ANC's National Executive Committee.

With its embracement of non-racialism, the ANC assumed moral and political responsibility to mobilise and unite all the classes and strata in society that objectively stand to gain from the success of the National Democratic Revolution. This required the ANC to master the science and art of mobilising people behind its mission to create the united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society envisaged in the Freedom Charter. This must be pursued with an understanding that the ANC is a people's movement, which:

was established ... to serve the interests of the suffering masses of our people... [and] ... was never formed to be and has never been an instrument to advance personal interests of its members, regardless of the positions within the organisation that any of its members

*might occupy.*⁴

Central to this characterisation of the ANC is service to the people, which must be understood as a political response to apartheid's neglect of the majority of South Africans. ANC members and leaders must be inspired by that "noble objective to serve the people of South Africa, expecting no reward for themselves except liberation and upliftment of the masses of our people...".⁵ It is for this very reason that the people expect ANC leaders and members to prioritise people's needs instead of using the ANC to advance their personal interests.

Factors that may threaten the ANC's values, principles and mission include conduct or actions which undermine internal unity and those which prioritise personal interests and the interests of the families and friends. It is

“Critically it also had to absorb new members with no political experience and induct them into the politics of the ANC and the national liberation struggle.”

unacceptable to define participation in the ANC in terms of what one stands to personally benefit. Others factors are caused by developments in the country, the continent and the world. When its values and principles and mission are threatened, the ANC should treat such situations as a moment for self-reflection, self-renewal and rebuilding.

The renewal and rebuilding of the ANC

Any living organism (whether natural or socially constructed) will, at particular intervals, require revival. This becomes a moment of self-reflection, with a view to identifying the challenges and devising measures to address such challenges. With organisational renewal, the ANC reflects on political and organisational challenges which impede its work.⁶

The literature defines organisational renewal as a knowledge-oriented process of effecting internal changes that will enable the organisation to perform better and survive in the ever-changing conditions in society.⁷ This process has to happen because the developments within and outside the organisation may have major strategic and tactical impact. Organisations that do not renew themselves are likely to fail.⁸ However, while objective conditions may force an organisation to change, some factors in the external environment may negatively affect the organisation's ability to change its internal systems and processes.⁹

In each phase of the struggle the ANC faced challenges. Some emanated from internal problems. Others were presented by conditions in the external environment. In response, the ANC had to renew and rebuild itself. In which periods did the ANC face challenges that required it to renew, rebuild and revive itself?

In 1937, President ZR Mahabane inherited an ANC with dysfunctional structures, un-coordinated provinces, deep-seated divisions and an ideologically distorted ANC vision and character. He embarked on a process of renewing and reviving the ANC. The process involved convening branch meetings in all provinces to discuss organisational challenges, recruit new members and define an approach needed to resolve challenges that faced the organisation.¹⁰

The renewal efforts by Mahabane's leadership laid a solid foundation for President Xuma's leadership collective to improve the membership system; establish the working committee and the ANC Youth League and re-establish the ANC Women's League.¹¹ It also developed a clear vision and policies for the ANC. For this reason, Xuma's period of leadership marked the beginning of a tradition of planning for the future.

With the election of the National Party in 1948 and the institutionalisation of the politics of racial discrimination in the country, the ANC once again had to face the new challenges. At its 1949 National Conference it resolved to renew and rebuild itself into a movement for mass

mobilisation, with dedicated volunteers and vibrant grassroots structures. This had to happen because the structures built in the early 1940s were no longer suitable for new conditions of the struggle. Renewal of organisational structures was necessary because of an understanding that “constrictions imposed by an inappropriate structure can be just as harmful to an organisation as poorly conceived strategies.”¹² Leading renewal and rebuilding efforts were primarily led by young generation of leaders and militant sections of the trade union movement.¹³

When faced with the political and organisational challenges in 1960s, the ANC used the Morogoro Conference as a platform for self-reflection, self-correction and renewal. The Conference resolved that the ANC must be reorganised for the struggles in 1970s and 1980s. Among these were the 1973 Durban strike, the formation of South African Students Organisation, the 1976 student uprisings, and the formation of Cosas, the UDF and Cosatu. Structures formed in the 1970s and 1980s became organs of people’s power that intensified mass mobilisation and made South Africa ungovernable and apartheid unworkable.

Even the period of the unbanning of ANC and other liberation movements presented challenges. In particular, the ANC was required to integrate cadres from different areas of political activism such as the mass movement, the underground structures, prison and exile into an organisation with a common strategic and tactical perspective. Critically it also had to absorb new members with no political experience and induct them into the politics of the ANC and the national liberation struggle.

In the current phase, the ANC has been facing challenges such as deep-seated divisions, manipulation of the organisational systems and processes, and the use of money to influence outcomes of meetings and conferences. Critically important in this regard is the ANC’s loss of integrity and people’s trust and confidence because of the abuse of state power, corruption, prioritisation of personal interests and interests of families and friends¹⁴

and state capture. What appears to be exacerbating the situation is what the ANC’s 54th National Conference referred to as “our neglect of cadre development”.¹⁵

In addition to the internal challenges of the organisation, the 54th National Conference was presented with and noted the challenges presented by domestic, continental and global environments that constrain ANC’s march to the future. This National Conference directed that the ANC be renewed, rebuilt and united with a view to repositioning it as a vehicle through which our people can pursue their struggles.¹⁶ Success in this regard will depend on what the ANC does in this phase.

“The period of the new dawn that has created a sense of hope in society and the contradictions and implosion in the Democratic Alliance provide opportunity for the progressive forces to make further advances.”

What must we do in this phase of renewal, rebuilding and unity?

Organisational tasks for the renewal, rebuilding and unity phase should include:

Building the organisation renewal capability by identifying and developing the organic intellectual capital, nurturing knowledge management skills¹⁷ and modernising organisational systems and processes.

Electing hard working leaders who have integrity and legitimacy to pursue the renewal and rebuilding of the ANC with passion and resilience.

Suspending the membership and leadership status of those who are compromised in criminal investigations and cases, with a view to improving ANC’s image and standing in society.

Urgently disciplining all the members and leaders who are

implicated in allegations of manipulating organisational systems and processes and fraud and corruption in government and its entities.

Fighting against and rooting out factional tendencies in the ANC by transforming or isolating members or leaders who promote factionalism.

Promoting and entrenching unity among leaders and members of the organisation, as a basis on which ANC will unite all South Africans.

Assisting branches with programmes on political education and engaging communities on socio-economic issues that trouble them.

Recruiting members and developing them into cadres who will build the ANC into an organisation that enjoys people’s trust and confidence.

Developing the financial sustainability of the ANC with a view to putting the ANC in a position in which it can fund its programmes and activities.

Ensuring that ANCWL intensifies the struggle against patriarchy and its manifestations in society.¹⁸

Helping the ANCYL to harness the energy of young people to provide vigour, vibrancy and dynamism in the ANC and the revolution.¹⁹

Providing platforms for the ANC Leagues to reflect, assess and ensure that the ANC remains focused on its strategic vision, mission and path.²⁰

Building the Tri-partite Alliance to be a reliable vehicle to mobilise and unite the working class and the poor behind an agenda to transform ours into a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

Cooperating with progressive structures of civil society among the youth, students, women, people with disabilities, religious community, issue based movements, traditional leaders and business community.²¹

Uniting all the progressive forces in the country and marshaling them to ensure overwhelming victory of the ANC in the 2019 general elections.

Developing the capacity of public representatives of the ANC to be able to manage and master the issues of governance at all levels.

Leadership for renewal and rebuilding tasks

In the case of the ANC, leaders must

be the embodiment and custodians of the values of humility, humbleness, honesty, respect, selflessness, sacrifice and unity. The ANC cannot afford to have leaders who disappoint it when it comes to these political values.²² It does not need leaders who compromise their cadre-ship status. If the leaders required for renewal and rebuilding must be cadres, what is the character of the cadres we need?

In defining the cadre, Marc Newman²³ states that the term cadre refers to military people who lead particular actions and translate experiences on the ground to the generals and directions from generals to the troops. John Rees approaches the matter from the angle of understanding and experience. He says cadres are members or leaders of revolutionary movements who have reached a certain level of political understanding and with experience in the struggle.²⁴

Lenin cautioned against simplistic characterisation of some as cadres merely on the basis of their knowledge of the revolutionary theory, practical experience in the struggle or advanced age.²⁵ This may be the reason why John Rees stated that cadres can only be those who provide an organisation with stability, durability and effectiveness.²⁶ Newman seems to agree as he states that cadres are those members or leaders who are capable of carrying the organisation or the glue that holds their organisation together at all times.²⁷

Our leaders must be the glue that holds the ANC together. They must be defenders of the ANC against anything or anyone, including some in our own ranks, with a potential to undermine the ANC's values and principles and disrupt the efforts to make South Africa a better place for all people.²⁸

In fact, leaders for this phase must be experienced, knowledgeable, skillful, innovative and creative leaders who are able to foster collaboration²⁹ in the organisation and society. They must be cadres like those described by Ho Chi Minh as deeply imbued with revolutionary morality, and demonstrate industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness, complete selflessness or dedication to serving the people.³⁰

Che Guevara correctly defined

the leaders we need as capable of self-analysis to be able to take appropriate decisions to sustain their organisation and the revolution. He characterises them as cadres of high standing, technocrats with good political astuteness who, by reasoning dialectically, can develop people from positions of political leadership in the organisation and government.³¹

Inherent in those who must lead in this phase should be the ability to provide advice to the political centre without undermining the political authority of the centre. These are seasoned members who are capable of acting without, and in many instances despite, direction from the political centre, and of independently figuring out what needs to be done in the interest of the organisation.³²

No one can claim to be eligible to lead in this phase if that person does not appreciate the importance of integrating into the ANC and its programmes new members who are capable of leading in new conditions of the struggle.³³ In other words, leaders cannot be gatekeepers who lock out people with the potential to make meaningful contributions to the ANC. Instead, they should be passionate about identifying talent inside and outside the ANC and nurturing it for the benefit of the ANC and the revolution.³⁴

This renewal phase requires leaders who can inspire people in good and bad times, reinforce confidence of members and society in the ANC and the struggle it pursues, not through threats or patronage but by being principled, firm, humble and considerate.³⁵ These are leaders whose cadre-ship status cannot be defined on the basis of their positioning in the organisation or the government.³⁶

They must not be confused with members who may have been 'microwaved' into positions of leadership in the ANC or the government merely because of their contribution and loyalty to the factions. Instead, they must understand the imperatives of leading people's struggles within and outside the state. This must include understanding the political significance of deploying to the state people who are politically

savvy, strategically focused and tactically aware to empower the ANC to master the politics of governance in the people's interest.

Mastering politics of governance

Most of the ANC's renewal documents on governance tend to focus on the induction of the ANC's public representatives in governance and the monitoring and evaluation of public representatives' performance in their areas of deployment.³⁷ Any organisation has to monitor implementation of its policies with a view to identifying weaknesses such as poor policies, weak implementation or poor leadership.³⁸

All must start with the deployment of cadres who are equal to the task of mastering the politics of governance whether as a governing collective or from the opposition benches. For them to perform this task, ANC public representatives must know the ANC's vision, mission and positions on governance. They must also be able to articulate such policy positions with precision.

While many tactical battles may have been waged and won in the governance sphere to consolidate democratic gains, more still needs to be done to interrupt the growth of the opposition and to win over people and unite them behind our agenda. The period of the new dawn that has created a sense of hope in society and the contradictions and implosion in the Democratic Alliance provide opportunity for the progressive forces to make further advances.

When ANC does not have hegemonic influence in particular situations, it must recall struggle pillars, especially mass mobilisation; Lenin stated that a revolutionary movement can achieve the revolution if the masses are behind it. Franz Fanon said leaders have a duty to ensure that the people are on their side.³⁹

Chief Albert Luthuli during the Defiance Campaign and Nelson Mandela at the time of the negotiations for a democratic South Africa expressed similar views. These leaders believed that any revolutionary movement must engage in any revolutionary activity from a position of strength. To them,

having the structures and people behind ANC provide that strength.

Members needed for renewal and rebuilding efforts

These very same selfless and dedicated qualities must be nurtured in all ANC members. Leaders are drawn from members and members need to understand and support the struggle to improve the lives of all our people.

Mao Tse-tung described members as well versed in the revolutionary theory, politically far-sighted, competent in work, full of spirit of self-sacrifice, capable of tackling any problems on their own.⁴⁰ These are the members the ANC needs, to defend itself against negative tendencies that compromise its integrity. Only upon them can the ANC rely to regain its intellectual and moral standing in society.

Like the freedom fighters who proved themselves in the struggle, ours should be a generation that is ready to participate in the efforts aimed at addressing the challenges currently facing the ANC and the revolution.

Retaining unity as a revolutionary virtue

Unity is a desirable virtue that must be built and nurtured in any revolutionary organisation. Only a united organisation can achieve the objectives of the revolution. For this reason, all revolutionary movements emphasise the building of organisational unity to streamline internal thinking and action with a view to strengthening capacity to address the challenges of the revolution.

Like many other revolutionary movements, the ANC views unity in a serious light. The ANC was formed to unite the people against the system that privileged few people and marginalised and oppressed the masses of the South African people, the majority of whom were the Africans and females.⁴¹ Anything that militates against organisational unity weakens the ANC.⁴² The success of the revolution largely depends on unity among the members, leaders and structures of the organisation which leads the revolution.

As important as it is, organisational

unity must not be abused. It must not be used as a political tool to disrupt efforts to strengthen the ANC as an organisation, consolidate the gains of the revolution and make further advances in fundamentally changing our society for the benefit of all South Africans, especially the historically excluded and oppressed people.

As we renew and rebuild the ANC, we must ensure that its members and leaders view this as a necessity, and understand that it is in the interest of all those who associate themselves with the ANC and the revolution it pursues. This requires the incorporation of members and leaders across the streams of thinking within the organisation in a collective effort. This will definitely reinforce the ANC's mandate to unite the people.

The ANC must devise and implement its strategy and tactics taking into account conditions on the ground. This is important for mobilising people behind ANC's mission to improve the quality of people's lives. Coupled with this must be the development of a leadership that prioritises improving people's lives.⁴³

Because it leads society as a whole, the ANC must educate the people and develop them to understand that our constitutional democracy is in the immediate and long-term interest of all South Africans. This will have to include our efforts to help members of the minority communities to appreciate that the poverty and inequality caused by the system of colonialism and apartheid cannot be in their long-term interest.⁴⁴ In this way, we can help minorities realise that they have a contribution to make in making ours a prosperous society.

We must unite people in the context of discharging our obligation as ANC members to "Unite all the people of South Africa as rapidly as possible into a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic country based on the principles of the Freedom Charter and in pursuit of the National Democratic Revolution."⁴⁵

To succeed, we need leaders who can awaken and marshal the people to the future, as no revolutionary movement will succeed with leaders Franz Fanon described as incapable

of urging on people to a concrete task, unable to show them the future.⁴⁶ The ANC must follow Lenin's advice that a revolutionary movement must train its members and leaders and remould itself for tasks at hand; and admit when its training abilities are inadequate.⁴⁷ ■

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- ³⁸ ANC Strategy and Tactics, 2017
- ³⁹ Franz Fanon (1963) *The Wretched of the Earth*
- ⁴⁰ See 'Implement Chairman Mao's Cadre Policy Correctly', October 27, 1967.
- ⁴¹ Thando Ntlemenza "In pursuit of unity and cohesion" *The Thinker* 57 / 2013
- ⁴² President Cyril Ramaphosa at the Gauteng Provincial Congress of the ANC, 20 July 2018
- ⁴³ Thando Ntlemenza 'Unity of ethics and politics' *Umrabulo* 42
- ⁴⁴ ANC Strategy and Tactics, 2007
- ⁴⁵ ANC Constitution, 2017
- ⁴⁶ Franz Fanon, op cit
- ⁴⁷ Strategy and Tactics of the Proletarian Revolution.

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Protect and Promote our Heritage



At SOMAFCO, the ANC school in Tanzania, a microcosm of liberated South Africa, students were encouraged to partake in cultural activities so as to know and understand themselves and their history.

By Thabang Makwetla

At the start of this heritage month, I addressed congregants at the Lesseyton Methodist seminary in Queenstown. We gathered there not only to celebrate the Seminary and the lives of its people over the years but its rejuvenation and revival. But it saddened me, and I am sure, all the people present, that this great missionary institution is in a state of dereliction. However, considering our oppressive apartheid past, this comes as no surprise.

Over the years precious institutions such as the Lesseyton Methodist Seminary, Lovedale in Alice, Healdtown just outside Fort Beaufort and even the University of Fort Hare, were intentionally and systematically destroyed by the apartheid regime.

This was following the Bantu Education Act in 1953 and the so-called Extension of University Education Act of 1959, bringing about inferior, racially divided and tribalised black education in South Africa.

Deprived of resources, institutions like Healdtown where Govan Mbeki and Nelson Mandela had their formative educational experience eventually closed down. Though Lovedale continued to operate under the puppet Ciskei Bantustan, like Lesseyton it became a shadow of its former illustrious past.

The apartheid regime had its own sinister vision of the black child's future. The mental enslavement of blacks was fundamental to the regime, reducing them to hewers of wood

and drawers of water. To achieve this subjection, institutions like Lesseyton had to be dealt with harshly.

Institutions like Lovedale and Lesseyton, though this was never encouraged by the missionaries, were in many ways cockpits of black radicalism. Students found it necessary to rise above the notion of being black English gentlemen and ladies. For example class boycotts and other forms of resistance at missionary institutions certainly worried the regime. Such activities had to be nipped in the bud before they could spill over to the world outside where the struggle against apartheid by the ANC and other left leaning organisations was growing in intensity.

There has always been a close relationship between religious and socio-political matters. If we go back further in time, we can recall how the Smuts government used force to suppress Enoch Mgijima's sect, the Israelites. 163 of Mgijima's followers were mowed down in Bulhoek on May 24, 1921 for refusing to vacate the land they occupied in Ntabelanga, in Queenstown. Indeed, land remains a burning issue in South Africa and its reform and transformation can no longer be avoided.

By destroying institutions like Healdtown, the regime took with it our history, heritage, culture, identity and dignity. In exile, under the leadership of Oliver Tambo, we began to restore these important pillars of our lives, in preparation for a liberated South Africa. At the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCO) for instance, the ANC school in Tanzania, a microcosm of liberated South Africa, students were encouraged to partake in cultural activities so as to know and understand themselves and their history.

The establishment of the Arts and Culture desk in exile, promoted by Oliver Tambo, himself a former choir master at St Peter's in Johannesburg in the mid-1940s, encouraged exiles to understand the importance of arts, culture, history and heritage as an integral part of our identity and to realise that these were not an after-thought.

In 1991 the Commission for Museums, Monuments and Heraldry

(CMMH) was established by the ANC, chaired by Wally Serote. It was now clear that the days of apartheid oppression and subjugation were over, and that the transformation of the heritage sector in a liberated South Africa was firmly on the agenda.

Since 1994, the Department of Arts and Culture and its entities such as the National Heritage Council under the tutelage of Advocate Sonwabile Mancotywa, has made serious strides in transforming our heritage sector.

Offensive busts and statues of colonial and apartheid leaders have been and continue to be removed from the public space, street names are being changed to reflect our true identity and new monuments including the Hector Pieterse Museum, the Apartheid Museum and the District Six Museum have been established.

Busts and statues of our leaders such as Mandela, Tambo, Walter and Albertina Sisulu are now distributed through our landscape. The Lesseyton heritage landscape also ought to be transformed and the church gathering on the 1st of September was testimony to that.

Not only should our nation celebrate Lesseyton as a heritage site, but also write the mission station's history, remembering and celebrating the life and times of its founders such as Joseph Warnera and the first Wesleyan African Minister, Reverend Johannes Mahonga.

The Department of Justice and Correctional Services as well as the Police Ministry, working with other arms of government, are also making a significant contribution to transforming our heritage landscape. We have, for example, renamed the notorious John Vorster Square, nicknamed the Blue Hotel during apartheid times, as Johannesburg Central Police Station. This is where a number of activists were detained, tortured and sometimes killed by the apartheid police, as was the case with Ahmed Timol.

We have also transformed Robben Island from a notorious prison to an acclaimed world heritage site. Government has renamed the Pretoria Central Prison as Kgoshi Mampuru Prison. This is where those held

and found guilty of capital crimes, mostly black, were executed under apartheid. The gallows where over 130 prisoners were hanged at the then Pretoria Central Prison at the height of apartheid, included political activists such as Solomon Mahlangu, Vuyisile Mini and fighters from POQO, has now been transformed and incorporated into a museum.

The Department of Justice and Correctional Services is engaged in identifying the graves of all those who went to the gallows. This process enables the families of the deceased to have closure and give dignified funerals to their loved ones. This process is now more than half-way complete. Thanks to the sterling work of the Missing Persons Task Team at the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) which has uncovered more than 140 burial sites of political activists from the ANC

“By destroying institutions like Healdtown, the regime took with it our history, heritage, culture, identity and dignity.”

and PAC around the country, killed and buried in shallow graves during apartheid times.

Exhumations by the Missing Persons Task Team have also uncovered artefacts such as bullets, coins and sometimes uniforms worn by guerrillas at the time of their deaths. Remarkably in one case, the team uncovered an East German compass around the neck of a deceased Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) combatant, still working at the time of exhumation. Such items have been handed to Freedom Park for preservation as they form part of our heritage.

However in some cases government is unable to recover the remains of cadres horribly killed by apartheid forces. This is the case with those whose bodies were reduced to ashes by apartheid death squads such as the notorious Vlakplaas unit. In such

cases, families should consider spiritual repatriation of their loved ones to a final resting place of their choice.

Government calls on the interfaith community, including that of Lesseyton to give spiritual guidance, ensuring that the bodies of exhumed cadres are buried with dignity and that assistance is given where necessary with spiritual repatriation.

Similarly, members of the Lesseyton congregation should, for example, take a lead in cleansing Nonzwakazi Methodist Church at Mlungisi Township, which has historical attachments to Lesseyton Mission. This is where eleven apartheid activists were brutally killed by apartheid forces on November 17, 1985. This will enable all those killed during the massacre to find spiritual rest and peace.

We should also all strive to restore institutions like Lesseyton and Lovedale to their former glory, enabling us to give our children the finest education, pivotal for the development of our country, educating both the hand and the mind as was the slogan of mission stations throughout Africa from Lesseyton to Mbereshi in Zambia and as was the case at SOMAFCO.

The alumni of Lesseyton should take the lead in upholding its legacy. They should draw inspiration from the likes of Reverend Z R Mahabane, the institution's late alumnus, a man of conviction, commitment, selflessness and compassion. When 437 miners died at Coalbrook on January 21, 1961, in South Africa's deadliest ever mine disaster, following a rockfall, Mahabane, together with the likes of Rev James Calata, another of our struggle icons, stepped forward.

During the memorial service for these miners at Coalbrook in February 1960, Mahabane played a great role in comforting those gathered on the scene who had lost their loved ones. It did not matter to Mahabane that the entombed 437 men were largely from Lesotho and Mozambique. These were his African brothers who contributed significantly in building our country. In Mahabane we had a Pan-Africanist and a visionary. We owe it to him and other great forebears of Lesseyton to revive the fortunes and history of this once great mission station. ■

Why there is continued aid dependency in Africa and how can we reduce this?



Aid can be effective only if the receiver countries open up their political systems and make them accountable to those whom aid is meant to assist.

By Mashudubele wa Mamabolo

Although Africa is the richest continent in the world, at least with regard to the possession of natural resources and to some extent human resources, it remains one of the poorest places on the face of the earth. This despicable contradiction ensures that the continent is perpetually regarded by donors as a charity case to which alms from the rich part of the world are dispensed in the form of foreign aid.

Most African countries fought and received independence from their colonial masters during the period circa the 1950s through to the 1980s. Since the newly independent African countries did not inherit much wealth from colonial rulers, they had to rely on foreign aid from the same colonial masters for their survival. Africa receives financial and technical support from multilateral institutions such as the World Bank. The continent also receives bilateral aid from individual rich countries, and this has been the case for almost 60 years, with, however, little to write home about regarding improved living conditions of many African subjects. In fact, it has been estimated that almost US\$1 trillion in development-related aid has been transferred from rich countries to Africa in the past fifty years (Moyo, 2009, p xix). Since enough evidence points out that some aid receiving African countries are poorer today than they were under the colonial governments, the key question that flows from this is why then was the transfer of such stupendous financial resources not able to make Africans better off?

In the light of above backdrop, the objective of this article is to explore various reasons why African countries continue to depend on foreign aid although an inordinate amount of monetary and technical resources was transferred to the continent. In order to successfully achieve this objective, it is fundamentally crucial to start with an attempt to define foreign aid. This piece shall then proceed and provide a brief historical and theoretical context of aid. This will be followed by a concerted attempt to provide proposals to reduce Africa's dependence on aid.

Defining Aid

Foreign aid is one of the most controversial subjects in the politics of international development. As such, various scholars concerned with the study of the international political economy of development have attempted to define aid. However, in order to be relevant to the question at hand in this essay, we use a definition provided by Zambia's Dr Dambisa Moyo (2009, p 8) who defines foreign aid as a total sum of cash transfers from rich to poor countries that comes in the form of concessional loans and grants. It is this type of foreign assistance that we focus on because of its tendency to create dependency. Of course, foreign aid also comes in the form of technical aid, which involves the transfer of skilled personnel from developed countries to the developing countries. Moreover, aid

“The key question that flows from this is why then was the transfer of such stupendous financial resources not able to make Africans better off?”

can be provided for humanitarian and emergency purposes.

Although the history of development aid is often traced back to the period following the Second World War when the famous Marshal Plan was introduced to assist the European countries out of the ravages of the war, in Africa there is a need to historicise development aid back to the period circa 15th century when modern colonialism saw the light of the day. The colonial system in Africa was created to exploit African natural resources and cheap labour at the expense of the development of the continent. From Africa, Europe and America created extractive economies with the intention to obtain gold, diamond, copper, timber and other resources which assisted in fuelling development in the metropole countries. As pointed

out by several authors of African history, (Rodney, 1973; Fanon, 1961; Asante, 1999; Clarke, 1990; Williams, 1987), colonialism in Africa created the dependence of African countries on their imperial masters by deliberately preventing the colonies from severing the colonial-umbilical cord linking them with former colonial powers. This colonial link prevented ex-colonies from developing independently from their former colonial masters.

This charge was led and supported theoretically by radical scholars from the region of Latin American in the period circa the 1960s and the ensuing dialogue raging between the scholars of the South and North led to the birth of what was referred to as dependency theories. These theories, amongst others, world system theory and most recently decolonial theory became some of the major theories of development emanating from the Global South, which was the main theatre of imperial activities. Dependency theories sought to explain the continuous dependence of the developing countries on their former colonial masters.

These theories arose as a reaction to modernisation theory, an earlier theory of development which held that all societies progress through similar stages of development, that today's underdeveloped areas are thus in a similar situation to that of today's developed areas at some time in the past, and that, therefore, the task of helping the underdeveloped areas out of poverty is to accelerate them along this supposed common path of development, by various means such as investment, technology transfers, foreign aid and closer integration into the world market (Conway & Heynen in Desai and Potter, 2014:111). Dependency theory rejected this view, arguing that underdeveloped countries are not merely primitive versions of developed countries, but have unique features and structures of their own; and, importantly, are in the situation of being the weaker members in a world market economy (Frank, 1966).

Coloniality and foreign aid

It is within this context that this article contends that the existing neo-

colonial relationship between the core and the periphery is one of the major reasons why Africa continues to depend on foreign aid. How does this happen?

When African countries fought for, and won independence during the 1950s and 1960s this was a setback to the colonial powers, because it implied a loss of their sphere of influence, which translated into a loss of material gains, the primary motive of colonialism. The implication of this revolution was that the imperial powers had to be innovative and find peaceful means to continue to exercise their influence on the former colonies. The colonial powers took advantage of the underdevelopment of the former colonies to exert their influence and development aid was one of the commonly used strategies in this regard.

Thus, development aid became a new powerful tool of the foreign policies of the former imperial powers towards what the Latin American decolonial theorist, Professor Ramon Grosfoguel (2007) referred to as the subaltern. This viewpoint is supported by the South African based political scientist Professor Tim Murithi when he articulates that the reality in Africa is that aid to a large extent is synonymous with influence peddling, which is in effect a hidden form of manipulation, control, and coercion – or colonialism. In his revealing article, *Aid Colonization and the promise of African Integration*, Murithi (in Abbas and Niyiragira, 2009, p 3) further argues that modern-day developmental paternalism is more sophisticated and dresses itself up as a kind and gentle helping hand with benign and benevolent intentions. This position was further articulated succinctly by the Rwandese President Paul Kagame in Moyo (2009: 27) when he said: “The primary reason why there is little to show for the more than US\$300 billion of aid that has gone to Africa since 1970 is that in the context of post-Second World War geopolitical and strategic rivalries and economic interests, much of this aid was spent on creating and sustaining client regimes of one type or another, with minimal regard to developmental outcomes on our continent”.

Endogenous causes of aid dependency

On the other side of the coin, however, the causes for aid dependence in Africa are endogenously driven. Thus, some leaders and middle class in the post-colonial aid receiving African countries are fond of behaving like agents of neo-colonialism. These leaders in cahoots with some members of the middle class are often content with the status quo in their countries by perpetuating aid dependency, since this serves their selfish interest of holding on to power. Too much aid money without constraints and some form of monitoring perpetuate their stay in power (Moyo, 1999, p 49). This conduct of the post-colonial African

“Underdeveloped countries are not merely primitive versions of developed countries, but have unique features and structures of their own; and, importantly, are in the situation of being the weaker members in a world market economy.”

elite was articulated succinctly in the 1960s by Martinique political activist-cum-philosopher, Franz Fanon, in his magnum opus, *The Wretched of the Earth*. He was prescient in pointing out that the neo-colonial elite lacked the consciousness to develop their countries, and failed to ensure that their countries reduce dependency on the metropolises. In Fanon’s words (1961:20):

the national bourgeoisie of under-developed countries is not engaged in production, nor in invention, nor building, nor labour; it is completely canalised into activities of the intermediary type. Its innermost vocation seems to be to keep in the running and to be part of the racket. The psychology of the

national bourgeoisie is that of the businessman, not that of a captain of industry; and it is only too true that the greed of the settlers and the system of embargoes set up by colonialism has hardly left them any other choice.

Furthermore, most aid receiving countries of Africa do not possess proper infrastructure, either physically or intellectually to manage aid. More often than not, the post-colonial governments in Africa lacked accountable and transparent democratic institutions to manage resources, including those extracted from their territories. This resulted in aid and local resources being siphoned from the coffers of poor African countries and stashed in foreign banks. These nefarious activities by the ruling elite have led to a vicious circle of perpetual dependence on foreign assistance, and because aid serves the interests of the rich countries well, it never stops flowing into Africa even though it is being mismanaged by the receiving countries (Moyo, 1999: 55).

Clearly, the lack of proper education on the sustainability of aid is one of the major obstacles towards making aid effective and therefore leads to perpetual dependency. African policymakers need to understand that aid cannot be a permanent feature of their economies at this age of economic crisis. Rich countries are also going through economic challenges hence electorates in the North have begun to vote for populist candidates who articulate policies that are iniquitous to foreign assistance. The recent election in the USA is a case in point, whereby a nationalist candidate Donald Trump won the elections with a contested majority. Some controversial statements that have been articulated by Donald Trump in media interviews since he assumed the office suggest that his presidency might have far-reaching ramifications on the USA budget for development aid. This is evident in his inaugural speech in 2017 when he pronounced that:

for many decades, we’ve enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry, subsidised the armies of other countries, while allowing the sad depletion of our

own military. We've defended other nations' borders while refusing to defend our own. And spent trillions and trillions of dollars overseas while America's infrastructure has fallen into disrepair and decay.

The failure of African elites to appreciate and read between the lines these tumultuous geo-economic and political dynamics facing donor countries is inimical to the future of Africa's development.

Simultaneously Africa continues to lose some of its highly trained people to the West, and this leads to the 'brain drain'. These are often highly educated and gifted individuals with specialised skills necessary for the development and enlightenment of their countries. Officials who remain in government positions are often poorly trained to manage financial resources in the interests of the development in their countries. Donor countries take advantage of the vacuum left by the departed Africans and replace them with foreign experts, who often have limited understanding of local conditions and developmental needs of the African people. In a revealing book, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest have done so much Ill and so Little Good*, William Easterly, the American economist, laments one of the greatest tragedy of donors associated with the assumption that poor people are illiterate to understand their plight and, therefore, they cannot provide home-grown solutions to their problems. As a result of this patronising attitude of so-called experts, the donors impose top-down solutions on the indigent people and wrongly diagnose the challenges facing developing countries (Easterly, 2006:17).

What is to be done?

Having briefly considered the reasons for aid dependency in Africa, we shall now, in the traditions of Leninism, ask the question: what is to be done with the above state of affairs? In other words, what are the appropriate measures that African policymakers can adopt to reduce their countries' dependence on foreign aid? First and foremost, it should be asserted

that there are countries in Africa, albeit a handful, where development aid has worked. Botswana is one such case. Owing to its tremendous success in utilising development assistance, Botswana serves as a poster child and a laboratory for researchers who venture to study the positive impacts of foreign aid in a well-managed country. How did Botswana do it correctly to benefit from the flow of foreign assistance from the donor countries? Like many former colonies, Botswana's economy had always relied on the exports of mineral resources. Following its independence from the British Empire, Botswana discovered a huge deposit of diamonds. Instead of nationalising diamond mines as other African countries did, Botswana partnered with the De Beers diamond

“Rich countries are also going through economic challenges hence electorates in the North have begun to vote for populist candidates who articulate policies that are iniquitous to foreign assistance.”

company and created wealth from its diamonds. Botswana is also blessed with a transparent and accountable democratic culture inherited from the precolonial times. Botswana used to receive a huge amount of aid from the donors in the years following its independence, but owing to its wise post-colonial leadership guided by values entrenched in their democratic institutions, they were able to use the aid to develop the country. Moyo (2009:76), postulates that “Botswana began with a high ratio of aid to GDP, uses the aid wisely to provide important public goods that help support good policies and sound governance and this laid the foundation for robust growth.” It is, therefore, imperative for aid receiving countries of Africa

and elsewhere in the world to use Botswana as a template if development aid is to benefit their economies. As for Murithi (in Abbas and Niyiragira, 2009, p 7), “the principles of aid integrity, transparency and democratic governance have to be upheld so that aid becomes effective in Africa.”

Indeed, lack of continental integration in Africa presents a challenge to Africa's economic development. African countries conduct very little trade amongst themselves. Although there are enough resources in Africa for development, it is reasonable to say that such resources cannot be managed and disbursed to fund development exclusively on a national level, they would need to be harnessed through the framework of continental integration to which African countries voluntarily agree and subscribe (Murithi). Moreover, Africa should also negotiate better free trade deals with the developed countries. African countries should also diversify their economies and stop their dependence on the income generated from the exports of natural resources, and in this regard, industrialisation is crucial.

Most importantly, African governments need to stem out the illicit financial flows of capital out of the continent. In a ground-breaking report prepared on behalf of the UNECA and AU High-Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa, South Africa's former President Thabo Mbeki exposed that Africa loses \$50 billion a year to the illicit flow of capital (Mbeki, 2015). This involves illegal activities by the multinational corporations such as tax avoidance and overcharging of services to the clients in developing countries. If these activities are stemmed out, these resources could be shifted to the development of Africa, and this could reduce Africa's dependence on aid.

In the same vein, remittance from the African diaspora could be another crucial source of development funds as well as to finance external balances by helping to pay for Africa's imports and repay external debt (Moyo, 2009:134). It is estimated that in 2006 about US\$565 million flowed into Mozambique while Uganda



received US\$642 million. These huge amounts could be utilised to bolster the economies of African countries as opposed to aid, which often does not come free. The biggest challenge facing African countries concerning remittance is, in the main, the cost of international migrant remittance. African countries need to reduce this cost if Africa is to raise as much as US\$5-10 billion (Moyo, 2009:134).

In addition to the above proposals, it is essential for African countries to invest much of their scarce resources on proper education that would empower its teeming youth to become productive engineers, scientists and entrepreneurs. There is no short cut to development. All countries which have developed and continue to rise have

invested in their human resources. Africa has a competitive advantage of being one of the few continents in the world with a young population. In this juncture, the picture is bleak for the future of this sector of the society in Africa. Owing to lack of economic opportunities, the majority of young people leave Africa in droves heading for imaginary greener pastures in the West. It is disheartening to watch pictures of drowned bodies of young African people in the high waters of the Mediterranean Sea while trying to cross to Europe. Instead of losing these productive and active bodies to the dangerous sharks of the high seas, African governments should recognise these peoples as the valuable resources for development. If Africa can equip these young people with the relevant skills to participate in modern economies, they could contribute positively to the economic development of the continent and this would lead to a reduction of African countries on aid dependence.

Conclusion

This article set out to explore and discover reasons for Africa's continuous dependence on the alms from the North and to provide proposals for the reduction, if not the elimination of the phenomenon of aid dependence. It was observed that a lot of resources in

the form of financial and other forms of aid were transferred to Africa since the period following independence, but with little impact on the development of Africa. This has assisted us to answer the central question of this piece. Much of the evidence provided points to the existence of the neo-colonial relationship between African countries and former colonial powers as the fundamental cause of aid dependence in Africa. It was evident from the solution proposed as a way forward that aid can, to all intents and purpose, be effective only if the receiver countries open up their political systems and make them accountable to those whom aid is meant to assist. In this regard, Botswana was used as a poster child to be copied by other aid receiving African countries. However, it is plausible to conclude that in general terms, aid dependency has had far-reaching adverse ramifications on Africa's economic development and it is wrong for African countries to continue with the current aid-dependence model. ■

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“Lack of continental integration in Africa presents a challenge to Africa's economic development. African countries conduct very little trade amongst themselves.”

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SOCIAL WELFARE AND THE DETERMINANTS OF 'DESERVING'

Is a Basic Income Grant Better Suited for the Now?



With growing replacement of labour by Artificial Intelligence (AI) cutting jobs deemed redundant across the board, the future of the labour market is unpredictable. The potential relief that a BIG brings for not only job seekers but the labour market is worth serious consideration.

By Themba Moleketi

Both the European social democracies and their colonial extensions were built on the putatively universal figure of “the worker,” and the domain we have come to know as “the social” was constructed on the foundation of an idealized, able-bodied male “breadwinner.” Indeed, the list of those requiring “social” intervention (the elderly, the infirm, the child, the disabled, the dependent reproductive woman) sketches a kind of photographic negative of the figure of the wage-earning man. (James Ferguson)

The above quote by James Ferguson in his book *Give a Man a Fish: Reflections on the New Politics of Distribution*,

highlights an important issue in the contemporary social welfare allocation debate in the global south. Put simplistically, how does social welfare determine ‘who is deserving?’

By analysing social welfare from the social democratic European states through to the post-colonial welfare regimes of Latin America and Africa, unanimously the protection of children and the traditional household has been a priority. Examples include the Bolsa Familia and Oportunidades programmes in Brazil and Mexico respectively, which have nominal conditions of school attendance for children and clinic visits for improved health.¹ The social grant system in

South Africa continues the tradition of interpreting social welfare in this way. The Old Age Pension and the Child Support Grant (CSG), the two most expansive social welfare programmes in the country, are representative of this. The significant impacts of these initiatives on poverty reduction must be noted. Ferguson indicated that “A recent comprehensive evaluation of the [CSG] programme concluded that it clearly yielded “positive developmental impact” not only in nutrition but also in educational and health outcomes.” Similar welfare initiatives also contributed to poverty reduction in Namibia. The impact on poverty reduction of these programmes

(and programmes similar to this) has been well documented and they have proved to be successful.

However, the above quote by Ferguson highlights a contemporary struggle facing the global south, trying to determine what is the responsibility of social welfare? This enquiry makes reference to contemporary concerns about the growing incapability of global economies to create employment, about high levels of inequality and poverty. The free-market experiment, which emphasises open markets, privatisation and minimal government spending as the model to achieve an economy that will be able to absorb all those willing and able to work has been proven inept. And the stakes of this failure has been shown to be incapacitating considering official unemployment figures published by StatsSA indicating that unemployment is close to 27% and around 32% among youth.

The lack of protection for those who are not deemed as 'deserving' or do not form a part of the formal labour market, reveals a weakness in the country's ability to mitigate the effects of the economic system in place. The 2002 report of the Taylor Committee, which was a joint research committee to explore the viability of a universal unconditional payment in South Africa, called for a 'Basic Income Grant' (BIG). It emphasised how employment cannot be the sole source of income because the economy is incapable of producing employment opportunities for all. The report made further mention of how a large part of the country's population falls outside the traditional definition of those in need of social protection:

In the developing country contexts... the majority of the population often stands outside formal systems of social security, being engaged in rural and self-employment. Therefore, the European social security focus on the risk of the formal sector job loss is generally less relevant here.²

Do these enquiries, accompanied by the endless data collected about the levels of poverty and unemployment in the global South provide enough reason for re-defining 'who is deserving'?

The intention of this article is to explore the pre-existing notion of

'deserving' when it comes to non-contributory welfare provision. How has the understanding of 'deserving' been broached and do the discussions surrounding the Basic Income Grant pose an opportunity for the re-definition of social welfare to be more contextually appropriate.

How the 'deserving' are determined

Gosta Esping-Andersen highlights how different regimes had their different measurements for what they deemed 'deserving'. In his book *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Esping-Andersen identifies three types of welfare regimes among the industrialised economies: liberal welfare, corporatist-statis and social democratic state.

The rhetoric of 'who is deserving' was not the wording actually used, a closer look at the different regimes

“The free-market experiment, which emphasises open markets, privatisation and minimal government spending as the model to achieve an economy that will be able to absorb all those willing and able to work has proven inept.”

reveals the presence of this concept. For instance, the corporatist-statis model of countries such as Austria, France, Germany and Italy, who were heavily influenced by the church, prioritised the protection of the traditional family structure.³ Even though the protection of the family was not pushed as aggressively by the other welfare-regimes it remained present, in particular in the social welfare of Britain. James Ferguson also reveals how the familial base to social welfare went beyond the boundaries of Europe. Ferguson made the argument that the

familial connection was also a part of the colonial 'civilization' project.

The literature of the welfare regimes across Europe, the United States and Latin America provides insight into how the issue of 'who is deserving' has historically been addressed. An obvious gap in the literature thus far though has been the lack of the inclusion of African countries. Ferguson brings southern Africa and especially South Africa's social welfare progression into the frame. He reveals the nuances surrounding the southern-African post-colonial experience, specifically its racialised welfare provision. Ferguson emphasised this in his discussion of the purpose of South Africa's social policy during the 1920s, "its principle purpose in pursuing social protection was to protect the 'civilized standard of living' of whites, especially the 'poor whites' whose racial privilege was endangered by the economic conditions they increasingly shared with blacks." In similar fashion he reports that in the Zimbabwe of the 1930s (then called Rhodesia) welfare also rested on race base exclusion: *The provision of old age pensions...public assistance for the destitute, free public education, and subsidized meat...meant that by the end of the Second World War, Rhodesia's European settlers "had little to complain of"...Africans, however, were entirely excluded from these schemes.*

Francie Lund emphasises Ferguson's argument by highlighting how welfare provision during the apartheid era was extremely racially discriminatory:

A range of measures outside the welfare department protected the level of living of white families and children. The subsidy of housing rentals, housing loans for civil servants, school subsidies...and restriction on urban residence for black people, served to protect the economic status of white people.⁴

This reveals the state's intention of exclusively addressing white poverty and solidifying the middle-class status of the group. Even though there is no mention of racial qualification for the grant, up until the 1960s the main priority was exclusive provision for the white family.

The historical provision of social

welfare both globally and locally reveals how the 'deserving' were defined. The determinants for qualification were to maintain the conventions surrounding the familial and race dynamics of the time. A further qualifier that is of similar importance was welfare support to supplement the labour market.

Arguably it is due to the legacy of European social welfare and the development of the capitalist economy that regimes of the global south that have incorporated cash transfers tend to be placed in the debate of encouraging both a 'lazy' and dependent population. The idea that if one is able to work, then one must receive an income according to one's labour is captured by James Ferguson: "Instead of passively 'taking' from productive others, a person in productive labour makes a contribution to society, thus gaining a well-earned sense of pride and dignity." The morality of 'earning' surrounding the notion of waged labour is intriguing and the arguments of Paul Lafargue and Karl Marx provide interesting perspectives into this development.

Lafargue, in his radical Marxist critique, makes the argument that capitalism has caused society to be unappreciative of the joys of leisure. Waged-labour negatively influenced society by shaping a society that has become overly appreciative of work. This stream of thinking is captured in Lafargue's discussion of the worker, who he says embodies "the extravagant passion of the labourers for work."⁵ Lafargue's argument is unapologetically elitist, especially if we apply it to the socioeconomic realities faced by the unemployed today. However, the point he makes that the social cost surrounding the culture of work and being remunerated according to one's contribution is that alternative and precarious lifestyles are stigmatised. This argument can easily be applied to social welfare provision associated with cash transfers. The discomfort toward the provision of universal cash transfer programmes because of the convention that an income is earned is encapsulated through the rhetoric of conservative anti-welfare politics. Non-productive livelihoods that rely on obtaining direct distribution are today most vociferously expressed in

conservative, anti-welfare diatribes against 'lazy welfare cheats'...living on the taxes of the hard-working 'makers'.⁶

In addition, Karl Marx in his discussion of Wakefield's concept of 'systematic colonisation' argued that the strength and persistence of capitalism is dependent on waged-labour. He discusses how the arbitrary price of land in the colonies had the intention of creating private property and inserting capitalism.⁷ The significance of this was the creation of the waged-labour, which is of importance because "The great beauty of capitalist production consists in this, that it not only constantly reproduces the wage labourer as a wage-labourer, but also always produces a relative surplus population of wage-labourers in proportion to the accumulation of capital." This poses the question, 'Is the

“An expansion to include a BIG system represents another shift that recognises the current situation and has the potential of being immensely transformative.”

discomfort toward social welfare and ideas such as the Basic Income Grant due to its threat toward the capitalist institution?"

I would argue no, because of how the pre-existing cash transfer programmes in the global south from Bolsa Família to the Child Support Grant have alleviated pressures of abject poverty and encouraged better participation in the economy. This is supported by Leila Patel's gendered analysis of the CSG in her article 'Poverty, Gender and Social Protection: Child Support Grants in Soweto, South Africa' which did two things. Firstly, addressing how gender and power relations influence development outcomes. And secondly, Patel's research gave insight into the importance of the intervention of the CSG. Her fieldwork revealed that 85% of her target population received

less than R2500 per month. The employment that part of the group was able to obtain Patel labelled as survivalist-type activities, which were inconsistent such as "selling goods and hawking with low income-generating potential."⁸ Patel shows that R260.00 per month CSG was crucial in providing a safety net for those who received the grant. Patel acknowledges that those who received the grant were only slightly more severely and moderately food insecure than those who did not receive the grant and yet also experienced severe and moderate food insecurity. The differences are marginal but can be enough of a difference to remove people from extreme poverty and make them economic participants.

Thus, the expansion of social welfare programmes in the mould of the Child Support Grant should not be considered threatening to the market economy. In fact, other cash transfers from mineral wealth in Alaska and Iran have been viewed as providing all citizens with their rightful share to a common product.⁹ There are no concerns of that arrangement threatening capitalism in those countries. I find that the intention of cash transfers should be viewed in this light, as being a 'citizen-income' that is better designed to address the contextual situation of countries, in particular those of the global south. In light of this an expansion to include a BIG system represents another shift that recognises the current situation and has the potential of being immensely transformative.

The Basic Income Grant

The Basic Income Grant is a proposed cash transfer programme that has reached a consensus in its understanding among scholars and BIG enthusiasts. The definition provided by the Taylor Committee as well as Guy Standing and Michael Samson is synonymous to Franco Barchiesi's "basic income takes the form of monetary transfers that are universal in nature, aimed at individual recipients, and not related to means testing or employment status."¹⁰ The BIG is also referred to as a 'citizen's income' by other writers, regardless of the different name it is the same in

understanding. It is this reference to the BIG as being a 'citizen's income', which is of importance, because of how it differentiates itself from existing social welfare programmes.

By referring to the BIG as an income it confronts the controversial issue of waged-labour. The current situation of economies no longer being able to provide the assurance of employment is no longer exclusive to South Africa and the global south, but appears to be relevant in the global north as well. The situation in South Africa reflects that from 1990 up until 2000 formal sector employment has dropped by almost 20 per cent.¹¹ The centrality of waged-labour within society has received criticism by scholars, due to the creation of what has been termed the labour market dependence. Currently this is the continued dependence on a labour-market that is severely limited in its ability to absorb all those looking for work.

The 'fourth industrial revolution' which is upon us presents a further issue. With growing mechanisation of industries seeing the replacement of labour by Artificial Intelligence (AI), cutting jobs deemed redundant across the board from workers in the extractive industries all the way to shop-tellers, the future of the labour market is unpredictable. The potential relief that a BIG brings for not only job seekers but the labour market is worth serious consideration.

It is this provision of 'relief' that must be emphasised. The provision of a 'citizen's income' is a recognition of these realities and arguably presents a more complete shift toward a rights-based interpretation of social welfare. The limits of the current definition are beginning to be felt more and more due to its exclusion of the growing unemployed but also a category of people within societies who are regularly overlooked, those who form a part of the informal sector.

The informal sector presents the contradictions of the current model. Here are willing workers who are taking the initiative in response to an economy that is not able to provide for them. However, as a consequence of the current interpretation of social welfare informal workers are deemed

as undeserving even though their activity is similar to those in the formal labour market and plays a key a role in society.

Ferguson highlights the seriousness of the situation by revealing that sentiments have changed among development institutions such as the World Bank and an increase in groups supporting cash transfer programmes has emerged because of "the surplus millions who would be only too happy to work for wages but for whom no jobs can be found."¹² By continuing with the existing definition of social welfare coverage, the exclusion of this group will persist. What is particularly troubling is that those who find themselves in the informal economy are not there because of a lack of effort on their part. Excluding this

“It is this reference to the BIG as being a ‘citizen’s income’, which is of importance, because of how it differentiates itself from existing social welfare programmes.”

group from social welfare arguably represents an acceptance of an unjust system.

The main reservation surrounding the BIG is the concern that such a welfare programme could create dependency and encourage the movement toward a nanny state. This sentiment was revealed by Michael Samson, Claudia Haarmann et al. "The conventional economic wisdom is that income transfers to the unemployed will tend to undermine their willingness to supply labour to the market, as additional income reduces the 'opportunity cost' of not working."¹³ This line of argumentation reveals the misconception of the programme. Currently there a pilot programmes with varying amounts across the globe from Finland, India, Kenya and Canada. In their respective pieces both the economic journalist Elizabeth

Lowrey and the *Independent's* Shehab Khan discuss the positive outcomes of a basic income experiment in a village in Kenya. Lowrey indicates that the 'stipend' was used for necessities and has seen the development of small-scale enterprise.¹⁴ Locally, various discussions have put the amount in the range of R100 per month. It is hard to believe that a monthly stipend of R100 a monthly is enough to discourage the public from wanting to participate in the labour market. Furthermore, it ignores the empirical evidence that shows that higher living standards actually contribute to higher rates of finding employment.¹⁵

Those who are biased toward the current market economic system do not recognise the severity of the experiences associated with poverty and low living standards upon the ability to function as social citizens. Income transfers have been shown to make alternative living standards tolerable and provide the opportunity for many to get involved in more dignified economic activity and/or actively look for work opportunities. Furthermore, with the changing future of work serious consideration of a BIG or citizens income is required. ■

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Shaping South Africa's Foreign Policy



The editors have coalesced a diverse and intricate cobweb of narratives, assessments and findings which can only serve to enrich how we look at South Africa's foreign policy.

By Bhaso Ndzendze

The past two years have seen something of a renaissance period for literature on South African foreign policy. These include Oscar van Heerden's *Consistent or Confused: The Politics of Mbeki's Foreign Policy, 1995-2007*, and Adekeye Adebajo's double act of *The Eagle and the Springbok: Essays on Nigeria and South Africa* as well as *Foreign Policy in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Security, Diplomacy and Trade* (co-edited with Kudrat Kirk), along with the many popular press publications in the nation's op-ed pages.¹

What seems to unify these works is a focus on the issues which have dominated South African foreign policy thinking after 1994 (including championing the African agenda, strengthening the African Union, ensuring peace in Zimbabwe, reforming the United Nations, fair trade with the US, China and the rest of the BRICS and latterly wrangling with the International Criminal Court and retrospective blunders such as Libya and the Central African Republic), as well as their being pursued through the official foreign policy making mechanisms – which, in many of these works, is the subject of scorn and criticism.

Equally crucial to all these works is a focus on the unique set of challenges and opportunities (especially in soft power terms) brought on by foreign policy-making at the behest of a newly democratic South Africa, with a government accountable to a diverse, vibrant and active domestic audience (though, as we shall see, this is not without its doubters). *From the Outside In: Domestic Actors in South Africa's Foreign Policy*, edited by Chris Landsberg and Lesley Masters, is a timely contribution; weighing in and accounting for the outcomes at the behest of these varied forces – labour unions, the private sector, gender, civil society and social movements.

Crucial to Landsberg and Masters' intervention is their attempt to shine the spotlight on the multiplicity of actors shaping South African foreign policy, with their intended aim of bringing these in from the analytical cold.² Their volume consists of ten diverse chapters from various contributors, nine of which are designed to highlight some particular sector, body, or division's

role in or perception of foreign policy-making, as well as a conclusion. While not uniformly so, the focus of the contributors is the years between the late Mbeki era and the entirety of the Zuma era.

The first chapter ('Bringing plurality back in from the cold: Domestic actors and South Africa's foreign policy'), by Anthoni van Nieuwkerk lays the groundwork for the rest of the book by conceptualising and uncovering the role of departments, aside from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), in their differentiated pursuits of policy coordination and its impact on the country's foreign policy. The chapter highlights the salience of integrated

“South African foreign policy, especially in the post-Mbeki era, is found to be the product of a myriad of departments pulling in different directions.”

foreign policy-making tools as well as challenges the prevailing notion that the presidency is the main actor in strategic policy formulation; rather, South African foreign policy, especially in the post-Mbeki era, is found to be the product of a myriad of departments pulling in different directions. Attempts to reconcile policy, such as an international relations cluster, have yielded mixed results at best. The chapter shatters perhaps the greatest of holy cows; highlighting that the White Paper on South African foreign policy was not the product of the entirety of the foreign relations cluster under DIRCO leadership.

The relative devolution of power in foreign policy-making is not only horizontal across departments, but also vertical, between levels of government. The second chapter ('Subnational governments and the localisation of foreign policy in South Africa'), authored by Fritz Nganje, pins its focus on the subnational governance

structures, which have developed their own approaches to international relations, and particularly the provincial and city authorities. Core to Nganje's argument is that these subnational actors are increasingly demonstrating their capacity to represent their interests at a global level. He cautions, however, that an effort needs to be made to enhance the domestic international link which would improve the conduct of South Africa's foreign policy.

The third chapter ('Between Plein Street and Soutpansberg Road: Parliament and foreign policy during the Zuma presidency'), by Jo-Ansie van Wyk, turns to the role played by parliament. Both the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces have committees dedicated to foreign policy, but the chapter makes its focus the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation (PCIRC) in the National Assembly. Portfolio committees are empowered to provide oversight, investigate government or any matter of public interest within the area of responsibility, and are accountable for government activities and foreign policy. The first to explicitly make use of an analytical framework, the chapter adopts and seeks to apply Hagan's (1995) framework to account for the constraints faced in impacting foreign policies as well as the range of stratagems employed by this committee.

The Committee, Van Wyk argues, fails to live up to its moniker of being an engine room of SA's foreign policy as it plays a rather limited role, accorded little deference by DIRCO, who nominally brief it only to inform it on its priority areas rather than to get direction. This renders the Committee more of an imbongi (giving occasional criticism and counsel) than inkosi (ie, not the source of origin for any major policy or legislation since its origins). Reduced to this, the Committee, a portfolio within "the people's house", is left only to reacting and participation through various strategies (accommodation, mobilisation, insulation and routine activities)³, and playing a "discursive" role. Thus it would appear that DIRCO, itself relatively marginal (as argued by Van Nieuwkerk in chapter one) further relegated to PCIRC a marginal role in its own actions.

The fourth chapter ('The ANC world view and implications for South African foreign policy: Review of the 2015 foreign policy discussion document'), by Landsberg, Kornegay and Masters, makes an examination of the ANC's approach to international affairs, through deep-seated organisational perspectives along with a textual analysis of the ANC's plethora of foreign policy documents. The central argument is that the 2015 ANC foreign policy discussion document provides a reflection of the party's perception of the shifting geopolitical environment, and thereby shapes how SA will pursue its national interests. In short, and as is discernible from the previous chapter, the ANC perspective becomes policy. A future area of research, reconciling Nganje's chapter and the present one in the wake of the metros being under opposition parties, could be one which looks at whether, or how, opposition parties' perspectives become foreign policies at the city level.

Chapter five ('Labour unions and South Africa's foreign policy: The case of COSATU'), by Mabasa and Orr, seeks to articulate the role of labour unions, particularly COSATU, in South African foreign policy. Beginning with an analysis of the federation's theoretical outlook (particularly Wallerstein's world systems theory) and its transnational solidarity and global labour movement – including the dramatic moment in 2008 when it played a crucial role in the prevention of the flow of arms from a Durban harbour into landlocked Zimbabwe in the midst of the heated electoral climate in that country. In particular, the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU), "made it clear that they would have no part in the repression of the working class in Zimbabwe" despite the relevant authorities equivocating that it was legal transfer of cargo. Subsequently, it successfully coordinated with Mozambican, Namibian and Angolan labour unions and federations to do the same.

The authors also set out the positions of COSATU in terms of addressing the African political economy and the developmental crisis across the continent: the federation has positions on fair trade (including

heightening intra-continental trade and championing preferential access for global South countries), as well on alternative African development models and the environment. Subsequently, Mabasa and Orr highlight complementary and contrasting approaches as the union pursues its political solidarity campaigns. One such area of divergence has been the issue of China; for the government it is an economic partner with whom closer relations are needed, but for the federation it is a job killer whose access to the South African market needs to be regulated. Another was AGOA, with its conditions of accelerated privatisations and financial deregulation. The chapter is cause for a rethink of South African foreign policy, at least in its economic diplomatic dimensions: if its purpose is to be priority-based, a means to the solution of the country's most pressing challenges (economic stagnation in the case of South Africa), then COSATU

“COSATU must have more of a seat at the table.”

must have more of a seat at the table.

In chapter six ('Big business and foreign policy: Cog or driver of South Africa's international relations machinery?'), Ayodele delves into the role played by business in SA's foreign policy. Active in the pursuit of their interests, they have, however, not been active drivers within the centre of foreign policy decision-making circles nor have they been drawn in into the pursuit of the country's economic diplomacy due to the continued distance between governments and the corporate sector. Nevertheless, the chapter highlights the role of the private sector as the face of the state once outside the country.

The MTN Group, one of the South African multinationals with the biggest presence in the African continent, is used as a case study. Its expansion is seen by the author as an indicator of state-corporate dynamics in international affairs and the role that the private sector can play in heightening South Africa's foreign policy reach; a

case in point was an opening for the government resultant from MTN's decision to form MTN Rwanda, in a country with which Pretoria had limited synergies, but which have since taken shape. The opposite can also be the case, as MTN Nigeria (previously denied licencing multiple times) was finally granted permission to operate, as the author seems to suggest, in the wake of the personal relationship between then Presidents Obasanjo and Mbeki, which went as far back as the 1970s.

The chapter also commends MTN's indigenous staffing practices (with no more than 0.8% of its staff in any given country not being citizens of that country) which has won it, and consequently South Africa, some soft power points. The chapter also argues for greater cooperation between corporate and government in the country's pursuit of developmental and leadership goals if they are to be met. This may not be an outrageous suggestion. Indeed MTN succeeded in Africa by linking itself to the African Renaissance outlook and has credibly presented itself as an African 'success story'. Further, this makes it an exemplar of the African dream; what is hoped to be achieved through greater regional integration: an African company capable of meeting Africa's infrastructure and service needs.

In chapter seven ('Women, gender and South Africa's foreign policy: The need for an inclusive approach to foreign policy decision-making'), Lesley Masters deals with the elusive question of gender and South African foreign policy. To be sure, the Constitution notes that gender is to be a priority area in foreign policy, and indeed South Africa has attempted to walk its talk. It has had an active role both within and in outside international discussions. Women have had prominent roles in South Africa's foreign affairs, even before the end of apartheid, on account of the ANC Women's League's activism. And DIRCO's three latest ministers have been female (Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and presently Lindiwe Sisulu). Regionally, South Africa has also championed issues of equality, including a SADC declaration committing to eradicating gender discrimination. But the point, as Masters articulates it, has been one

of an incorrect methodology; with a focus being rather on the numbers of women in the diplomatic arena and in leadership positions in these spaces, rather than the agenda. A critical omission, for example, has been in the White Paper on South African Foreign Policy failing to give attention to women in its discussion of emerging trends (climate change, new media, and the changing nature of conflict make the list). For Masters, there is a continued dominance of masculine perspectives, which comes at an enormous cost for South Africa's global engagement. Discernible from the chapter is the argument that the mere presence of women in diplomatic quarters – perhaps rooted in simplistic notions of women as peacemakers and men as warmongers – is not the issue; rather it is the lack of adoption of “feminine” perspectives (with women forced to assimilate to masculine logics of appropriateness); “lines between hard and soft issues is increasingly blurred with security issues overlapping with environmental and social development concerns.” Further, “increasingly, it appears that key to successful international engagement is finding an inclusive approach and a balance between gendered perspectives.”

Chapter eight (‘The elitist love-hate affair: Civil society and South African foreign policy’), by Landsberg, focuses on the engagement strategies of non-state actors with the government, with reference to what he denotes as ‘elitist’ non-state bodies: think tanks, academics, NGOs, and their efforts in trying to shape the focus of the government in relation to the African agenda, and South Africa's Africa-wide strategy. The author comes to a pessimistic conclusion on the impenetrability of the state regarding its foreign policy; as he argues, what is really at play is a disproportional dominance of the country's foreign policy by elitist, donor-funded NGOs and think tanks in competition to gain influence over the state, while those organisations in the grassroots and in the margins are left in the cold. Further, these two entities do not always have the most productive nexus: “civil society-government relations in South Africa have always resembled a roller-

coaster ‘love-hate’ affair, with both sides often being ambivalent and coy to engage each other.” Often times, and especially with regards to think tanks, there is an expectation that government will engage them on their own terms, and government itself being capable of being “too prickly.”

The issue may also be that there is no single government to penetrate – might not each civil society organisation be better served carving out a niche for itself, and target (as all the preceding chapters seem to suggest) either DIRCO, local government, particular departments, labour and business?

The editors then dedicate space to what can be characterised as a manifesto (‘Note from the editors:

“The chapter also commends MTN's indigenous staffing practices (with no more than 0.8% of its staff in any given country not being citizens of that country) which has won it, and consequently South Africa, some soft power points.”

Voice from the periphery: Grassroots social movements and South Africa's foreign policy') by the Unemployed People's Movement (UPM) in which they share their perceptions of the disconnect between the people and the distant foreign policy machinery. This allows us to glean into the practicalities on the ground as to what constitutes the gap between what is domestic and what is foreign policy. The UPM raises an important issue regarding this nexus: explaining foreign policy workings and decisions to the people could “help address xenophobia” and would “help people on the ground understand the world's workings at large” and therefore put an end to the scapegoating of foreigners.

Herein lies the strength of the book; its diversity. One finds in the same book paragraphs which decry capitalism, and a few pages down, a chapter in which there is the acknowledgement of the role to be played by the private sector in promoting South Africa's African agenda and intra-African trade. Much like the diversity they note to be at play in South Africa's posture, so too the editors have coalesced a diverse and intricate cobweb of narratives, assessments and findings which can only serve to enrich how we look at South Africa's foreign policy – even a simple word association gleaned from the table of contents accrues this conclusion, with terms such as ‘between’, ‘integrated’, ‘(dis) engagement’, ‘periphery’, ‘grassroots’ relaying a situation characterised by disjuncture and distance. The book ultimately acknowledges the insights of state-centric realism without being covered by them – as the book seems to argue, it would be un-factual to proclaim the state as obsolete in the crafting of foreign policy, but it is also equally churlish to not take stock of the kaleidoscope of interests and power centres active and at work in the shaping of South Africa's posture towards the world. ■

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- ¹ Including Monyae, D. 2018. ‘In fixing Zuma's messy legacy, Cyril cannot neglect foreign policy’, *Sunday Times* 21 January, and Shivambu, Robert. 2018. ‘SA's new foreign policy agenda must embrace human rights’, 16 May.
- ² Chris Landsberg and Lesley Masters 2018, *From the Outside in: Domestic Actors in South Africa's Foreign Policy*. Fanele.
- ³ Accommodation refers to the cooperation between DIRCO and the PCIRC (though, once again, it is characterised by asymmetrical briefings with the former informing the latter more on what are its priority areas than seeking approval from it; mobilisation refers to the legitimisation of the ruling party's foreign policy objectives and global solidarities; insulation refers to a deflection and ignoring certain foreign policy matters which have the potential of embarrassing the ruling party (this includes the PCIRC's silence over the 2015 Omar al-Bashir affair), while routinisation involves a focus on budgetary issues and external humanitarian assistance.

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Congratulations to Eritrea and Ethiopia Uniting as One People with One Shared Destiny



I appeal to all those who are in politics to come together to create one union Government and demonstrate how Eritrea and Ethiopia can resolve their precarious predicament to provide a model for resolving conflicts to the rest of Africa and the rest of the world.

By Mammo Muchie

This is my plea to the new generation of African leaders and African peoples: work for unity with firm conviction that without unity there is no future for Africa... I reject the glorification of the nation-state, which we have inherited from colonialism, and the artificial nations we are trying to forge from that inheritance. We are all Africans trying to be Ghanaians or Tanzanians. Fortunately for Africa we

have not been completely successful ...Unity will not make us rich, but it can make it difficult for Africa and the African peoples to be disregarded and humiliated. And it will therefore increase the effectiveness of the decisions we make and try to implement for our development. My generation led Africa to political freedom. The current generation of leaders and peoples of Africa must pick up the flickering torch

of African freedom, refuel it with their enthusiasm and determination, and carry it forward. – Julius Nyerere, First president of Tanzania

The glory which awaits Africa cannot come about until Africa is united. If we fail to unite, then a great nation will go to sleep forever. – Kwame Nkrumah

We can assure you we will face the future together. We will work as one... from now on do not say Eritrean and

Ethiopian people; say there is one people: we are one people. – Isaiyas Afeworki

Isaiyas gave an interview in a glossy magazine in three languages about his undying and unchanging commitment to a 'one Ethiopia – andit or hanti Ethiopia'! He declared in the front cover: 'It's our persistent stance to strive for a united Ethiopia.' (August 23, 2007)

"Ethiopia has a unique distinction in the universe for empowering those that were disempowered, for humanising those that were dehumanised, spiritualising those that were denied their right to worship God and inspiring and strengthening those oppressed to resist oppression".

Moving from the Failed 1991-1993 Transition to the 2018-2020 Re-Union Transition

The transition from 1991 to 1993 of Eritrea from being part of Ethiopia to becoming a separate state did not produce peace and stability in the region for the last 27 years. In fact, what came was the totally unnecessary war in Badame on the border between Eritrea and the province of Tigray from 1998-2000 that led to both sides losing over 100,000 people. What also came from the last 18 years is what is called a "No War, No Peace" state that closed Eritrea off from Ethiopia. Fathers and mothers and children and family had no right to see each other. It was truly evil to the people on both sides what the ruling elites imposed on both Eritrea and Ethiopia. Both were losers, no one gained at all. It was a lose-lose outcome and never a win-win one.

They all should now have the moral sense to acknowledge the cruel injustice they imposed on this very God fearing and justice loving people with the longest historical memory and civilisation in Africa and the rest of the world. Eritrea too is part and parcel of the originator of this long history, civilisation and memory associated with Ethiopia's name. Everything is moved but memory. The name Eritrea came much later during the scramble for Africa; and its origin is undeniably and purely Ethiopian. As Julius Nyerere said, "Tanzania is a colonial mistake";

similarly, most of the states in Africa and all those affected by the colonial world were created during the partition of the scramble for Africa including our own North East Africa region.

All the ruling elites on both sides should be honest and admit the mistakes they made to create war (1998-2000) followed by the unending "no war and no peace" from 2000-2018. The apology from the elite must be honest, transparent, true and open to the people and the public; and I am sure the forgiving people will accept their apologies as long as they do them with moral intelligence applying fully honesty, sincerity, humility, integrity and decency. Dr Abiy, the Prime

“I call upon the leaders and the people to join together and use at least two years from 2018 to 2020 to create the transparent and open transition to regenerate the real unity that the people can become fully and truly comfortable with.”

Minister of Ethiopia, has demonstrated how to apologise for the wrong the Government of Ethiopia has done publicly and forthrightly. There is a great lesson to learn from both the Eritrean and Ethiopian sides, as all those that suffered deserve genuine and sincere heartfelt apologies from the ruling elites that were involved in doing this gross injustice and damage to the people and to Eritrea, Ethiopia, the region, Africa and humanity as a whole.

There was also no clarity what constituted the transition from the 1991-1993 TPLF and EPLF discussion and decision. It was never transparent and open. It was closed and a mystery to nearly all of us. The people who were never involved suffered a lot. The elite that made the war did not

suffer as much as the people who died and were forced to be separated from their families. Is what has gone wrong the result of what was agreed as the transition? Or was it the failure to manage what was agreed expeditiously and truly between 1991-1993? Or failure to implement it properly until the 1998-2000 war broke out?

We need now a new transition driven by the vision of love, reconciliation, forgiveness, respect and trustful collaboration always and ever. No going back to war to split families ever again. Never! There is a need for a total paradigm shift to enter the dawn or era of eternal peace, stability and building all the needed to promote the wellbeing of the people and nature with consistency, resolve, commitment and dedication.

The Need for an Open and Transparent 2018-2020 Transition

Now there is a real need to craft a new sustainable transition that draws a very profound lesson after seriously monitoring and evaluating the 1991-2018 tragic mistakes that cost our people immensely. We need from now on, starting from 2018, to the future ever coursing through the eternal river of time, to realise no division but unity, being always and ever one people with a shared one destiny to contribute not only for the wellbeing of our own one people and nature but also to the people in our beloved Africa and humanity globally.

I recommend devoting two years from 2018 to undertaking systematic effort to create the real unity of the people; and if agreed it is my recommendation that it would be much better to create one union Government joining and combining Eritrea with Ethiopia. We should mobilise all the stakeholders from public, private, civil society and universities to a variety of other sources to build genuine real unity with trust and confidence. The people on both sides should be given the opportunity and they should make the decision and what they decide should be strictly adhered to, as long as they make the choices without any interference based on honest, open and transparent exchange of knowledge to decide on what would best promote

their enduring and sustainable unity and togetherness.

I call upon the leaders and the people to join together and use at least the two years from 2018 to 2020 to create the transparent and open transition to regenerate the real unity that the people can become fully and truly comfortable with. We have a number of choices. The first is to create a united one Government; the second is to establish a federation; the third is confederation and the fourth is to keep the two separate states. As there are a number of choices and it will be good to create a road map trajectory to select the most appropriate governance, institutional structure, leadership and systems that shape the one people and one destiny to be propelled not by selfish interests, egoism and by instrumentally calculating one's own gains at the expense of others based on choices by pricing everything and valuing nothing; but as Dr Abiy Ahmed Ali repeatedly states, by preferring to move along the pathway of love, reconciliation, forgiveness, respect, pride and self-worth. Let the 2018-2020 transition become a game-changer and great success to forge and build lasting unity by rectifying the failure of the 1991-1993 transition that brought the calamity of war and family separation.

Appeal to the Leadership in Eritrea and Ethiopia

What I appeal to Dr Abiy and Ato Isayas is to do all they can to create the 'One People, one shared Destiny' where Eritrea is Ethiopia and Ethiopia is Eritrea by uniting us all as Ethiopians and Africans and use the transition to radiate the re-generation of an enduring Pan-African spirit for Africa to come out entirely from the colonially planted divisions that have been the source of so many wars across Africa. Let both of them as the current leaders work with full trust, love and moral and emotional intelligence to create not only the enduring, sustainable and innovative unity between the people, but also let all work very hard with joy to make what both leaders are facilitating and guiding to become a role model for bringing African solutions to African problems. Let the resolution of the

conflict with the 2018-2020 transition efforts provide a new vibrant and dynamic brand and model for the rest of Africa to learn to move away from division and to bring about ever-lasting African Unity.

On June 16, 2018, I was in the USA and gave a lecture to our 50 years' re-union in Dwhite Morrow High School in Engle Wood New Jersey where I declared the USA has the whole world in it and having gone through civil wars and many problems, the American people have established enduring unity. The whole world is in the USA and all know how to live together regardless of the numerous problems that are not yet fully settled such as racism, inequality, unemployment and even poverty. I said the USA should forget everything

“Use the transition to radiate the re-generation of an enduring Pan-African spirit for Africa to come out entirely from the colonially planted divisions that have been the source of so many wars across Africa.”

else and should rather prioritise this model of USA or American success for being able to make all live together despite the huge diversity hailing from the whole world living in America. Let America stand for humanity first where all care for one another rather than for weapons, money and all other material and other distracting interests. My beloved host family and former elementary school mates liked this message or advice to let America stand for valuing and prioritising humanity rather than standing mainly for commerce and valuing things more than humanity!

We in Africa should learn to accelerate our unity and we have delayed it for too long and we have

been fighting to protect borders cynically drawn by the enemies of Africa. This is the time to change. Eritrea and Ethiopia have divided themselves in 1991-1993. Now in 2018-2020 let them teach all Africa by not being distracted by defending borders others drew cynically to impose their divide and rule over the whole of Africa. Now there is the opportunity to re-transition the transition by correcting the flaws of the 1991-1993 failure. If the two leaders can create a united one people, they can send a powerful message to the world. They both should be supported to share the Nobel Prize as Mandela and De Klerk did after the 1994 South African reconciliation. If love, forgiveness and reconciliation bring Eritrea and Ethiopia to unite as one people with one destiny, those who facilitated this transition from war to permanent peace and from separation to unity will deserve a Nobel peace prize.

Can a United Ethiopia include Eritrea to be Ethiopia too?

We heard that Ato Isayas Afeworki, the leader of Eritrea, was open for confederation or federation in 1991, though we have not had any tangible proof or evidence for it. It will be good if we can hear from him what his position was in 1991. We heard that those who opposed his openness to federation/confederation were some of them from the TPLF leadership group. I hope the real truth backed by evidence can come out finally now. What has been consistent was that Ato Isayas has always advocated one united Ethiopia in his statements. Now it is time for both his words of unity and action to move from any mis-match to a match by teaming up together with the new vision of love, reconciliation and forgiveness expressed consistently with great humility by Dr Abiy.

Over the last twenty years it was easy to recognise and appreciate Ato Isaya's Ethiopian unity words but in terms of action, what was often seen was the Eritrean Government giving support to some of the ethnic based fronts fighting the TPLF-led regime in Ethiopia. Now there should be consistency.

It would be good to know why the transition decision to split Eritrea

from Ethiopia was taken. Why was it not possible, given TPLF and EPLF were allies at the time, to make some arrangements to form a unity of Eritrea and Ethiopia in some form or variety! This is sincerely a real puzzle that needs clarification as it is important the truth is told forthrightly and honestly as it is the only way the necessary trust can be made and built.

My Own Take on the 1991-1993 Transition

In 1991 on May 27 when the decision was made to form a transitional Government with TPLF and a provisional Government in Eritrea, I was the chairman of the Ethiopian Community in Britain and we organised a big protest challenging the decision that the mediators wrote on a hotel note paper for TPLF to take over Ethiopia. We protested the next day on May 28, 1991 at the American embassy challenging the USA support for dividing Ethiopia ethnically and for the secession of Eritrea. I remember the BBC interviewing me about the development and I explained to them that this settlement will create war and division and the transition will not lead to a lasting peace. I was interviewed also by Martin Plaut from the BBC in 1992; I repeated by giving a number of reasons why there will be war. In 1993 there was a meeting in Oxford University, I repeated by giving more reasons why the necessary condition for peaceful transition does not exist and we cannot go for a long term economic collaboration then when the politics is leading us into a war that I said is likely to erupt any time in the next few years. How I wish I were wrong, but what I predicted happened.

I remember giving another BBC interview on the Badme war and the decision by the TPLF leaders to expel those with Eritrean origin from Ethiopia. I opposed the expulsion of citizens of Eritrean origin that broke families apart. I still am very sad and angry that it ever happened and so many sisters and brothers were expelled just because their families originated in the Ethiopia of Eritrea. Families that have Eritrean husbands and wives were separated because of this evil and cruel policy of expelling Eritreans from Ethiopia. That

was truly evil and when the BBC asked me I said why should Ato Meles not be expelled then, as I am told his origin is more from Eritrea than Ethiopia. I have also heard that Ato Isayas is more from Ethiopia than Eritrea, why not also bring him to his homeland to Ethiopia rather than keep him in Eritrea. My own daughter and son's grandfather is Eritrean too. My children always love to see Eritrea as the umbilical cord of their grandfather is in Eritrea. Now if the transition is properly done within the 2018-2020 period, I know my children cannot hesitate to go very soon. I would love also to support both research and post graduate training in Asmara University and all universities too if it is possible to be invited to do it. I will be more than happy to serve our one people as I believe sincerely as they

“Families that have Eritrean husbands and wives were separated because of this evil and cruel policy of expelling Eritreans from Ethiopia.”

always are our sisters and brothers truly.

Concluding Remarks

What we need is a genuine transition to build the long-cherished re-union of Eritrea and Ethiopia. This will make the dream of all of us to come true finally. I recommend not a federation, not a confederation, not a two separate states but one union Government to make the one people and one destiny to be fully realised. Above all else, for the great vision expressed by Ato Isayas to come true (NB: Please see the quote as an inspiration here in the opening page of this commentary) to be realised, we need to vote and select/choose the union government and not the two states or federation or confederation. That is my open vote in advance in case the transition is made by permitting the people to do the choice amongst the four options.

We can assure you we will face the future together. We will work as one...

from now on do not say Eritrean and Ethiopian people; say there is one people: we are one people.

Only a union Government will translate into reality the vision expressed in this quote by Ato Isayas!! If Ato Isayas implements and translates into practice what is quoted above, he can only be a true Ethiopian brother to me and all of us from all of Africa.

The best legacy of all those who made the mistake over the last 27 years they can leave behind is to realise and go for one union Government. If they do this, we should all forgive them and move on onwards and forwards appreciating their coming back to reality, in spite of making big mistakes in the first place in 1991-1993. The reward is with the current transition (2018-2020), they have come back to provide Ethiopia and Eritrea an enduring great legacy agreeing that all must live together as one people with shared future and destiny without fail always and ever. I appeal to all those who are in politics to come together to create one union Government and demonstrate how Eritrea and Ethiopia can resolve their precarious predicament to provide a model for resolving conflicts to the rest of Africa and the rest of the world.

Where there was hate, may love replace it, where there was conflict, may reconciliation beat it, where there was bitterness, let forgiveness prevail to remove it. As Dr Abiy keeps reminding us, let us be added as Ethiopians and Africans; let us not be subtracted; let us be multiplied also and not be divided. Let us be included without any one excluded. Let us go for a united, prosperous well-being anchored, green, smart, inventive, innovative, creative, entrepreneurial, talented and loving and God fearing one people moving along the path of a life-journey full of curiosity, sense of wonder, intelligence, education, wisdom, knowledge and happiness. Let us remove divisive vice and go for unity virtue. Let everyone join and celebrate and congratulate the current great Eritrea and Ethiopia permanent transition to forging and building an ever-lasting historic come back for their re-union to be one, one and one! ■



Below we publish extracts from a document by the *Concerned Africans Forum* to former Heads of State and Government and others of our leaders, the *Africa Forum*.

The assumption of office by President Donald Trump in the USA in January 2017 has resulted in a process of the re-evaluation of the global system of international relations.

The reason for this is the posture which then Presidential Candidate Trump adopted that if elected as US President, he would pursue a policy between the US and the rest of the world based on the proposition – **America First!**

Since his election and inauguration President Donald Trump has continued to insist that his guiding policy principle remains – **America First!** ...

US Foreign Policy

Before we comment on these

important comments made by Candidate Trump, we must cite some comments made by former Obama US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and former Carter National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, relating to US foreign policy. ...

Both Hillary Clinton and Brzezinski are Democrats.

They hold the common view that US foreign policy must, as a matter of course, be based on the following propositions that:

- the US has a *manifest destiny* to position itself and practically discharge its responsibility to serve as the leader of the world;
- the US has earned this privileged position because it has *exceptional*

capacity to uphold values of fundamental benefit to all humanity; and,

- the US has an obligation to *accumulate the required soft and hard power* and develop the necessary strategies, which must evolve with time and changed circumstances, to ensure that it honours its manifest destiny!

Any study of US foreign policy over many years and the strategic positions taken by the US foreign policy establishment, regardless of political affiliation, would show that the propositions advanced by Clinton and Brzezinski are shared by this all-party US foreign policy establishment. ...

Trump and US Foreign Policy

In reality it is very clear that what Candidate Trump said in his April 2016 Foreign Policy Speech and what he has done in this regard since assuming power, are entirely and fully consistent with the posture which the US foreign policy establishment has promoted for many decades, especially during the Cold War years and since, concerning both the *manifest destiny* of the US, its *exceptionalism* and the imperative for the US to develop the necessary *predominant soft and hard power* to enable it practically to express that manifest destiny and exceptionalism. ...

It is obvious that the leadership and membership of both the Republican and Democratic tendencies in US politics are, in different degrees, not happy, or worse, with President Trump and his Administration. ...

That disaffection derives from the fact that Donald Trump both during the Presidential Campaign and since he assumed office, has been too honest and open in publicly asserting and pursuing the basic strategic objectives of US foreign policy as understood by the US non-partisan/multiparty foreign policy establishment over many decades.

The Republican and Democratic Party establishments seem to have determined that coming from outside the 'Washington establishment', what he called 'the swamp', Donald Trump has demonstrated an inability to conduct himself according to

the 'politically correct' processes which would reinforce the hitherto internationally accepted hegemony of the established 'Washington establishment'. ...

Europe on Trump

Naturally people in Europe have been very concerned to understand the real substance of the Trump foreign policy given that in good measure that policy relates directly to this part of the world.

The important German magazine, *Der Spiegel*, has carried views of various Europeans in this regard.

In its June 6, 2018 edition *Der Spiegel* published an article written by its staff headed 'Berlin Worried about Losing Trump's Trade War'.

This article makes the important observation that:

"It has been clear for some time that the (US) president is jettisoning anything that limits the U.S. from wielding its power as it likes."

The June 11, 2018 edition of the same magazine carried an article entitled 'It's Time to Isolate Donald Trump' by Roland Nelles. Among other things Nelles makes the important observation that:

"Trump wants complete control and can't stand being contradicted. He always has to have the first word and the last..."

China's view on Trumpism

As we have indicated China has become a particular target of the Trump administration as it has sought to implement its [[America First]] policy.

It is therefore natural that China will have taken all necessary steps properly to understand the strategic meaning of this **America First** policy.

In this regard the People's Daily, organ of the Chinese Communist Party, published a Commentary on 3 August, 2018 by Sun Chenghao of the Daily entitled 'Trump goes further along strategic contraction'.

Sun makes various strategic considerations we must take seriously. Accordingly we will now take some time to cite these views.

Sun makes an assertion which is not normally featured in the dialogue

about the system of international relations concerning the strategic place of the US in the contemporary world, what he characterises as the 'strategic contraction' of the place and role of the US in global affairs. He says:

"From the macroscopic perspective, the national strength of the US is still on a downward trend because of the financial crisis and two anti-terrorism wars, which determines that Trump's and Obama's foreign policies have no difference in nature... Under the context of strategic contraction, Trump continued Obama's choice of shifting the US strategic pivot to the east...The US finally comes to a real strategic contraction under Trump's administration after the transition in Obama administration."

Accordingly Sun makes the important point that Trump is behaving as he has done, pushing an **America First** policy, because he is responding

“It has been clear for some time that the (US) president is jettisoning anything that limits the U.S. from wielding its power as it likes.”

to this 'strategic contraction' which the US cannot reverse.

He joins others we have quoted earlier in asserting that Trump's **America First** policy does not depart from, and is fully consistent with established US foreign policy, including as it was pursued by the Obama Administration.

He then draws attention to what is nevertheless particular to Trump's foreign policy posture and says:

"The on-going diplomatic strategies and logic of the US government are still a continuation of the former (Obama) administration's policies. The difference is that the current policies have shaken off the banner of the so-called liberalism, and become simpler and cruder."

"The 'illiberal hegemony' pursued by Trump still stressed the importance of hegemony, just like what Obama

addressed at the United States Military Academy, also known as West Point, in 2014, 'America must always lead on the world stage.'

Sun then makes an important point, concerning the misuse of foreign policy interventions by US Administrations principally to address domestic US partisan political conflicts and says:

"Owing to the internal (US) political instability, Trump's methods to sustain the US supremacy and push forward the national strategy are quite different from those of Obama. But resorting to the world to ease internal pressures will only bring new uncertainties to international order."

He then comments on the posture adopted by the Obama Administration, whatever might have been the situation then relating to 'internal (US) political instability'. He writes:

"Obama administration's foreign policy doctrine can be summarized as 'don't do stupid things'. It retained the country's hegemony by making good use of resources and avoiding waste, which can be reflected in restraining the use of force, advocating multilateralism, promoting 'values' diplomacy with 'smart power', leading allies from behind and reaching out to hostile nations."

Sun then writes that to the contrary: *"Trump seems to have done many 'stupid things', such as launching campaigns against globalization and multilateralism and reshaping the pattern of regional allies, but what he did was actually another passive response under the US strategic contraction in dealing with the outside world."*

"Trump's decisions all started from safeguarding the narrow national interests of the US so as to cut off the route for other countries who plan to take a free ride and concentrate on reciprocity and mutual benefit on resources."

"Apart from the 'retrenchment' strategies adopted by Obama, Trump places more importance on diversifying the approaches to safeguard the US hegemony..."

Africa, the World & Trumpism

In the context of the system of international relations, the Trump phenomenon means that we, as

Africans, must understand and act to advance our interests fully appreciating what the slogan – **America First!** – means practically!

It would seem that President Trump has remained true to his word with regard to the matter of [[America First!]] and has therefore taken decisions which depart from positions taken by predecessor US Administrations.

In this regard we must understand that what has driven the Trump Administration is a practical assertion of the principle – **America First!** – which is the same principle which has informed the strategic actions of successive US Administrations since WWII – to assert the global hegemony of the US!

The collapse of the Soviet Union and Socialism in Europe from 1989 onwards firmly implanted in the global system of international relations the idea and practice of a unipolar world system dominated by the US.

However, in time, the evolution of human society has posed a practical reality of the re-emergence of a multi-polar distribution of power in terms of the system of international relations.

Obviously the US establishment would view the emergence of such multi-polarity as a challenge to its hitherto unchallenged hegemony - otherwise a *'contraction'* of its global strategic dominance. ...

In this regard we believe that Sun Chenghao was perfectly correct when he said that the essential and therefore principled difference between the Obama and the Trump Administrations with regard to foreign policy was that the latter advanced an agenda of an *'illiberal (US) hegemony'* whereas the former pursued an agenda of a *'liberal (US) hegemony'*!

The point about all this is that it confirms that both the Obama and the Trump Administrations shared the strategic objective to ensure US hegemony over the system of international relations! ...

Put simply, this means that the international community is faced with the practical reality that important sections of the US ruling group, like those represented by the Trump Administration, have taken the decision

that they must use the preponderant political, economic, military and other power of the US to ensure that the system of international relations is defined almost exclusively by the US, in its interests!

As has been said, as we have reported earlier, some of the objective impulses which have led to the dominance of this *'illiberal hegemony'* have been:

- the emergence of a nationalist domestic political constituency within the US which supports the notion of **America First** at all costs; and,
- the *'strategic contraction'* of the place and influence of the US globally.

If we accept that both these phenomena are part of historical objective reality, independent of human consciousness, we must then

“ The point about all this is that it confirms that both the Obama and the Trump Administrations shared the strategic objective to ensure US hegemony over the system of international relations! ... ”

expect that the Trump manifestation of an *'illiberal hegemony'*, and therefore US diktat in terms of the system of international relations, is here to stay, whoever serves as the US President! ...

This means that the global community of nations must therefore, and of necessity, urgently engage in a systematic discussion about the system of international relations it needs to address the interests of all nations and peoples.

Failure to do this can only mean that the rest of the world, apart from the USA, participates in the formation of the world system of international relations only by responding to such

actions as might be taken by the Trump Administration as it implements its [[America First]] policies and strategy, as well as similar policies which would be pursued by the successor US Administrations!

Obviously this would be unacceptable!

Trumpism vs Multilateralism

Already there are certain positions on which the international community has agreed and which the world community of nations, through the UN, must defend and promote.

These include, among others, but not only:

- the UN Charter;
- the UN 2030 Agenda – the Sustainable Development Goals;
- the Addis Ababa Action Plan on Financing for Development;
- various WTO Agreements;
- the Paris Climate Agreement;
- the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Treaties Against Chemical and Biological Weapons;
- the General Framework for the Resolution of the Question of Palestine; and,
- the Framework for UN Peacekeeping Missions.

What this means is that there already exists a very important body of decisions which have been accepted by the international community and which should not be undermined by any actions the US Government might take in pursuit of the objective – **America First!**

All the preceding means that as Africans we have an urgent responsibility to intervene in the global discussion which the Trump Administration has imposed on the whole world – i.e. to make our own considered input into how the system of international relations should be constructed such that it serves, today and tomorrow, equitably, all the nations and peoples of the world!

Need for Africa's Intervention – What is to be done?

As Africans we did not participate in determining the system of international

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relations established before and after World War I.

Similarly we played no role in determining the system of international relations established after World War II.

In practice, the same reality obtained during the period of the Cold War.

We can say virtually the same thing about the period after the end of the Cold War, except to the extent that the 'victorious' sole superpower, the US, and therefore the unipolar world, agreed to listen to the African voice.

The grave danger we face as Africans is that if the world community of nations allows that the established and democratically agreed system of international relations, including international law, is eroded and undermined by a hegemonic USA, we will then fall victim to all in the rest of the world who are in one way or another, more powerful than ourselves.

It is in our very direct interest that all nations, big and small, must conduct their affairs within the parameters of an internationally agreed set of rules, overseen by the established multilateral structures and systems.

In this regard, the most important strategic consideration for us fully to take on board is to understand that strict respect by all nations, including the most powerful, of established international law, such as the UN Charter, and other policies democratically agreed by the internationally community, such as the SDGs, is a vital shield to protect our right to self-determination and to avoid wilful domination by the powerful!

Trump's pursuit of an 'illiberal hegemony' has exposed exactly this point, hitherto somewhat disguised – that the US hegemon is saying that its will must at all times supersede all international law and agreements, if the US considers respect for and observance of these as being inimical to the interests of the US!

This is precisely the reason why we, the Africans, to whom international law and international agreements are of the greatest importance in terms of our very sovereignty, must occupy the front ranks in the very necessary global effort for all nations to reaffirm in

meaningful ways the vital importance of international law and agreed global agreements in the context of a multilateral system of international relations which all nations, big and small, must respect!

The assertion that the US has a unique right to override any and all international law in pursuit of an **America First** policy means that small and medium powers, such as the African countries, must accept whatever the [[America First]] policy prescribes for them!

It is imperative that Africa must respond to what is to the Continent an imminent and present danger.

Of very great interest to us as Africans with regard to the immediate foregoing is the reality that certainly for the first time since at least the beginning of the 19th Century, the interventions of the Trump Administrations have created

“It is in our very direct interest that all nations, big and small, must conduct their affairs within the parameters of an internationally agreed set of rules.”

the space and possibility for Africa, at last:

- to meet to consider what exists in the system of international relations which must be protected and preserved;
- to make its own independent assessment about the required structure and functioning of the system of international relations to address the current global situation; and,
- to strategise about how it should engage the rest of the world to present Africa's perspective about itself and the world and to help construct the required and mutually beneficial multilateral system of relations.

It is therefore important and urgent that the Africa Forum does everything necessary to:

- advise the African Union (AU) about the opportunity which has arisen which makes it possible for the AU to take the initiative to persuade the world community of nations to negotiate the system of international relations;
- prepare a well-considered document which the AU could use to engage the rest of the world in the context of the re-design of the system of international relations; and,
- consider the interventions the Forum must make to support the AU as it tries to persuade the rest of the world to accept and adopt Africa's perspectives about its own future and the future of the rest of the world.

Accordingly, the evidently destabilising intervention of the Trump Administration in the system of international relations in the short period of a-year-and-a-half since January 2017 has created the important possibility even for us, the Africans, at last to play an important role in terms of designing the system of international relations.

As Africans we cannot afford to miss this opportunity to help re-design the global context in which Africa must pursue the historic objective of its renaissance!

Conclusion

We, organised as the *Concerned Africans Forum (CAF)*, hereby submit this document to the important organisation of former African Heads of State and Government and others of our leaders, the *Africa Forum*.

We appeal to the *Africa Forum* seriously to study the document and obviously make its own observations with regard to the matters we are raising.

In the end we appeal to the *Africa Forum* to intervene with the *African Union* to ensure that this premier organisation of the African people urgently makes the necessary interventions to help entrench a system of international relations which will protect and advance the interests of the more than one billion Africans in particular, and the peoples of the South in general. ■

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Summit calls for enabling environment to support Africa's innovators



By Department of Science and Technology

Greater investment and the creation of enabling ecosystems are required to support Africa's innovators. This was one of the key messages that emerged from the African Innovation Summit (AIS) held in Kigali, Rwanda earlier this month.

The AIS is an Africa-wide initiative to mobilise investors, policy makers, researchers, the youth, innovators and thinkers into a coalition for

collective action to foster an enabling environment for innovation in Africa.

Speaking at the summit, Rwandan Prime Minister Édouard Ngirente said that initiatives such as the AIS were critical for Africa's development.

"The challenge facing Africa is building robust ecosystems of innovation," the Prime Minister said. "I am happy that AIS is helping our countries build a culture of innovation

as a way of life. It is a critical element of development and economic growth."

Delegates at the summit agreed that a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach was needed to ensure that policies, investments and enabling ecosystems were put in place to empower and propel African innovators and their solutions forward.

The summit concluded with a call to action addressed to innovators,



government leaders, the private sector, civil society and academia: "Let us throw out the boxes that have caged us".

These sentiments were echoed at a satellite AIS event hosted in Pretoria by South Africa's Department of Science and Technology (DST). While the Kigali summit focused on how the continent can innovate to address pressing developmental challenges, the DST's

satellite event focused on innovation in the Southern African region.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap was discussed in this context. The strategy seeks to promote economic and technological transformation in order to enhance the competitive and comparative advantages of the region's economies.

Anneline Morgan, Senior Technical Advisor: Science, Technology and Innovation for the SADC Secretariat, said that African countries such as Zambia, Botswana and South Africa should benefit from their material wealth instead of merely exporting it to other continents.

"African countries can get more value from benefiting their mineral resources by transforming them into high-value products," Morgan said.

Dr Thomas Auf der Heyde, Deputy Director-General: Research Development and Support at the DST, said that in order to achieve structural transformation through innovation and industrialisation, countries in the region needed to address policy deficits.

"Government must also undertake policy reforms, promote greater investment in research and development, finance technology entrepreneurs, improve access to local and international markets by small to medium enterprises, and develop indicators that will ensure impact at every level of the innovation value chain," Auf der Heyde said.

Professor Shirley Motaung of the Tshwane University of Technology told delegates that, while it was necessary to create an enabling environment for innovation, training a cohort of knowledge entrepreneurs was equally important.

"We must not limit ourselves to the classroom," Motaung added. "Policy makers need to introduce entrepreneurship as a module or school subject. Degrees offered by our universities do not prepare students for entrepreneurship but for jobs."

Fannie Gondwe of Perisha Agro and Packaging Enterprise, and Lilitha Mahlati of Ivili Loboya, demonstrated the socio-economic value derived from product beneficiation in their respective businesses. Malawi-based

“Government must also undertake policy reforms, promote greater investment in research and development, finance technology entrepreneurs, improve access to local and international markets by small to medium enterprises, and develop indicators that will ensure impact at every level of the innovation value chain.”

Perisha Agro and Packaging grows orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, which are more nutritious than ordinary sweet potatoes and have been shown to alleviate Vitamin A deficiency. Gondwe's plans include embracing the value chain of orange-fleshed sweet potatoes by adding production of juices, chips and skin lotions.

Ivili Loboya is a wool and cashmere beneficiation enterprise based in the Eastern Cape. The company uses fibre from goats to produce cashmere, which in turn is used to produce safety footwear innersoles, clothing and homeware.

Delegates at the DST's satellite AIS event agreed that more businesses need to follow the beneficiation route, as it leads to the creation of much needed jobs and economic growth.

Dr Olugbenga Adesida, co-Director of AIS, called for bolder thinking about the future and a greater sense of urgency around Africa's transformation. "Africa cannot simply be consumers, nor can it outsource its development," Adesida said. "We all must engage with a new sense of urgency to facilitate change." ■



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The Editor welcomes contributions that take into account The Thinker's vision of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and caring South Africa. Submissions of poetry and the written word should be brief. For visual material, a high-resolution document is required (300dpi Jpeg). Please send your work electronically to editor@thethinker.co.za for consideration.

THROUGH A CREATIVE LENS

When they came back from the shops

By Mohau Bosiu

When they came back from the shops, they sat to eat lunch. Some fried rice with beef they bought last night from the Chinese joint next to Domino's Pizza, by Leeuwkop and Naivasha road. Outside, the midday sun was unforgiving, dense and humid air that melted on human flesh, the kind that made her appreciate the outrageously low air-conditioned temperatures in upmarket Woolies shops.

As they ate – all the while, air from the silver fan next to the TV stand blew softly across the sitting room – she was now yawning, her eyelids closing, leaning her hand over a sofa cushion, a black suede sofa, matching the colour of her short skirt and Havaianas. Irritated by sweat, her toes began to twitch, caramel skinned, oddly accentuated by the mauve pink colour of her nail polish. She had applied it so meticulously the night before, after she finished showering, and was pleased that it didn't smudge. It never did, though. How she applied nail polish to her toenails was quite an art, her precision; perhaps derived from her long-standing love for colouring books, or maybe that, for her, the idea of entrusting someone else with a simple, standard cosmetic treatment of her feet was quite *ridiculous* – as she would

sometimes say jokingly, or perhaps it was just an expensive exercise she couldn't afford. She found joy in her work and all the little things she could do by herself, for herself.

They finished eating, and before she resigned to the bedroom she asked him what time it was.

'Ten to twelve.' She asked him to wake her up at one o'clock when she left the sofa.

He, swiftly, ceasing the opportune hour for being lonesome, as though he couldn't wait for her exit, put his personal computer on his lap and typed an email, responding to a meeting request. On the tab opened next to the Gmail one was TS Eliot's quartet 'Little Gidding.' There was a lot occupying his mind – it was cluttered, his mind, a cabinet comprising a legion of open folders that all demanded his full attention. It was his love for knowledge and his sophisticated way to explain simply the things she found complex, that she found endearing and attractive. Sometimes his nonchalant attitude and coolness of thought during her outbursts in their arguments would rile her up in the heat of the moment – and he had learned very quickly that saying anything back would always make the situation worse. One Friday he promised to be back early from

work, by 5 he said when she asked. She called at 6 that Friday evening to ask where he was, she was surprisingly calm. He said he's just finishing off his work, and will be home by 6:30. At 7 she called again. She had reached boiling point, her words piercing – 'you said you'll be back at 5, don't play games with me!' – reminding him of his promise, she threatened to dispose the food she was busy cooking and go home. She did not end there, she said; with an uncharacteristically stern, commanding tone for such a petite lady, 'I'll throw away your key in the bush and never talk to you again if you don't get yourself here in 15 minutes.' At that, he immediately left the bar without notifying his colleagues, went to his desk, packed his bag and on the way bought her favourite bottle of sparkling wine; Villiera MCC Brut. His punctuality in work did not extend to his other commitments, and this irked her.

As she left for the bedroom, he wanted to do many things at once; to read, to prepare clothes to wear for the meeting he was invited to attend the following day, to complete an essay he was commissioned on. He opted to read the news, instead.

After he had read a news story on News24 about a young boy who was stabbed to death in front of his mother and 10 year old brother in the early hours, he drank a glass of water. The young boy was trying to protect his mother. She was accompanying her two boys, 6 and 10, to the bus station to wait with them for the bus that ferries them to school, as she usually does. On that fateful morning, the bus did not arrive. So they began to track on foot at daybreak. As they walked, a man approached. He requested two Rands. She told him she didn't have, but the man was not to take no for an answer; shook his head in protest – 'NO', he said. She ignored him and continued on her journey, along with her boys. The man broke an empty glass bottle against a rock by the gravel and made his way toward her, the

young boy screamed 'mama!' when he saw the impending danger. The woman wrestled with the man who outmanoeuvred her, gripped her into gridlock, her occiput onto his chest as the broken glass bottle fell to ground. He was slipping his other hand down to lift her dress. She was instantaneously overwhelmed by shock and trauma, the thought of what could happen in front of her kids sent her into a momentary daze. The young boy was kicking the man from the back, while the older one was screaming for help in the wilderness. Enraged by the young boy, the man pursued the broken glass bottle, grabbed it and stabbed the young boy repeatedly; blood splashed his face and gushed out the feeble body to be sucked by the ground.

The phone rang, it was an unknown number. Qenehelo let it ring until the home screen came on. 13:10 were the numbers that appeared on the home screen, he rushed to the bedroom - hush, brisked steps. He was barefoot. His flip-flops tossed mindlessly, one under the sofa, the other beside a leg of the mahogany-coloured oak coffee table. He was race-walking on tiptoes, swivelling his way to the bedroom. 'Thobile, wake up.' Thobile laid belly flat on bed, her one hand covering her face. 'Tsoha, wake up', he whispered, his left hand caressing her behind, while he sat on the bed beside her. 'Que, uh-uh,' she said in soft defiance, his hand continued to caress her behind. 'It's quarter past one, wake up.' He spoke softly into her ear. She opened her eyes, a wry smile on her face. 'Is this what a slay queen looks like after a nap?' - 'Mina I'm queen Nandi shem!' They giggled. His hand was now up her crotch, stroking her in circular motion with his middle finger. It was pleasant and tantalising, she wanted to savour this moment a little longer, to get him to do it a little more she knew she had to pretend otherwise; to dare him, to give him a chase, so she said smiling 'leave my vagina alone.' He retorted - 'isho ngesiZulu'.

'Yekela into yami.'

A thing, she called it in her language. 'Why don't you say ikhekhe?' he asked.

They laughed and he went back to his computer.

He, despite the brief intimacy, still couldn't shake the irritation he felt, a gurgling annoyance, fortified by the opening line to the news story he was reading earlier. How could the reporter possibly describe the soulless body of the boy as one that died a hero? he asked himself. It was quite trite. There was no hero in that story. We all lost. We all lost a young boy. We lost a man, too, to unemployment and destitution, who knows - to drugs and alcohol abuse as well. The malaise of a post-apartheid South Africa, haunted by its colonial and apartheid residual effects, the malaise entrenched by loss of faith in the capacity of the government of a new dispensation, a blight of legacy and perpetual failure; to extricate its suffocating tentacles over the people, especially the least in the social ladder, he thought, briefly wallowing in distress. His irritation was short-lived, for he had seen the worst before, though this reminder wearied him, a reminder that even the least of people do not live in togetherness of spirit, informed by their likeness, similarity in habitation, income bracket, languages. But that even among these, the have-nots, there's still rank and individualism; who ate meat last night for dinner, whose yard has a nicer gate, whose children's uniform is new, books covered with colourful covers instead of brown paper - a belief that the one who accumulates more is better, a peculiar culture of placing material value higher than humanhood, usurping the fundamental principle that has guided the people of Africa for years past; ubuntu, I am because you are.

Thobile came out of the bedroom, and before she went to shower she asked Qenehelo to iron her work tunic. He obliged. 'Please put it on the counter,' he said.

'It's wet here.' It was probably

melted ice from the ice-cube tray he used when he poured himself water to drink.

'Just wipe,' he countered. 'I'm late Que,' she said, throwing the tunic on his face, running to the bathroom, quickly shutting the door, leaning her back against it. She chuckled at her little triumph. He rose from the sofa, putting the navy blue nurses' tunic on his shoulder, as he walked toward the kitchen to fetch the ironing-board, which was slotted between the dark grey fridge and white cupboards with shiny silver handles. Before ironing the tunic, he changed the music playlist from the sombre Gregorian Chants, to play Maleh. He needed something lively, knowing that his time to read was now done since Thobile was up. He clicked enter on the album cover written the words: YOU MAKE MY HEART GO, and selected track number 3: 'Nje' - a simple, uncompromising rendition of love and devotion to a person you feel great affection for, despite what others might say or think. A love untainted by public opinion. Deep, unburdened, just sultry and nice. Nje.

He was folding the ironing-board when he heard the bathroom door closing, he had put the tunic spread out on top of the bed.

'Thank you!' Thobile yelled, cheerful, and pleased. She was content. Looking at her naked body through the mirror attached to the wardrobe door, she traced the supple skin of her hips with her hand, and loved her broad smile that revealed her perfectly white symmetrical canines exceedingly. She couldn't remember the last time she felt this way. When Qenehelo saw that she was in light spirits, her face calm and happy, bearing a sense of gratitude, a genuine, unannounced sense of gratitude - it was the same countenance she had when they came back from the shops - he felt comforted, he didn't know by what exactly, perhaps seeing her like this.

She grabbed her bag on the counter, and summoned him 'get the keys, let's go. I don't want to be late.' ■

Mohau Bosiu is multi-idiomatic in language and literary culture. He is an alumnus of the Tshwane University of Technology. He uses his skills in corporate and cultural communication to serve brands that improve the socioeconomic conditions of South Africa and Africa. Mohau is also a volunteer at the National Foundations Dialogue Initiative (NFDI).



12 THE THINKER

Dear Dr le Pere,
I enjoyed very much reading your piece on China's evolving ideational framework under Xi Jinping. An extremely well written piece. Precise. Not easy for such a wide ranging topic. I can only imagine how much work went into *The Thinker*, Quarter 2, 2018 making it so efficient and sharp.

Your piece fills an important (and major) gap in the debate, out there, today, on China. In North America/Europe, few seem to take seriously the ideational/ideological side of Xi and the CCP. Many seem fine with just going from headlines to headlines, with all of the conscious or unconscious baggage. A long time has passed since we have seen the type of work done by Franz Schurmann, in *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (1966), or Stuart Schram on Mao's Thought. The recently published work on Xi tends more toward political biography rather than in depth dissection of Xi's "thought", i.e. Xi's intellectual itinerary, the various stages of its formation and evolution, the Party's current efforts to link Sinified Marxism with the evolving Chinese and global reality, and what Xi's thought may mean for the world.

I found very interesting how your piece examines the Maoism in Xi; how Xi has gone back to restore/resurrect elements of Mao; and how some elements of Maoism were always still there (throughout the Deng Xiaoping

period), but were either underplayed by the party and/or ignored by scholars in the West (due to their own normative preferences). The fact that the gigantic Mao portrait is still there overlooking Tiananmen says something. Xi's generation, the "sent-down youth", has a fascinating and complex relationship with Maoism.

Thank you for providing your framework for assessing what Xi is trying to achieve, the intricate new multi-dimensional ontology. Perhaps, in extending your argument, it is really Xi and his strategists who are playing the 3- or 5-dimensional "mental chess", not Donald Trump...

Just a few related thoughts for further consideration. First, some might argue that the high-point of the moves toward "rule of law" in the PRC was in 2007/08, under Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao, and that we have been seeing walk-back since about 2008 (Carl Minzner, *End of an Era*, 2018) – how then to consider the new institution-building and rule-making that has happened under Xi.

Second, some of the pressures that you correctly highlight that "China Dream" responds to, preceded the 2008-09 financial crisis, such as the growing concerns inside the Party about corruption since the late Jiang Zemin period, and intensified during the Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao period. China started to address the corruption challenges head-on, and in a more public and open manner in 2005 and 2006,

including through coordinated efforts with the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank and the OECD – and under the "UN Convention Against Corruption". Canada, my country, showed interest in 2005-06 in working with China on "clean government" and ethics in government, but a change in the Canadian government brought a change in China policy, and this bilateral effort was unfortunately abandoned. Awareness of such continuities in China would help to provide context for the robust anti-corruption, Party re-building and domestic poverty elimination measures under Xi. The mainstream global media tends to ignore these ongoing concerns, when focusing instead on the anti-corruption campaign as a power-grabbing exercise only ... further to your argument.

Thank you for your take on the main factors that impress upon the ambitious Belt & Road Initiative. As you have cautioned elsewhere, it will be very important for China to avoid engaging in international behaviour that others outside of China see as unequal power relations or as unsustainable (due to uneven distributional effects). Research is needed on whether or how China is adjusting, in response to both the positive and negative feedback it receives from others, in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world. It would be very interesting to ponder whether such considerations will make it into "Xi thought" in the future. In other words, whether Xi and the party ideologists will rework and further develop their ideational and policy frameworks beyond the mantras of "win-win" and "South-South cooperation", and if so, how.

With the FOCAC meeting coming up, it is a good time to think about China-Africa relations. I recently saw a commentary in the FT that argues that China is "failing" Africa. Is this true? How would you think about this? How *should* one think about it?

Thank you, for writing the excellent piece, Dr le Pere – I learned a lot in reading it, both the analysis, and the art of writing!

Gregory T. Chin
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