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The Thinker

A PAN-AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS

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MANDELA'S CALL FOR A SETTLEMENT OF THE CONGOLESE CONFLICT

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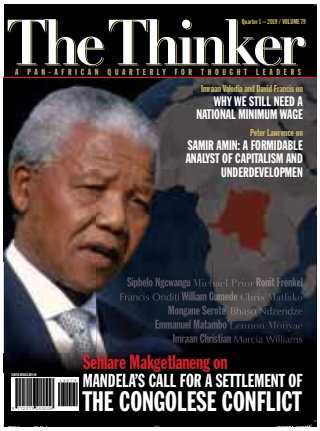
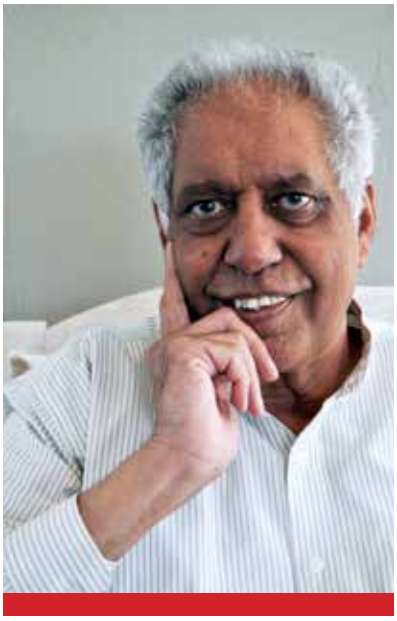


On the Cover:

Pan-African unity and cohesion requires an end to the conflict in the Congo.

NIGERIA

Elections at a Critical Juncture



Nigerians go to the polls on February 16, 2019 to determine the direction, immediate and future, of the country. The outcome of the presidential polls will validate the approaches and focus of a much vilified administration, if the electorate vote to retain in office the incumbent President Muhamadu Buhari. Or they may elect to choose one of the 78 other presidential candidates, including prominent former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, seeking to occupy Aso Rock, the seat of the presidency.

Consistent with the vogue among Nigerian politicians, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar only recently defected from the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC). The cross party movement from his former comrades in the APC was a convenient move to facilitate his tortuous emergence as the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in a heavily monetised, in dollar terms, congress of the party. The sheer number of candidates seeking the highest office in the land is not only symptomatic of the vastness of perspectives on the current state of affairs of the country, but the reflection of the utter dysfunctionality of the political party process. This deficiency includes the inability of all the major parties to meet the challenge of distilling common understandings among their numerous stakeholders and interest groups. The major parties have blurred programmatic identities reflecting the lack of profound ideo-philosophical directions among them.

Continued membership in a party rests on accommodating the personal ambitions of the top echelons of the party. Where personal differences cannot be harmonised, defection to the other party is the usual result. With a glaring lack of ideo-philosophical anchors, cross party defections based on the calculus of often short term personal interests have shaped the character of the coming Nigerian elections at all levels. This spans the presidential through the gubernatorial contest, the race for the 109 seats in the Senate and the contest for the 360 member House of Representatives. The formal manifestos, 'Taking Nigeria to the Next Level' of Buhari and Atiku's 'Restructure: Let's Get Nigeria Working Again', merely serve to provide debating points in intellectual discourses. It is argued that both manifestos do not really present a clear transformatory roadmap or a radical way forward given the daunting circumstances of the nation. Given the situation, some analysts have concluded that the elections seem to leave the electorate with no choice than to settle for a lesser evil between two 'Siamese twin' candidates.

Still, other analysts perceive that there is real choice in the election. In this perspective, the first option is to sustain the project of perceived building of a new Nigeria being undertaken by the incumbent administration. The other choice, referencing PDP's Atiku, is to go back to Nigeria's tainted past which favored only an opportunistic few.

With lack of any guiding principles, the party system that produced the candidates at all levels of the contest is rife with lack of internal coherence. Political bargaining internal to the parties has been within the context of implacable turbulence and deep disaffection in relations between estranged godfathers and their disgruntled godsons. A case in point was the decision of the Party Chair of the ruling APC in Lagos State to deny the incumbent Governor of Lagos State a second term. The political godfather acknowledged that the governor had indeed performed creditably in the first term. His offence was that he had not been a good party man. Many read that to mean he had not serviced significant party men with largesse from the state coffers!!! So political settlements at all levels are thus driven by the parameters akin to classic patrimonialism.

> "This deficiency includes the inability of all the major parties to meet the challenge of distilling common understandings among their numerous stakeholders and interest groups."

A spirited attempt to create a third force in the African Democratic Congress would seem to have floundered. The new parties and their 76 candidates are mainly newcomers, youthful and otherwise. They are bolstered with significant intellectual capital and technocratic depth to drive their ideas of a radical change of national trajectory. But they are consigned to the margins. They have been over gunned by resource constraints. These include former minister and activist Oby Ezekwelisi (55) a former Federal Minister of Solid Minerals and later Federal Minister of Education. She served as the Vice-President of the World Bank's Africa division from May 2007 to May

2012. Ezekwesili was a 2018 nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in transparency in the extractive sector. A second such candidate is Kingsley Chiedu Moghalu (55), political economist, lawyer, former United Nations official, and Professor in International Business and Public Policy from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

The context of the Nigerian elections is daunting. The current thirty six state structure of the federation has resulted from the progressive devolution of the Nigerian state from its original powerful three regions into a thirty-six states. The devolution has been driven by compelling political imperatives ranging from the strategic demands of the civil war, local calls for autonomy, gerrymandering of the dominant forces to access more resources from the federal purse and balancing and perceived skewing of state structure in favour of the north.

The outcome has been that most of the states are unviable. They survive mainly on hand-outs from the federal government. In fact, only Lagos State, with one of the largest economies in Africa, can survive autonomously. The demand for the re-structuring of the Nigerian federation mainly from an aggrieved South has remained a non-negotiable condition for the continuation of the federation. Muhammadu Buhari assured Nigerians that he would address this issue to win the last presidential election. He reneged on this promise.

The situation has been exacerbated by the re-emergence of the Indigenous Peoples' of Biafra (IPOB), seeking to take Eastern Nigeria out of the federation. To compound matters is the re-emerging potency of Boko Haram, fundamentally Islamic militants in the North East. Finally there are the violent attacks across the country, attributed to Fulani herdsmen. The main theatre of this horror that many have described as systematic killings has been in the middle belt. This has been interpreted as ethnic cleansing in a territorial expansion of the Fulani to deprive the original inhabitants of their land.

The incumbent president has downplayed the political and security dimensions of the critical challenges facing the country. In 'taking Nigeria to the next level', he has opted to focus on the developmental and reinstituting the critical salience of integrity in the operation of the Nigerian state space. He is defined by his unrelenting fight against corruption at all levels. It is this latter characteristic that many in the electorate still see as a redeeming feature of Muhammadu Buhari. Yet, paradoxically it is the same reason why many in the opposition, especially in the PDP, are determined to frustrate his re-election. His first term exposed Nigerians to the horrendous leakage of national wealth into the pockets of now identifiable prominent rogue persons and families across the country. For this group, the aim is to kill the anti-corruption fight to save their necks. Meanwhile, other pristine national voices are frustrated by the seeming lethargy of the incumbent administration in bringing to book those responsible for killings all over the country. They see silent complicity in President Buhari.

"The outcome of the coming elections has critical implications for the future character of the Nigerian federation as well as for socio-economic development, peace and security in the continent. But if its history is anything to go by, Nigeria has shown formidable resilience to transcend these tensions intrinsic to any multi-national post-colonial state."

Alhaji Abubakar Atiku's strongest appeal in the South lies in his commitment to structurally equilibrate the federation. How this resonates in the conservative north remains to be seen. The perceived weakness of the Buhari administration is its inability to institute meaningful protection for all from the violent marauding Fulanis. The administration often conveniently claims these are non Nigerians. This situation has created a groundswell of support for Atiku Abubakar in the middle belt. Indeed Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue state defected from ruling APC to the PDP in protest against the president's perceived indifference to the security and humanitarian challenges posed by what in politically correct terminology is the 'herdsman-farmers' clash.

The stakes are very high and some have predicted keenly contested elections. The elections promise to transform the usual ethno-regional block voting across the country. It is meanwhile gearing to be the most expensive election in the nation's history. During the week of the PDP congress to elect its presidential candidate, the Naira depreciated briefly in the face of unprecedented demand for dollar by candidates to incentivise delegates to the congress and to pay off some pliable contestants.

The biggest stake is how the elections will impact on the unconditional unanimous demand by the Southern states and some of their allies in the middle belt for the restructuring of the Nigeria federation. What would a win for Buhari in these circumstances portend for continued stability in the country? What assurances are there that the potential President Atiku Abubakar would be able to overcome entrenched sentiments in the north against restructuring? And if he did, what would be the counter reaction from his natural constituency to this?

In essence, some interesting times lie ahead for Nigeria in making a decision on the way forward on 16 February 2019. The outcome of the coming elections has critical implications for the future character of the Nigerian federation as well as for socio-economic development, peace and security in the continent. But if its history is anything to go by, Nigeria has shown formidable resilience to transcend these tensions intrinsic to any multi-national post-colonial state. ■

The Edito thanks Ademola Araoye for contributing to this editorial.

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.

Our Decisions Consider

Your Future.

Oasis was formed with the belief that a company could deliver a track record of continual excellence, outstanding results and superior returns in a socially responsible and ethical manner. It is a belief that has led us to an unwavering commitment towards our clients, their families and society at large. Over the past twenty years this commitment has made us a trusted global wealth manager and led us to continue and value each decision we make. Because we know that every choice made will impact the lives of our clients tomorrow.

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Dr Mongane Wally Serote became South Africa's poet laureate in 2018. In 1973 he won the Ingrid Jonker Poetry prize. As a Fulbright Scholar, he obtained a Fine Arts Degree at Columbia University in 1979. In 1993, he won the 'Noma' Award for publishing in Africa, and in 2012 the prestigious Golden Wreath Award. He served as Chair of the Parliamentary Select Committee for Arts and Culture and was formerly the CEO of Freedom Park, a national heritage site. His written works include several acclaimed novels and volumes of poetry.

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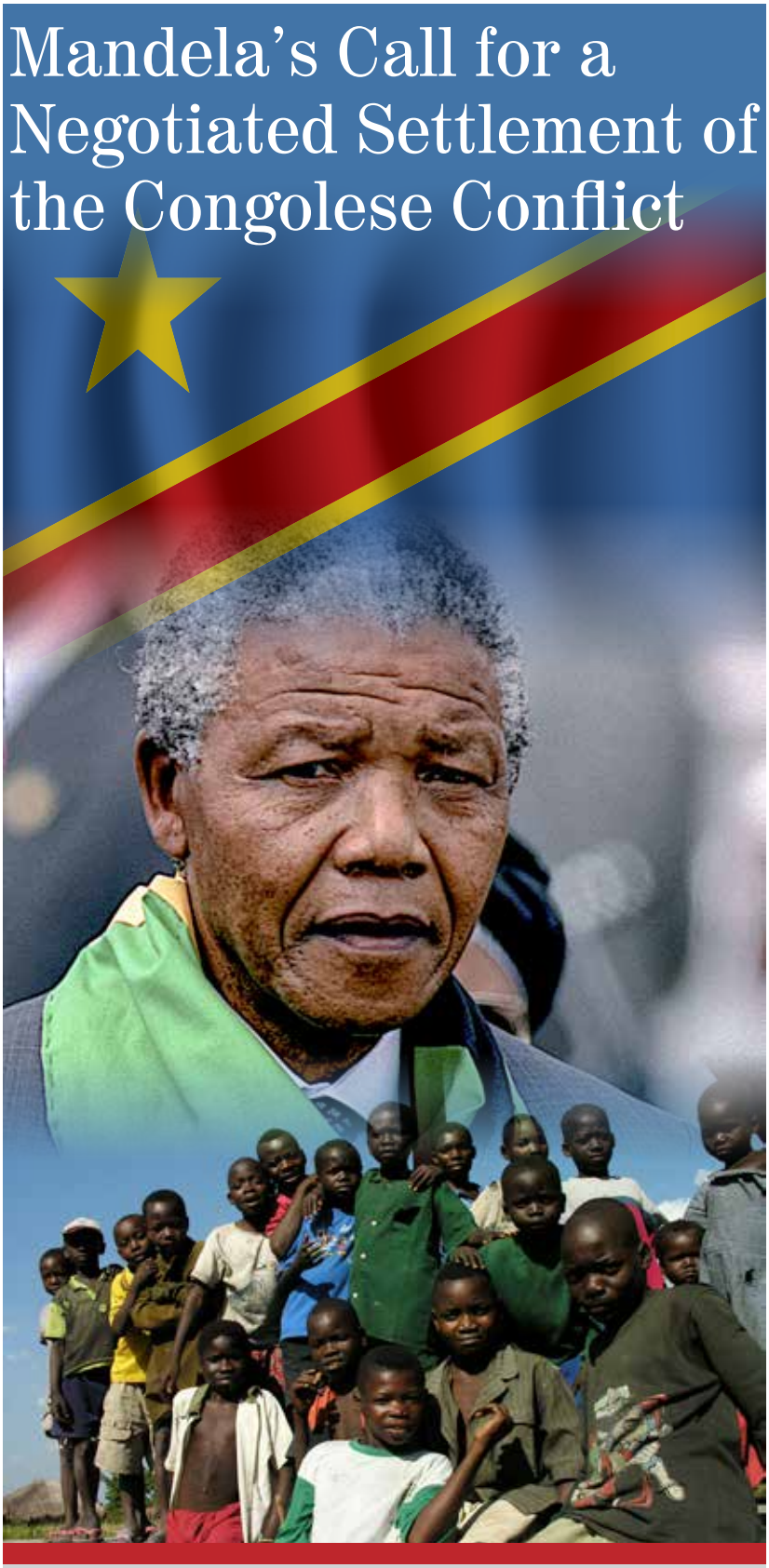
Mandela's Call for a Negotiated Settlement of the Congolese Conflict



By Sehlare Makgetlaneng

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was a leader of the national liberation struggle for human rights, democracy, development and political governance conducive for their advancement. He was imprisoned for his commitment to their realisation. Following the end of the apartheid rule in 1994, Mandela put these goals at the centre of his administration's Africa policy.

For the first time in the history of South Africa's role in African and global affairs, South Africa through Mandela called for a new renaissance in the conduct of African and global diplomacy based on human rights, democracy, development and political governance issues and processes. Central to this approach are the interests, needs and demands of the people of Africa and the rest of the world, not their heads of state and governments.

As Mandela explained to the US Congress on 10 June 1994, the 'unending process of the betterment of the human condition' is best served if we 'cease to treat tyranny, instability and poverty anywhere on our globe as being peripheral to our interests and to our future'. 'The new world order that is in the making must focus on the creation of a world of democracy, peace, and prosperity for all humanity.' This is in essence the core of Mandela's call for a new renaissance in the view of issues of sovereignty and national interest in the conduct of diplomacy in African and global affairs. In his words:

> *In an age such as this … much revision will have to be done of ideas that have seemed as stable as the rocks, including such concepts as sovereignty and the national interest.*
>
> *What we speak of is the evolution of the objective world which inexorably says to all of us that we are human together or nothing at all.*

The DRC as the strategic heart of African continental transformation

The DRC constitutes the strategic heart of the structural transformation of Africa. The advanced capitalist countries in advancing their strategic interests in the DRC and in using the country for their own interests, particularly in Central and Southern

Africa, increased this challenge to Africa.[1] According to Steven Metz, they have always viewed it as the 'linchpin' in Central Africa. 'Because of its great size and natural wealth, Zaire has the ability to serve as either the locomotive of development or an agent of destabilization'.[2] Used as 'an agent of destabilisation' means, among others, that it serves as Africa's challenge in its movement towards its development and progress. This reality means that there is a structural and fundamental need for African countries to play an active role in contributing towards the resolution of the DRC's problems.

Africa has socio-political, economic and ideological obligations to actively contribute towards the transformation of the DRC. Its contribution to the transformation of the DRC is its investment in its own transformation. The country's centrality, size and enormous natural resources make this investment in the interest not of the DRC and its people, but also in the interest of the future of the African continent and its people. The fact that the advanced capitalist countries have been maintaining in practice that any government in the DRC must serve their strategic interests opposed to those of the people of the country and the continent is such that they cannot be expected to contribute towards the resolution of the DRC's problems. This view is articulated by Claude Kabemba who states that 'the problems of the DRC are Africa's problems, to be solved by Africans themselves', not by the West.[3] For this reason African countries must coordinate their policies in support of the Congolese people. The DRC as the heart of African continental transformation is articulated by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja in his analysis of Congo's subordination to 'an externally determined dynamic'. In his words:

> *This dynamic, whether it is based on the global interests of major world powers, the expansionist aims of external actors seeking economic and commercial advantage, or the security interests of neighbouring states, is a function of the size, the strategic location and the resource endowment of the Congo. Thus, throughout its history as a modern state, this country has been subject to external interests and meddling consistent with its strategic importance geographically and economically, as well as its potential role as a regional power in Africa. The present crisis cannot be properly understood without reference to this fundamental reality.*[4]

It shares borders with nine countries. They are Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia in Central, East and Southern Africa. Its river, the Congo River, is one of the five longest rivers in the world and the first with respect to hydroelectric potential. Part of this hydroelectric potential has already been harnessed through the Inga Dam. Its hydroelectric potential has 'the potential of lighting up the whole African continent, from Cairo to Cape Town'.

"The advanced capitalist countries have been maintaining in practice that any government in the DRC must serve their strategic interests opposed to those of the people of the country and the continent."

The DRC's 'strategic and economic importance' underlines its 'centrality to the African revolution and the African renaissance'. The global actors who did not 'wish to see' the DRC 'play this emancipatory role with respect to the liberation of Africa did their best to destabilise' it and 'place it under the control of reactionary elements like Moise Tshombe and Mobutu Sese Seko'. Nzongola-Ntalaja points out that Gerhard Mennen Williams, as the United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, wrote in his article in the August 1965 edition of the Africa Report that "since whoever controls Congo is likely to have enormous influence over the whole continent of Africa, it was in Uncle Sam's interest to make sure that the country's rulers were America's friends'.[5]

For the West and its settler colonial allies in South Africa, 'Congo in disarray under the Mobutu kleptocracy was preferable to a strong and well-organised state under the control of patriotic and pan-African elements', as they would have played 'a critical role in the liberation' of Southern Africa.[6] He points out further that the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the support of 'the Katanga secession' by Belgium, France, Britain and 'white settlers' from the Congo and South Africa, and the Mobutu regime's involvement in Angola's 'wars on the side of the reactionary forces were all part of this strategy'.

Key reasons behind Mandela's call for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict

There were key reasons behind Mandela's call for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict. Central to this was for the Congolese people to be able to create a national space to define their own future by exploring and offering a viable and alternative agenda to that imposed on their country by the United States and its regional allies.[7] This was an integral part of his call for a new renaissance in the conduct of African diplomacy based on human rights, democracy, development and political governance issues and processes of material concern to the Congolese people. He was concerned with the needs and interests of the Congolese people, not of Mobutu Sese Seko and Laurent Kabila and their regional, continental and global allies. Nelson Mandela throughout his term as the president of South Africa made it clear that he was representing the people of Africa and the rest of the world not his fellow heads of state and government.

Mandela called for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict at the turning point in the history of Congo. It was in 1997 when the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) was on the verge of victory over the Presidential Guard under the leadership of Mobutu Sese Seko. His administration offered

to facilitate dialogue between Kabila and Mobutu for them to resolve their national conflict through negotiations in the interests of the Congolese people. They rejected this offer. Mandela regarded his policy as a means to enable the Congolese to resolve their national conflict without the United States and its regional allies interfering in their internal affairs against their interests. He was basically calling for the right of the DRC to its national self-determination and the free, independent exercise of its sovereignty and domestic and foreign policies in the interest of its people.

In explaining South Africa's contribution towards the resolution of the Congolese conflict, Cedric de Koning pointed out that the 'DRC conflict can only be resolved by political will through negotiations'[8] and that peace was 'thus in the hands of the Congolese peoples, and those bordering the DRC'.

The Mandela administration's contribution towards the resolution of the Congolese conflict was based on the situation of the Great Lakes. Its situation was characterised by war, violence, extreme and persistent suffering and instability from 1996 when the war in Congo started to 2006 when elections ended its transitional government of national unity. Filip Reyntjiens provides an account of these issues, processes and developments in his book on the war and its regional geopolitics.[9]

Given the Great Lakes situation at that time, if the AFDL was a proud national organisational product of the Congolese people, it should have made efforts to settle the Congolese conflict through negotiations as a means to save the DRC from external actors who were advancing their own interests antagonistic to those of the Congolese people. The forces led by Mobutu were practically already defeated. Their defeat on the battlefield was not going to be reversed at the negotiation table. The problem was that Kabila was a captured leader serving the strategic interests of external actors.

The United States strategy and tactics were some of the key reasons behind the Mandela administration's call for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict. Upon the realisation that Mobutu and his regime had outlived their usefulness to its strategic interests, the United States looked for a replacement to serve the satisfaction of its needs, demands and interests in the country. It forged an alliance with leaders of Rwanda and Uganda to achieve this strategic objective. This reality is supported by Wayne Madsen in testifying on the war in the DRC in May 2001 as follows:

> *DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency] trained young men and teens from Rwanda, Uganda, and eastern Zaire for periods of up to two years and longer for the FPF (Rwanda Patriotic Front) /AFDL-CZ (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire) campaign against Mobutu. The recruits were offered pay between $450 and $1,000 upon their successful capture of Kinshasa.*
>
> *… When the AFDL-CZ and their Rwandan allies reached Kinshasa in 1996, it was largely due to the help of the United States. One reason why Kabila's men advanced into the city so quickly was the technical assistance provided by the DIA and other intelligence agencies. According to informed sources in Paris, US Special Forces actually accompanied ADFL-CZ forces into Kinshasa. The Americans also reportedly provided Kabila's rebels and Rwandan troops with high definition spy satellite photographs that permitted them to order their troops to plot course into Kinshasa that avoided encounters with Mobutu's forces.*[10]

> "Missing from this analytical perspective of critics of Mandela's call for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict is the consideration of the interests of the masses of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Angola."

The role played by external actors under the leadership of the United States which led to Kabila being the Congolese president is explained by Saragen Naidoo as follows:

> *Laurent Desire Kabila became president of the DRC through an externally contrived plan that backed neighbouring states to replace the devalued Mobutu Sese Seko. Thus, the Kabila leadership was expected to be amenable to the economic, political, and security interests of western governments and other states in the region. This agenda involved allowing mainly Belgian, Canadian and United States-based mining conglomerates to exploit the country's enormous mineral wealth, and allowing Rwanda and Uganda to take charge in Kinshasa. However, once at the helm of the impoverished state, Kabila began to ignore the terms and conditions of his ascension to power in a careless and arrogant manner.*
>
> *His death knell sounded when he reneged on deals made with those who put him in power. When he cancelled mining concessions awarded to American Mineral Fields Inc (AMFI) and Barrick Gold Corporation, contracted even before he assumed the presidency, he committed a grave offence. His next mistake was to try to purge the Rwandans and Ugandans in his government and military. After being expelled for their attempt to assassinate Kabila in July 1998 and take control of the DRC, these former allies launched a military campaign to oust the president.*[11]

For Naidoo, these issues, processes and developments constituted the rise and fall of Kabila.[12]

American Mineral Fields was the prime beneficiary of the United States leadership of the alliance that brought Kabila into power. Headquartered in Hope, Arkansas, President Clinton's hometown, it signed a $1 billion deal with Kabila in May 1997 to mine cobalt, copper and zinc in the DRC. The replacement of Mobutu with Kabila was a means used by the United

States and its regional allies to achieve its strategic objective. According to Madsen:

> *American Mineral Fields directly benefited from America's initial covert military and intelligence support for Kabila. It is my observation that America's early support for Kabila, which was aided and abetted by U.S. allies Rwanda and Uganda, had less to do with getting rid of the Mobutu regime than it had to do with opening up Congo's vast mineral riches to North American-based and influenced mining companies.*[13]

Rwanda, which played a key role within this alliance led by the United States in the struggle to replace Mobutu with Kabila, is a main beneficiary of North American and British support. Thanks to the support it enjoyed from the United States, Britain and Canada, Filip Reyntjiens maintains that Rwanda, a 'Lilliputian state', a country of only 10,169 square miles, with a population of about ten million people, has achieved 'the status of regional superpower' and developed 'a formidable intelligence, security and military apparatus, which became the most effective in the region'.[14] From being 'an army [70,000-strong] with a state, rather than a state with an army' and the 'master player' of the region, it 'emerged as a major factor of regional instability'. Another reason behind this achievement is what Reyntjiens refers to as the 'genocide credit', or 'genocide dividend', namely 'the tolerance inspired by international feelings of guilt after the genocide' or the killing of about one million people from April to June 1994.

This socio-historical development has been and continues to be used by Rwanda in justifying its interference in the internal affairs of the DRC, including invasion in the name of ensuring its security. As a means to justify its intervention in the DRC, leaders of Rwanda 'relentlessly put forward the security issue'.[15] According to Colette Braeckman, President Paul Kagame has pointed out on several occasions that 'at any time, if' its 'security was threatened, Rwanda reserved itself the right to openly send back its troops to the Congo'. Braeckman continues:

> *In spite of this military retreat, whose reality is ceaselessly disputed by actors on the ground, and Congolese witnesses, Rwanda tried to maintain its structures of exploitation of the resources of Kivu and the Eastern Province (Kisangani): the commercial networks which forward to trading posts, stores or factories of transformation of Kigali raw materials extracted from the Congo, as gold, diamonds, as well as the cassiterite, Colombo-tantalite and other precious ores; small private planes, on the airports in the middle of nowhere, bring weapons and depart again with ores.*

Mahmood Mamdani maintained that the resolution of the Congolese conflict needed African intervention as the DRC lacked the appropriate political leadership to solve its problems. Given the nature of divisions among African countries, South Africa was the only country in a position to take the initiative in contributing towards resolution of the Congolese conflict.[16] This was 'the first litmus test" of its 'claim to political leadership on the continent'. This claim was rightly understood by Africa and the world. He maintained that for it to pass this test and for its initiative to be credible, it should be independent of the United States. His position was based on high expectations placed on South Africa by individuals and organisations continentally and globally for it to play a leading role in African affairs. With its qualitatively largest and strongest diversified economy, relative international strength and considerable African continental and Southern African regional strength and under the leadership of Mandela as an international icon, it was viewed as a country with enormous advantages and privileges to play a leadership role in African affairs, especially in the resolution of continental conflicts.

Its contribution towards the resolution of the Congolese conflict was an integral part of South Africa's struggle in contributing towards the achievement of the transformation of Africa in the interest of its people. It was an investment in its future security and that of the continent. In Mandela's words in 1993:

> *South Africa cannot escape its African destiny. If we do not devote our energies to this continent, we too could fall victim to the forces that have brought ruin to its various parts.*[17]

In his message on the death of Kabila, Mandela explained his administration's efforts to contribute towards the resolution of the Congolese conflict as follows:

> *We had worked with President Kabila from the period before he became President of the DRC. After he had captured Kisangani and Lubumbashi Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and I met with him and gave him our support in the efforts to bring change to the political situation in Zaire. We prevailed upon Mr Kabila and President Mobutu Sese Seko to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Zaire and to avoid bloodshed in a battle over Kinshasa. We spent much effort in persuading President Mobutu to step down from office and hand over power.*
>
> *After Mr Kabila took over the political leadership of the DRC we frequently defended him on international forums. We hoped that he would abide by the agreed programme of establishing an inclusive interim government that would lead the way to democratic elections within a reasonable period. Unfortunately for the people of the DRC as well as for the wider region this did not happen and the situation did not stabilise or improve in the expected manner.*
>
> *When South Africa was asked to join those countries that intervened in the DRC on the side of President Kabila's government we declined and warned against such a course of action. We pointed out that in a country such as the DRC it was unlikely that any one side could win such a war. All that would be achieved was the destruction of the infrastructure of the country, the slaughter of innocent civilians and an end to possibilities of development. Unfortunately, once more, these pleas fell on deaf ears.*[18]

Mandela was fully aware that his call for a negotiated settlement

of the Congolese conflict through the establishment of a government of national unity was going to be criticised. The fact that it was going to be criticised was a secondary issue for him. The key issue was the correctness of his approach to the Congolese conflict and its service to the Congolese people and their country. He was a leader whose pursuit of truth was a substantial and welcome addition to the contribution of the resolution of the Congolese conflict which required tactics based on the concrete situation of the DRC and the Great Lakes region. This was necessary to defeat efforts of the global and regional actors whose position on the DRC was antagonistic to the advancement of the interests of the majority of the Congolese people and their brothers and sisters of other African countries.

One of the key reasons why Mandela called for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict and the establishment of a government of national unity was because Laurent Kabila was not a free leader independent from those who put him in power. He was structurally not in a political position to advance the right of the DRC to its national self-determination and the free and independent exercise of its sovereignty and domestic and foreign policies.

Mandela could not support a leader who was for the continuity of misfortunes of the Congolese people. As Lynne Rice points out:

> *The "Congo," … still harbors that "heart of darkness" uncovered by Joseph Conrad. The names of places and the faces of leaders have changed over the years, but the underlying reality of outside forces lusting for power remains the same. From the time of King Leopold's rule to the present, the history of the Congo can be traced as a movement from tyranny to chaos to tyranny and chaos combined.*
>
> *For five years following independence, the people of the Congo struggled unsuccessfully with and against one another to forge a political order to fit their own needs and further their own interests at home and in Africa. Almost from the beginning, however, international political forces tried to shape that struggle for their own ends.*[19]

Critics of the Mandela administration's Congo policy

Some African scholars and leaders criticised the Mandela administration's call for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict. Their opposition to this policy was a call for a military settlement of the conflict by African leaders whose position on human rights, democracy, development and political governance is popularly criticised continentally and globally. Commenting on the Congolese conflict in 1997 and South Africa's efforts to contribute towards its resolution, Mahmood Mamdani pointed out that:

> *South Africa emerging from apartheid is not the same as Congo emerging from Mobutuism. At least two political differences are worth noting. The South African transition was a compromise between forces for and against apartheid; the Congolese transition is marked by military victory of the anti-Mobutu forces. Whereas the South African transition was worked out mainly through an internal arrangement, with foreign influence limited to an indirect role, the transition in Congo is being worked out through a more direct regional involvement. These differences explain why South African diplomacy failed to achieve its intended objectives over the past few weeks [of mediation]. South African diplomats publicly sought a transition authority led by forces other than Laurent Kabila and the Alliance [of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire], and tried to convince Kabila to acquiesce in this. The initiative asked Alliance forces to turn from the brink of victory and sign a compromise! Was this breaktakingly naïve because South African diplomats read the Zaire situation through South African lenses?*[20]

> "Mandela was fully aware that his call for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict through the establishment of a government of national unity was going to be criticised."

There was nothing 'naïve' or 'missionary' about South Africa's policy on the DRC conflict. South Africa did not seek a transitional government not led by Kabila and the AFDL. It did not try to 'convince' Kabila to agree not to lead a transitional government. Its 'initiative' did not ask it to 'turn from the brink of victory and sign a compromise'.

The fact that the AFDL forces were about to be victorious over the forces under the leadership of Mobutu did not negate the importance of a call for the negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict. The AFDL forces had nothing to lose to have dialogue with their fellow Congolese who were practically already defeated. History does not deal with what might have happened. What has happened has happened. What has not happened has not happened. This does not mean that we should not raise the question as to what would have happened if particular things were done and the question as to what would not have happened if particular things were not done. The negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict might have helped to prevent horrible sufferings brutally visited upon the DRC and its people. It might have helped to reduce if not end the involvement of the external actors in the internal affairs of the DRC; actors who still today constitute dominant forces in its internal relations.

South Africa's efforts to contribute towards the resolution of the Congolese conflict through the establishment of a government of national unity was criticised by other scholars. Ibbo Mandaza criticised it by deploying an argument that it was an integral part of the 'conjuncture' in the 1990s and 'the global political order'. For him, central to a government of national unity were efforts to ensure that 'no

popular movement' in Africa should successfully seize state political power 'without the "blessing" of those who supervise our globe'. In his words:

> *This new global paternalism towards organic democracy in Africa will no doubt have pre-empted some genuine movements, compromised others, and ensured that those who emerge into state power are so emasculated as to lack real initiative in the affairs of their countries. So, we have seen the emergence of the peculiar "governance model" for Africa, an externally imposed recipe for political settlements: the Government of National Unity! Not only is it assumed in such a model that Africans cannot manage their "first past the post" or "winner takes all" system of government but, more important, these is always the fear that a popular movement might prove difficult to keep under rein unless compelled to "share power" with its adversaries.*

In this regard, neither the conventional national liberation movements of Southern Africa nor the second phase of popular movements in post-colonial Africa have been able to transcend this superimposed (and externally imposed) notion of 'modern African democracy' during this era of the dominance of international capital. Mandaza continues with the comment:

> *These are obvious lessons for Laurent Kabila and his Alliance; and also for those progressive African governments and people determined to take their destiny into their hands.* [21]

As this work demonstrates, Kabila was against the Congolese people taking their destiny into their own hands. He marginalised the Congolese people in their national agenda to serve as social agents of their development and progress. Given the fact that it was impossible for external enemies of Congo to be defeated without some Congolese playing an active role in the process, he was, structurally speaking, enemy of his country and his people. He made the DRC more vulnerable to the external actors.

Mandaza regarded South Africa's efforts to serve as 'impartial arbiter between the Mobutu regime and the rebel alliance' as 'the entire farce'. His support of his argument is the fact that the AFDL forces were relentlessly advancing towards victory and the United States 'declaration that Mobutu had suddenly become creature of history' (ibid). This was Moose's declaration. He pointed out that Moose read out 'the final epitaph for Mobutu and his regime' by declaring: 'It is clear that Mobutu, the Mobutu regime is a thing of the past'. Despite this reality, Mandaza regarded South Africa's policy to have a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict as a 'compromise' which should have been avoided at all costs as a matter of principle.

Criticism of South Africa's efforts to contribute towards the resolution of the Congolese conflict through the establishment of a government of national unity by scholars such as Mamdani, Mandaza, Che Ajulu, Yusuf Bangura[22] and Alexactus Kaure[23] do not take into account key reasons responsible for the victory of the AFDL over the Mobutu regime and the strategy and tactics of the external actors led by the United States.

> "Kabila was against the Congolese people taking their destiny into their own hands. He marginalised the Congolese people in their national agenda."

The United States, realising that Mobutu was no longer useful to its strategic interests, looked for a leader of the DRC to take care of its needs and demands in the country. It was for this reason that during the efforts to remove Mobutu from power, it sought to lay a ground for the justification of the deployment of its military forces in Africa. Warren Christopher, as the United States Secretary of States, provided the rationale for the formation of the Africa Crisis Response Force in 1996. Its criticism by some African leaders and Mandela's strong opposition to it forced the United States to change its name to the Africa Crisis Response Initiative.[24] This military project was promoted in the guise of enhancing the capacity of African countries to respond to humanitarian crises and peacemaking challenges by having rapidly deployable, interoperable units. Christopher was rebuked by Mandela who maintained that the issue of ensuring peace and security in Africa is the responsibility of the African people.[25]

Mandaza's view of South Africa's position on the Congolese conflict is characterised by contradictions. He criticised it for having not 'pronounced publicly a position on the Zairean conflict, let alone neither condemn Mobutu or hail Kabila'. Pretending not to understand that it could not do so precisely because as he correctly pointed out that it wanted to serve as an 'impartial arbiter' between the Mobutu regime and the AFDL forces, he concluded:

> *It is a sad indictment on African diplomacy which, even at its very best, is nothing but an extension or front for contemporary global politics. Like many other African revolutionaries before him, Kabila and his alliance have reason to be worried about the difficult months ahead. Nevertheless, Kabila has established himself among most Africans and progressive forces the world over as yet another veritable symbol of the African struggle and its resilience against global forces that have so far done more to thwart than aid the continent's recovery.*[26]

Profound problems faced by Kabila as the Congolese president did not mean that he was a revolutionary. Indeed, during his rule he was not a revolutionary. Revolution as an internal process means that the masses of the people truly regard it as their own creation and defend it with their power and authority.

Mandaza's position that Kabila was a revolutionary is disputed and rejected by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja. Pointing out that Paul Kagame, interviewed by Mahmood Mamdani in August 1997 and the Washington Post in July 1997,

stated clearly that the war that led to Mobutu's removal from power was planned in Kigali, Rwanda, by Rwandan military officers, he concluded that this was not 'surprising' since Kabila had no 'credible autonomous organisation and no coherent social project or political programme'.[27] He pointed out further that Kabila was 'recalled from his business ventures by the coalition of states led by Rwanda and Uganda with the aim of ending the Mobutu dictatorship, to provide a Congolese façade for what was actually an external military intervention'.

According to him a serious error consisted of hand-picking Kabila as the leader to replace Mobutu. A national leader, as Nelson Mandela declared in 1990 when he got out of jail, is chosen at a national conference. He or she should not be chosen by foreign governments or be self-proclaimed. What needed to be done was to convene a roundtable of Congolese patriots and democrats so they could choose the leader and a broad-based government of national unity.

Nzongola-Ntalaja's position is supportive of South Africa's policy approach to the Congolese conflict. It is against the position of Mamdani and Mandaza dismissing its efforts to contribute towards a negotiated resolution of the Congolese conflict through the establishment of a government of national unity. Relating to Mandaza's position that Kabila was a revolutionary, especially before he was hand-picked by 'the external coalition', we should take into account Ernesto Che Guevara's frustration with him. According to him, Kabila was ever absent from the frontline of action against the forces of oppression in Congo, always in Cairo, Dar es Salaam and Paris, 'in the best hotels, issuing communiques and drinking Scotch in the company of beautiful women'. He hoped that one day he would be 'able to overcome his defects' and get down to serious action against forces of oppression and exploitation.[28] He never overcame his defects and did not embark upon a revolutionary programme of actions.[29]

Nzongola-Ntalaja states that Kabila had no 'credible autonomous organisation and no coherent social project or political programme'.[30] This was his profound weakness characterising his political, economic and ideological position on the DRC political governance, democracy, human rights, democracy and development issues and processes. He points out further that:

> *Having no solid political base in the country, Kabila established personal rule based on nepotism, cronyism and hero worship, which was characterised by incompetence and a general lack of political direction. Instead of a national leader with vision for the country's future, he gave the impression of a leader cut off from the people and relying primarily on a small circle of associates chosen on the basis of family, ethnic or clientelist ties. Moreover, he sought to turn the clock backwards politically, by denying the significance and legacy of the Sovereign National Conference, banning political activity and jailing opposition leaders, and attempting to close the space of democratic freedom and civil liberties that the people of the Congo had dearly won against the decadent Mobutu dictatorship.*

"Kabila was ever absent from the frontline of action against the forces of oppression in Congo, always in Cairo, Dar es Salaam and Paris, 'in the best hotels, issuing communiques and drinking Scotch in the company of beautiful women'."

Kabila was not a free leader. He was put in power to advance the interests of the members of the alliance which put him in power. Failure to deliver on this mandate meant being removed from power by those responsible for his being the president of the DRC. This reality is supported in the literature used in this work. It is also supported by Mahmood Mamdani when he pointed out that:

> *No one disputes any longer that Laurent Kabila's government was installed by foreign forces. Few would deny that the parameters of Congolese politics for the first year of Kabila's power was defined by a twin reality. One, Kabila did little by way of political reforms to expand his domestic political base, and two, most Congolese came to see the Rwandans as an army of occupation. It was not difficult to foresee that a government in search of instant popularity would have one trump card at its disposal. That card was the demand that Rwandan troops leave.*[31]

This reality is also supported by Richard Dowden. Pointing out that Kabila had 'spent the intervening years in exile as a bar owner in Tanzania', he concluded that:

> *Desperate to find a Congolese to front their invasion, the Rwandans and Ugandans picked him up to head a puppet government. Two years later, when Kabila began to wriggle out of Rwandans tutelage and build his own political military power base, the Rwandans tried to do the same thing again. They accused him – like his predecessor – of supporting the Interahamwe, and invaded Congo.*[32]

Nzongola-Ntalaja regards Laurent Kabila as a warlord.[33] According to Meike J De Goede, a warlord is 'a predatory leader that exercises power through intimidation, violence and exploitation of natural resources and people, supported by armed force'.[34] It refers 'more to a style of leadership and violent predatory politics than to his background'.

Laurent Kabila was not a free independent governance force. Human rights, democracy, development and political governance problems continued to be faced by the Congolese people during his administration.

Kabila did not make serious efforts to move towards the resolution of the Congolese national question. According to Andre Mbata Betukumesu Mangu, he 'tribalised' or 'ethnicised' power

'even faster than it was under Mobutu's rule'. He succeeded within 'a very short' period of 'time – just a few months, where Mobutu spent years – to build up his ethnically based power and dictatorship'. He amended the AFDL charter as an integral part of achieving this objective. By amending of the AFDL charter, he confiscated 'all its power'. As a result of this action, the 'majority of the members of the cabinet, senior officers in the administration, the security services and the army were appointed along ethnic lines among the Balubakat'.[35]

Che Ajulu explained why Kagame, Museveni, Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Laurent Kabila were against the Mandela administration's proposed negotiated settlement of the DRC conflict in his analysis of South Africa's Great Lakes diplomacy. He maintains that Kagame and Museveni supported the AFDL and Kabila, given the role of Mobutu and his regime in the 'proxy wars of destablisation'.[36] For Angola, the defeat of Mobutu was regarded as of strategic importance in its war against the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) under the leadership of Jonas Savimbi. Kagame and Museveni, the key actors behind the rebellion that led to the removal of Mobutu from power were 'totally opposed to any solution that did not equate to total victory and ousting of Mobutu'. Ajulu, like some other individuals opposed to and criticising South Africa's position, concludes that:

> *Within this broader context, Mandela's mediation was, for all intents and purposes, an exercise in futility. Kabila, with the support of his allies and with outright victory in sight, was not interested in Mandela's diplomacy and refused to settle for anything less than Mobutu's immediate departure from Kinshasa.*

Missing from this analytical perspective of critics of Mandela's call for a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict is the consideration of the interests of the masses of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Angola. It takes the viewpoint of their leaders. These leaders are confused with the people under their leadership.

The African National Congress, as the organisation known for its determination not to lose sight of the tactical means in its struggle to achieve its strategic objectives, was mindful of the possible profound consequences of a military solution to the Congolese conflict for the Central Africa, Southern Africa and the continent and its people. It is for this reason that it was opposed to a military solution.

South Africa under the leadership of Mandela had the requisite information on the Great Lakes situation and the strategy and tactics of the United States in its efforts to replace Mobutu with Kabila. Its foreign policy towards Africa is articulated by Wayne Madsen as follows:

> *America's Africa policy is morally corrupt. Its commercially-influenced orientation has directly promoted ethnic rivalries and some of the worst bloodshed of the 20th century. US military and intelligence involvement in Africa, far from creating a sanguine and stable environment for a 'new world order,' has taken the continent back to another era, namely, the 'old world order' of Western tutelage, tribal preferences, commercial chicanery and continued underdevelopment.*[37]

"The lack of the satisfactory provision of the Angolan people with their basic social services has survived the end of the civil war."

Rwanda and Uganda, which formerly supported the AFDL and Kabila because of the role of Mobutu and his regime in the 'proxy wars of destabilisation' have now become actors in these proxy wars in the advancement of the interests they share with their global allies. This has been the case since they waged a war of invasion to remove Kabila from power and replace him with their servant. They have proved to be interested in the mineral resources of the DRC, not to contribute towards the resolution of its problems.

The main security problem Rwanda is facing is internal to itself. A truly democratic Rwanda with its people satisfied with how they are governed and with national resources being used for their development and progress would see no need to be militarily present in the DRC to take care of the needs and demands of their socio-political and economic security.

As for Angola, some critics of the leaders of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) maintain that some of them have used the civil war as a means to enrich themselves, rather than seriously deploying resources to isolate and defeat UNITA. The civil war served as their excuse in not adopting and implementing policies to satisfy the needs and demands of the Angolan people. Its end, the killing of Savimbi and subsequent military and electoral defeat of UNITA did not lead to the MPLA deploying resources to substantially improve the material conditions of the masses of the Angolan people.[38]

Writing before the end of the civil war, William Reno in his work focusing on the political and financial role Angolan raw material exports played in the civil war maintained that the Angolan rulers and their external allies, especially transnational corporations extracting Angolan mineral resources, agreed that order, regardless of the way it was achieved, was more important than taking care of the needs and demands of the people. The control of resources, their common strategic aim, was compatible with the MPLA's provision of Angola with policy direction in its internal and external relations. He concluded that the Angolan rulers and their external allies would justify their actions advancing their strategic interests as preferable to the continuation of the civil war by any means necessary.[39] The lack of the satisfactory provision of the Angolan people with their basic social services has survived the end of the civil war.

In his message on the death of Kabila, Mandela wrote that as we 'throughout persisted to encourage

all parties involved to continue negotiations with President Kabila and his government', it was 'our fervent hope that reason shall now prevail and that all concerned will revert to negotiations and a committed search for peace'. He wrote further that:

> *Tragic as the violent death of President Kabila is, we trust that this provides the opportunity for the government, the armed opposition and the unarmed opposition in the DRC to sit down as compatriots and place the common good of their country's people paramount in their considerations.*[40]

Conclusion and Recommendations

Thabo Mbeki, upon becoming the national president, continued with the policy pursued under the leadership of Mandela, aiming at a negotiated settlement of the Congolese conflict. It led to a transitional government of national unity which was brought to an end by the results of the 2006 general elections.[41] This means that South Africa's policy approach towards the Congolese conflict prevailed over that of leaders and scholars who opposed it.

It is of vital importance for African scholars to be truly independent in their role of recording the genuine transformation of their national state, societies and economy. Going beyond appearances means going beyond the idea and the thought in the struggle to achieve a synthesis of reality. In our dialectical examination of the past and the present of the antagonistic social forces in action in the struggle to achieve their objectives, we should, as progressive and revolutionary forces, subject our theoretical position on issues, processes and developments to a critical scrutiny. We should ask ourselves questions relating to policies and actions as to whether or not they service or disservice the popular interests of the countries they are declared to serve.

The essence of Mandela's call for a negotiated resolution of the Congolese conflict in the interests of the Congolese people is best and tangibly articulated by Ernest Wamba dia Wamba after the Congolese Rally for Democracy – the Goma group led by Emile Ilunga – and the Kisangani group under his leadership signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. He said at a press briefing in Lusaka, Zambia:

> *Please do not look at me, Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, not look at Laurent Desire Kabila, not look at Emile Ilunga, Bizima Karaha, etc., but at the people of Congo who have suffered so much and who need, want and have been demanding peace, democratisation, reconciliation, security and genuine people development. Supporting them, in good faith, is the way to build a long lasting peace and security in the region. As you know Congo is surrounded by nine countries whose security, peace and stability closely depend on its stability.*[42]

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Why we still need a national minimum wage

Unlike a basic income grant, the national minimum wage is backed by political will, and supported by an appropriate institutional structure. More importantly, perhaps, it is a small step towards a future of decent work for decent pay, and a more just allocation of resources.

By Imraan Valodia and David Francis

There has been a lot written about the impact of technological change and the advancement of artificial intelligence on the future of work. This often arises as part of discussions about the so-called fourth industrial revolution. The most common form of this argument, most briefly, is that the displacement of workers by machines is inevitable and the impact on employment will be catastrophic, and so we need to think about the viability of a basic income grant as jobs become increasingly scarce.

Much of the thinking underlying this view is dismayingly deterministic. While we do not deny that artificial intelligence-based technologies will have significant impacts on society, we believe that the argument in this form ignores important considerations about the role of work in society, and the role of society in shaping work. Furthermore, a focus on technological change as inexorable leads to a misspecification of the problem. The interesting question is how society can shape the future of work and the economy in light of rapid technological change.

The central challenge in contemporary South Africa is not that machines are displacing workers, but that there is insufficient demand to provide full employment. This results in staggering and persistent inequality, and growing poverty. According to research by the Development Policy Research Unit at UCT, in 2016 there were 6.2 million workers out of 13.2 million (47.3%) who earned less than R3,500. What is more notable, however, is that 53.1% of all working women earn less than R3,500 per month, compared to 42.5% of men, while 40.8% of all working women earn less than R2,500 per month, compared to 29.9% of men. Furthermore, far more women than men work in low paid jobs, and women earn less than men across the income distribution. Indeed, recent research by Stats SA found that, in 2015, the median

wage for women was only 77.1% of that for men. For the bottom 25% of wage earners, the median wage for women is only 75.0% of that for men (Statistics South Africa 2016). Over the last 25 years we have seen significant growth in wage inequality, in spite of a profusion of redistributive policies enacted by the state, and the policies in place to address vulnerable work.

To understand our way out of this mess, we need to be clear on our vision of the good society. While technological innovation is inevitable, the ways in which is shapes our society are not predetermined. Our support for the national minimum wage comes from our vision of the good society, which is one where those who want to work can do so, and are paid fairly for the work they do. In contemporary South Africa, neither of these requirements is met.

We do not argue that there is some inherent value in work, nor that all people who can work must do so. But there is no denying that work is one way to a fulfilling life. And yet more than a third of those who want to work cannot find any employment, and of those who do work, almost half earn less than R20 an hour. Clearly tackling a problem of this magnitude requires a range of economic and labour market policies, and ultimately requires rapid growth in demand. But growth alone will not address the structural problems in the economy which reproduce such widespread low pay.

What, then, are possible solutions? In the area of labour market policy, there are two main proposals: universal coverage of minimum wages, and universal basic income (often called the basic income grant).

While the time for universal basic income may arrive, we believe it is not appropriate in contemporary South Africa. We would argue, in fact, that a basic income grant is not a radical enough solution: it is too early to give up on a society built on decent work for those who want to work. Our scepticism of the need for a universal basic income arises out of our concern about veracity of the predictions about wide-scale job destruction. The alarmism about the end of work as we know it arises from an ahistorical understanding of the "fourth industrial revolution" which sees it as a wholly new and distinct phenomenon. In fact, it is a continuation of a process of technological change which began in earnest with the industrial revolution (if not even earlier). Indeed, the way in which technology impacts on employment was written about extensively and insightfully by Karl Marx in the mid-19th century. Of course, artificial intelligence is a new and exciting technology, but there is very little evidence to support claims that it will usher in the end of work. Technological progress leads to reallocations of resources and of workers, but the evidence of the past two centuries is that it creates new opportunities for work, too.

> "53.1% of all working women earn less than R3,500 per month, compared to 42.5% of men, while 40.8% of all working women earn less than R2,500 per month, compared to 29.9% of men."

Secondly, a focus on a basic income instead of decent work avoids the important questions of ownership and the distribution of income in a world of increasing mechanisation and digitisation. The argument for a basic income by implication concedes the bulk of the economic surplus to capital, whereas we should continue to contest the allocation of income and profits to foster a more equitable distribution of income and wealth. The labour movement in South Africa and around the world has been formidably successful in this regard. Production, whatever the level of technological progress, remains a social relation and we should not fall into deterministic thinking about the inevitability of the destruction of work.

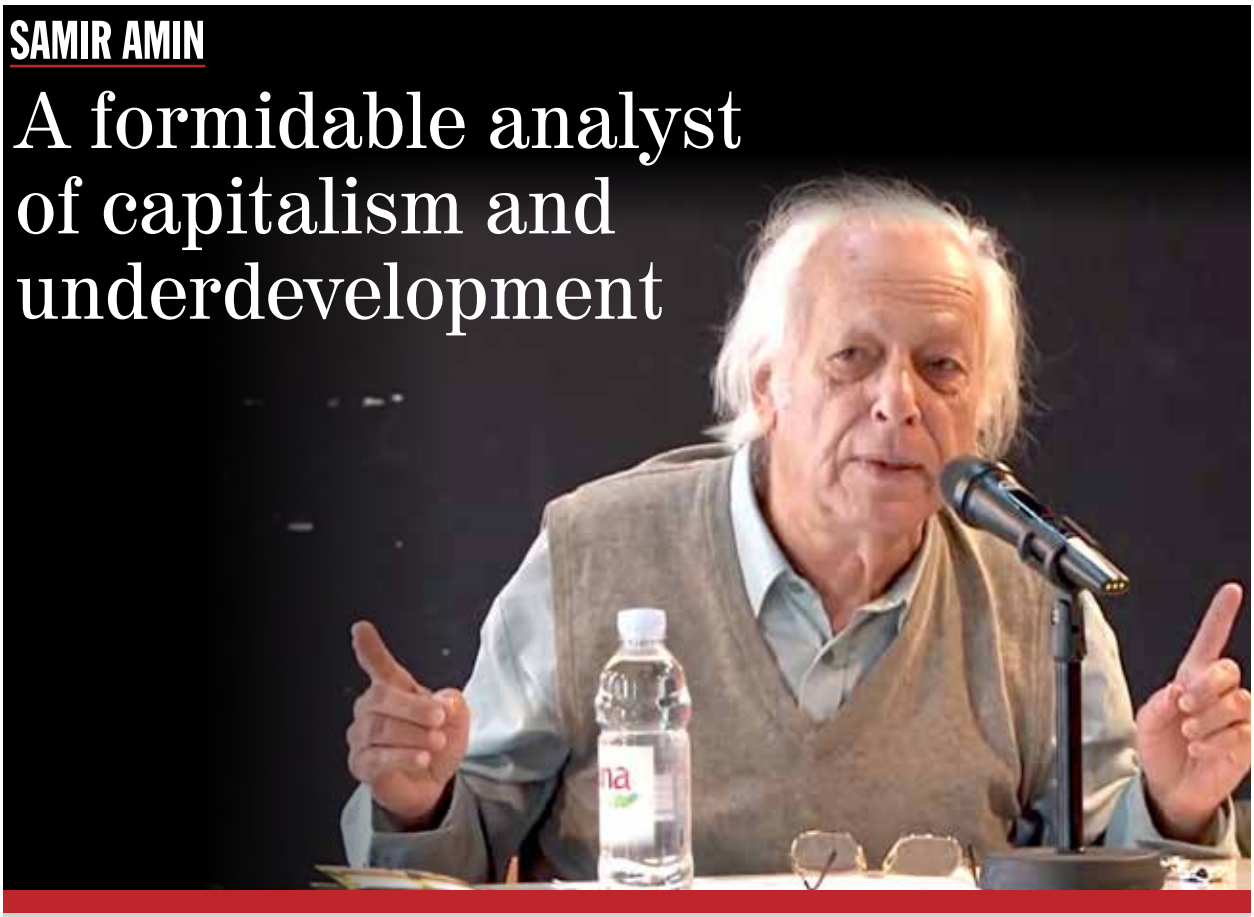
Finally, the argument for a universal basic income presupposes a world which does not yet exist – certainly not in the global South – where there are abundant resources, and the institutional capability to allocate them fairly and at a level that would be meaningful. The cost of a basic income grant at a level that would allow households to live a decent life is beyond the capacity of our current fiscal resources, and indeed much of the rest of the world, with the possible exception of countries with the highest GDP/capita. Furthermore, given the globalisation of production and the ability of corporations to move in search of the most favourable tax regimes, a universal basic income would need to be part of a global pact which would ensure that this basic income was at a comparable level across the world.

On 23rd November 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the National Minimum Wage Act into law. We believe that this is a vital legal and policy intervention because the South African labour market continues to generate the very high levels of income inequality illustrated above. This is, of course, partly the result of our stubbornly high levels of unemployment and the resultant gap in income between those who have and do not have work. But it is also due to vast inequalities in income among those who do work.

This has been driven by the rapid growth in low-paid work, and weak or even no bargaining power for those in low-wage work. This is a structural problem, and the national minimum wage has been conceived as a structural intervention to attempt to transform the South African labour market through the setting of a realistic and meaningful wage floor. The minimum wage is one tool that can be used to raise wages at the bottom of the income distribution, mitigate poverty to some extent, and begin to decrease South Africa's rampant inequality. Unlike a basic income grant, the national minimum wage is backed by political will, and supported by an appropriate institutional structure. More importantly, perhaps, it is a small step towards a future of decent work for decent pay, and a more just allocation of resources. ■

SAMIR AMIN

A formidable analyst of capitalism and underdevelopment



In the face of war declared by monopoly capital, workers and peoples must develop strategies that allow them to take the offensive.

By Peter Lawrence

Samir Amin, the eminent Egyptian-French political economist, who died in August 2018, devoted his life to the analysis of global capitalism and to the place of the developing countries within that system. He was born in Cairo, moved to France for his higher education, and then spent most of the rest of his life based in Dakar, first as the Director of the UN's Institute for Development and Economic Planning (IDEP), and then as the Director and an activist of the Africa Office of the Third World Forum, which he helped to set up. He was a thinker who authored many books and an activist who identified and often joined in with the struggles of the peoples of Africa in particular, but also elsewhere in what we now call the 'Global South'.

This article examines his contribution to a deeper understanding of the position of the Global South in the world economy and what he argued needed to be done to change it for the better. His was a committed political position as a Marxist socialist who sought through his work to show that the capitalist system had run its course and would eventually be replaced by a socialist one, though the road to socialism would be long. He emphasised the critical role of class struggle in this process and because of the existence of a world capitalist mode of production, he believed that this could only be effective at a global level and would require the unity of the working class and other oppressed classes across the globe, though he did still see national struggles as a critical building block.

His first major work published in English was a two-volume study of the relationship between the developed capitalist 'centre' and the less developed but still capitalist 'periphery' (Amin, 1974a). Both were viewed as integrated parts of a world system of capital accumulation. Concepts of 'centre' and 'periphery' were not new when Amin first published his work, nor was the idea that development and underdevelopment were in his words 'two opposite poles of a dialectical unity'. The pioneering work by Raul Prebisch (1950) and Andre Gunder Frank (1966), acknowledged by Amin as important to his own insights, had introduced and developed these two

concepts. In Amin's model of the world economy the unequal relationship between the centre and periphery was an integral part of the process of capital accumulation at the centre and of the way in which capitalism could overcome its persistent crises, especially by using the periphery to reverse falling rates of profit.

Amin was a strong critic of conventional economics which he called an 'ideology of universal harmonies' in which everything fell into place with firms and people respectively maximising profits and welfare by entering markets and behaving rationally in relation to prices. When applied to underdevelopment, this approach omitted to explain how development and underdevelopment had unfolded historically. Instead, the poverty of the developing countries was explained by an inherent backwardness. It had nothing to do with the extraction of surplus through the repatriation of profits to the centre, nor with the extraction of mineral wealth with value added accruing to processors and manufacturers in the centre, nor with the consumption of luxury goods by a small but growing political and small business elite.

Amin followed Marx in arguing that capitalism had by its very logic to expand and incorporate more markets and populations in its incessant search for higher rates of profit. This search took Capital into new geographical areas of pre-capitalist formations often far from its 'home base'. He also embraced later Marxist ideas, especially those of Lenin and others, pointing to the increasingly monopolistic nature of capitalism, contradicting the simple mainstream economic ideas of competition between many firms resulting in the lowest possible price and the maximum welfare.

However, capital's expansion into pre-capitalist formations had dominated but not transformed them. The economic formations of the peripheral economies had been 'blocked' and not able to make the transition to fully capitalist formations in the same way as those of the centre had done. Rejecting concepts of dualism, in which peripheral economies were divided into 'modern' and 'traditional' sectors, Amin argued that pre-capitalist formations had transitioned into 'social formations of peripheral capitalism' in which the two sectors of dualism were an integral part of one capitalist system.

In this system, the centre produced capital goods developed through advanced technologies in order to manufacture mass consumer goods for its populations in what Amin called an autocentric system. In the periphery, foreign capital first extracted resources for export which paid for the imports of relatively luxury products for a small elite class within the peripheral economies. Even if some of those consumer goods were produced within the peripheral economies, their markets were small and the capital goods needed for that production had to be imported from the centre. This maintained the centre's control and the periphery's dependence. The system of accumulation at the centre inhibited any possibility of countries in the periphery following an 'autocentric' development path such as that which produced the existing developed countries. In that sense, he followed the position developed by Gunder Frank that development and underdevelopment were two sides of the same coin.

> "The monopolies can extract rents, that is, make higher profits than they would be able to in competitive markets – and do this to an even greater extent in peripheral economies where labour is cheaper."

That thesis did not exclude the possibility of some degree of self-centred development taking place, as was evidenced in parts of Asia and Latin America, although that still left a substantial part of the populations of these 'miracle' countries in abject poverty. However, for Africa, it was clear to Amin that its 'extraverted' economies produced value that was transferred from the periphery to the centre through the processes mentioned earlier but in addition because of the unequal exchange of labour value. This was the result of wages in comparable productive activities in the periphery being lower than those at the centre to a much greater degree than the difference in output per worker in both. Further, cheap labour produced the exports of raw materials, both agricultural and mineral, to a centre where the value of labour embodied in the final product was higher. In both ways value was transferred from periphery to centre.

Amin rejected dogmatic applications of quasi-Marxist or any other generalisations of the historical development of modes of production. He distinguished between pre-capitalist European feudal formations and their prior primitive formations and the 'tributary' mode of production which he argued was prevalent in Asia and Africa. According to Amin, this tributary social formation comprised two classes: a peasantry organised in communities and a ruling class exercising political power over the communities and levying 'a (non-commodity) tribute' from them. The difference from feudalism was that it was the community as a whole that had the rights of allocation of land and not the rulers who held the land on behalf of the members of the community.

However, none of these modes of production appeared in a pure or even monopolistic form. He argued that there were a variety of 'Oriental and African formations' with three main characteristics: a communal or tributary mode of production, simple commodity relations in some areas and long distance trade relations. It was the aggressive expansion of the capitalist mode of production that effected their transition to peripheral capitalism; but at the same time, in the shape of imperialism, enabling the expansion of foreign capital into the colonies, thus inhibiting peripheral capitalism from developing into the autocentric capitalism of post-feudal Europe.

As a consequence of colonialism, Amin found three resulting types of

economy across Africa.

First was the 'Africa of the labour reserves' which supplied labour to plantations and the mines; secondly, the 'Africa of the colonial trade economy or l'économie du traite', in which smallholder farmers produced agricultural commodities for export via monopoly trading companies; and thirdly, the 'Africa of the concessionary companies', commercialised large scale agriculture on alienated land – the plantations and estates (Amin, 1972:519-524).

With the introduction of domestic manufacturing mainly in the post-colonial period, the resulting economic structure for African countries typically had three characteristics. First, there were substantial differences in productivity between different spheres of the economy. While in the developed centre productivities in the different sectors are much closer to each other, in developing countries productivity in manufacturing using advanced technology is much higher than in the agricultural or service sectors. Second, the economies of the periphery were 'disarticulated' in the sense that they are 'made up of atoms… the density of the flow of external exchanges being relatively greater and that of the flow of internal exchanges very much less'. There was little integration between the different sectors of manufacturing, for example with the machines and other inputs having to be imported, because these items were made in the Centre. Thirdly, peripheral economies were externally dominated, 'extraverted' rather than autocentric. (Amin, 1974a:288).

In this global economic structure, it was not possible for the extraverted peripheral economies to 'catch up' since their growth rates were dependent on the growth rates at the Centre where the demand for their exports lay. So while there could be bursts of growth in the periphery as new markets or products at the centre emerged creating a short term growth in demand for various raw material inputs from the periphery, in the medium and longer run these growth rates converged to the Centre's growth rate. In that process of falling growth rates comes falling world prices for the commodities previously in high demand making it difficult for peripheral economies to become less introverted and more articulated – that is, to develop.

Not that Amin didn't recognise the changes that had taken place by the 1970s, especially in Africa. Treating Africa as backward and static was part of the racist inheritance of colonialism:

> *...Black Africa is probably that part of the Third World which has undergone the most thoroughgoing transformations during the last half century, and it is still changing with amazing speed.* (Amin, 1974a:364)

Amin noted that this transformation had been uneven. The subjects to colonial rule were largely living in rural communities with a very basic level of production, consumption and technology. There was therefore no possibility for the development of a national bourgeoisie, although a rural bourgeoisie had developed in some parts of the continent as a result of the commercialisation of agriculture, which still was outward oriented. The formation of an urban bourgeoisie had been delayed as colonialism restricted the development of a trading class which might, through moves into industrial activity, have become a powerful national bourgeoisie. Instead it was the petty bourgeoisie of government officials and state sector managers that dominated urban areas. Politics was played out in terms of relations between this class and the local small business and foreign capitalist classes with the peripheral bourgeoisie, as a comprador class, colluding with and dependent on the central bourgeoisie.

> "De-financialising the management of the economy would mean democratising the banks and the central bank in much the same way as for the other monopoly dominated sectors."

Capitalist development was therefore blocked at the level of low agricultural productivity and final stage industrialisation. Such development could only move forward with an increase in agricultural productivity to feed the towns and with an articulated basic industry which produced for itself as well as for a consumer market. Amin of course recognised the differences within the periphery, but where, as in the case of some Latin American countries, he did find evidence of articulated industrial integration, he argued that unlike the countries of the centre, these countries exhibited only a partial autocentric development in that a substantial part of the population was excluded and so the output of this sector was based on a limited internal market.

Later work took in the development of globalisation as a concept and actual process in which world capitalism comprised five monopolies: technological monopoly of large corporations supported by the state especially in the defence industries; financial control of global financial markets; monopolistic exploitation of natural resources around the globe; monopolisation of the media; and finally monopolisation by the United States of military weaponry of mass destruction. Such global monopolisation had created a 'new hierarchy, more unequal than ever before … subordinating the industries of the peripheries and reducing them to the role of subcontracting.' (Amin 1997: 4-5)

In his earlier work Amin questioned the view that multinational corporations were the beginning of a world production process as being somewhat exaggerated. However, writing 50 years later he recognised the changes that had taken place and especially the increasing concentration of capital in what he termed the 'system of generalised and globalised monopolies' concentrated in the Triad, as he called the US, Europe and Japan. These entities controlled 'all the systems of production' (Amin, 2013:400):

> *'Globalization' is the name they have given to the set of demands*

by which they exert their control over the productive systems of the periphery of global capitalism (the world beyond the partners of the triad). It is nothing other than a new stage of imperialism. (Amin, 2013:400)

Because of their dominance over markets the monopolies can extract rents, that is, make higher profits than they would be able to in competitive markets – and do this to an even greater extent in peripheral economies where labour is cheaper. The concentration of capital in fewer corporations means that there is a similar concentration of wealth in the hands of a global plutocracy. Amin has 30 large monopolies (sometimes banks) dominating global markets, while other research suggests that the top 50 control three-quarters of global corporate capital and 90% of those are banks and other financial corporates (Vitali et al, 2011; Lawrence, 2017). Amin recognises this financialisation in which more profits can be made 'investing' or rather speculating in financial markets, thus requiring non-financial activities to produce comparable returns to their shareholders. Not surprisingly, this has led to increasingly inequality and the creation of a global plutocracy.

The system's sustainability requires both public and private debt to keep it going; public to underwrite risky corporate activity and rescue corporates too big to fail, and private to compensate for lower real wages to keep consumer goods industries in business. For Amin, this is a system that is 'imploding before our eyes' under the weight of its own contradictions, and especially in the case of financial markets which almost brought it down in 2008. It is a system in which 'monopoly capital has declared war on workers and peoples' (Amin, 2013: 401).

Amin was scathing about the way some critics of his framework, and that of Gunder Frank and the dependendistas, argued that capitalism was developing the periphery, that statistics showed that GDP was growing fast in some countries, that there was a growing proletariat and that the spread of agricultural and industrial capitalism would destroy pre-existing social formations (Warren, 1980; Smith, 1980). The success stories of countries like South Korea did not disprove Amin's theory. In his view these countries were special cases with very specific histories including massive support from the capitalist centre as well as specific domestic class characteristics, neither of which obtained in most of the periphery. In particular South Korea and Taiwan's growth and development was 'based on major agrarian reforms (certainly for fear of contagion by the Communist model) strengthened by the exceptional egalitarian sense of Confucian ideology. The emergence of national bourgeoisies and national capitalisms is more evident in what Amin calls Confucian Asia, helped by the Chinese diaspora, than it has been in Latin America or Africa, where middle classes have grown and created internal markets not accessible to the mass of the population. The case of South Africa is also a special one where the labour reserve economy did to a large extent destroy pre-capitalist formations.

> "If more countries of the global South moved in this direction, globalisation would be therefore be rebuilt on the basis of negotiation, rather than submission to the exclusive interests of the imperialist monopolies."

People nowadays are told that there is no alternative to neoliberal programmes and Amin certainly rejects the various alternatives that have been proposed, some taken up by sections of the Left. He critiques them in detail.

Market regulation has not stopped further wild speculative activity in financial markets. A return to social democracy is not possible now because capitalism is not the same as it was in the post second world war period. Building consensual movements around such issues as the environment will not affect the power of the monopolists. Movements around religions are no substitute for democratic class struggles nor are those built around concepts like personal freedom. But Amin argues that this kind of resistance is not enough. 'In the face of war declared by monopoly capital, workers and peoples must develop strategies that allow them to take the offensive.' This requires 'audacity, more audacity, always audacity' (Amin, 2013:408).

Overcoming the resulting and increasing inequality and impoverishment of large sections of peripheral capitalist societies would result in the growth of social movements opposed to the system, demanding change. Such change would not mean a move to socialism, impossible in a Marxist sense given the low level of development of technology (the productive forces), but what he called 'popular national construction' in which the three tendencies of socialism, capitalism and statism combine and conflict' (Amin, 1990). In this sense, the emergence of different kinds of social movements across the world, both in the centre and periphery, suggests a way in which capitalism can be challenged both internationally and within nations and begin popular national construction and a process of delinking from the capitalist centre. The jump from movements which resist to movements which challenge to governments which engage in popular national construction is not one Amin fleshes out even in theory.

So Amin asks Lenin's famous question: what is to be done? He outlines what he calls an 'audacious programme for the radical left'. This programme he organises under three headings: first, socialising the ownership of monopolies; secondly, de-financialising the management of the economy; and thirdly, de-globalising international relations.

Socialisation of monopolies means first nationalisation and then democratic management through democratic control of decision making by representatives of those groups with involvement in that monopoly,

both upstream and downstream. These include suppliers, consumers and others, including local authorities with interests and responsibilities in the geographical areas affected by the institution's activities. This would be especially important in peripheral economies where much greater weight in decision making as well as in productivity enhancing farming technologies would need to be given to peasantries.

De-financialising the management of the economy would mean democratising the banks and the central bank in much the same way as for the other monopoly dominated sectors. It would also mean abolishing the trade in speculative financial products but would still require banks and other financial institutions to conduct business – especially mobilise savings and channel investment funds to needed productive activities.

Amin's third element in the programme, de-globalising international relations, brings us to Amin's original idea of *delinking*. This was not 'an autarkic retreat, but rather as a strategic reversal in the face of both internal and external forces in response to the unavoidable requirements of self-determined development'.

Delinking from the world capitalist law of value logically follows from the thesis that the world system dominated by global capital slows down the development of the peripheral economies it has created. It involves an 'autocentric national development starting from the abolition of the dominant forms of private ownership of land and factories, and taking agriculture as its base, that is, not envisaging any forced appropriation from the peasants to 'hasten industrialisation' and opting for the most egalitarian income distribution (notably between rural earnings and workers' pay'.

However delinking does not mean autarky. It does not mean opposition to foreign technology of any kind. It does mean recognising that technology is not neutral and so using a mix of technologies at appropriate periods of development. It does mean involving the people in the decisions about which technologies to use as well as participating in 'world scientific and ideological currents' (Amin, 1980:63). It means controlling foreign capital not abandoning it. A further part of delinking is the control of foreign investment flows, especially speculative investment by not connecting with global financial markets and thus controlling capital flight. (Amin and Bush, 2015).

If more countries of the global South moved in this direction, globalisation would be therefore be rebuilt on the basis of 'negotiation, rather than submission to the exclusive interests of the imperialist monopolies'.

A globalised system serving the market had to be replaced with an 'alternative humanist project of globalisation' governed by a world political system which would effect general disarmament, 'equitable access' to global resources, 'flexible economic relationships between the world's major regions' to 'reduce the centres' technological and financial monopolies' , including the 'liquidation' of the three international financial institutions: the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO, and finally with a global parliament. He argues that it would also lead to greater global equality.

> "The bourgeoisies that have emerged after decolonisation have become compradors dependent upon and serving the national and international bourgeoisies of the centre."

He recognises that this will be a long process and that there would be many obstacles to achieving this version of globalisation, but considers it to be the only way to make progress 'on the long road to socialism' (Amin, 2013:408). In an earlier interview, he explained the 'long road':

> *...if the transition to socialism is a long road we should not be surprised that it is full of 'thermidors' [since the French revolution the word 'Thermidor' has come to mean retreat from the radical goals in a revolution] and even restorations.*
>
> *It has been the strategy of imperialists from 1991 or so to make it impossible to rebuild such a multi-polar, polycentric system, not only by newly globalisation and so on, but more important, through the tool of military interventions. But US imperialism has proven to be unable to achieve its targets, because it has created even more chaos. …. so the problem is now how to conceive of the organisation of the movements, which could crystallise into a political force, able to challenge and ultimately change political power.* (Amin and Zeilig, 2017)

Given that he had previously been criticised for arguing that changes cannot take place at the national but only at the global level, here he appears to reject this view, if it was ever his. The changes in strategies against imperialism he is proposing can only take place at a national level 'in the context of states/nations with advanced radical social and political struggles, committed to a process of socialization of the management of their economy'. However, 'delinking implies political solidarity between countries of the south to defeat the project of military control of the planet by the US, Europe and Japan'. The existence of a world capitalist system did not mean that national states did not have any room for manoeuvre in pursuing policies which would generate real development for the whole population of a country. His position was that this could only happen through a delinking from the capitalist system. This was a consequence of the failure of the system to produce national bourgeoisies which would develop a national capitalism ultimately along Keynesian lines. Instead the bourgeoisies that have emerged after decolonisation have become compradors dependent upon and serving the national and international bourgeoisies of the centre.

Autocentric development, argued Amin, required the 'creation of

integrated industrial groups made up of complementary activities'. Whatever was created would depend on country conditions, for example the kinds of raw materials available. This would have implications for the structure of foreign trade which would need to change to reflect a changed division of labour in which domestic production would be designed primarily to satisfy domestic needs of the whole population and not the manufactured consumer good needs of the centre and a small elite in the periphery. For Africa with its mineral wealth, an industrialisation-based strategy would be more appropriate than the one based on agriculture which African countries had been advised to take. In any event development would only be possible for the countries of the periphery if they broke with the world market. This conclusion was to inform much of Amin's later work.

Not that Amin had anything against investing in agriculture to provide basic foods for the population rather than exporting agricultural products. Indeed what was needed was a:

> *… gradual increase in the productivity of peasant agriculture based on different combinations of agro-ecological and input-mediated strategies …. (which) will doubtless be slow but continuous, and would make it possible to control the exodus of the rural populations to the towns (in the North and South), as well as provide opportunities to construct mutually beneficial autonomous food systems in underserved communities with regards to local economies, food supply and diet. At the level of what is called the world market, the desirable regulation can probably be done through inter-regional and rural-urban agreements that meet the requirements of a kind of sustainable development that integrates people rather than excludes them* (Amin, 2012: 21).

The agrarian question may have been solved for the countries of the centre, but he argued that the solution for the periphery was not commercialised and industrialised agriculture driving people off the land to become an industrial and urban proletariat, but a smallholder based agriculture which could provide a living for the rural population and limit the migration to the already overcrowded cities.

Such a strategy required audacity which 'under such circumstances, involves engaging vigorously and coherently towards this end, the required measures of delinking with the desired advances in social progress (Amin, 2013: 407). But who engages? Certainly the peasant movements:

> *Resistance by peasants, small family farmers and the poor consumers most affected by the dysfunctional global food system is essential in order to build a real and genuinely human alternative. We must ensure the functionality and resilience of family and peasant agriculture for the visible future of the twenty-first century, quite simply because they allow us to resolve the agrarian question underlying world hunger and poverty. Peasant, family and improved, agro-ecological agriculture – along with a new relation with consumers and labour – are essential to overcome the destructive logic of capitalism.* (Amin, 2012: 21)

“Development would only be possible for the countries of the periphery if they broke with the world market.”

More than that, given globalisation, the class struggle

> *….must be considered* on the world scale *(his emphasis), …… the bourgeoisie (of the centre, the only bourgeoisie that exists at the level of the world system) exploits their proletarian and proletarianised masses everywhere, at the centre and the periphery alike, but that it exploits those of the periphery more violently and brutally, and that this can happen because the objective mechanism which is the basis for the unity that links the bourgeoisie with its own proletariat (owing to the autocentric character of the national economy from which it arises), a mechanism that limits exploitation at the centre, does not function in the extraverted periphery.* (Amin, 1974a:600)

Even so, Amin argued that the radical left in the 'imperialist triad' needs to build 'an alternative anti-monopoly social bloc', while in the peripheries, the radical left builds an 'anti-comprador bloc'. This is indeed the problem for socialists everywhere and especially organising across national borders. But for Amin, joining up struggles nationally and internationally was crucial and it was clear where responsibilities for doing this lay:

> It is the responsibility, first, of activists in the grassroots movements to see that, however legitimate their action, its efficiency is limited by the fact that it does not move beyond a fragmented struggle. But it is also the responsibility of the intellectuals. Not the academics, but those thinkers and others operating in politics, who must realise that there is no possibility of changing the balance of power without joining the struggles being carried forward by the social movements – not to dominate them or seek their own fame, but to integrate the activity of grassroots social movements into their political thinking and strategies of change. (Amin, 2012: 24)

For the class struggle to be waged on a world scale required the centre's proletariat to drop its tendency to see it first triumphing in Europe and then bringing socialism to the periphery. This was yet another form of 'Eurocentrism', in which the capitalist mode of production that emerged in Europe and then North America is seen as the universalist mode of production, as the capitalism of the centre incorporates more social formations into its orbit.

Amin did venture into world economic and cultural history, arguing that the peripheral Atlantic Europe appropriated the history and culture of the then central Mediterranean Europe in falsely tracing its history to ancient Greece and then seeking to universalise its culture and its capitalist development to emphasise its superiority to other cultures, for example the Islamist-Arab culture and history. Amin sees this

tendency as a means of justifying the spread of capitalism around the world (Amin, 1988).

However, Eurocentrics of left and right should be careful. In an interview in 2017, he pointed out that historically, peripheral cultures eventually surpassed the centre:

> *Yes, I dared even to write that the most advanced parts of the pre-capitalist world, were not where change starts. It is rather at the peripheries. Now, the most advanced system before capitalism spread across the world was not in Europe; it was in China and that has been recognised again today – though it had been recognised in the 18th Century. China, was the model for the Europeans. …Democracy was not on the agenda, but China had invented, ten centuries before the Europeans, a civil service. You have to wait until late in the 19th Century to have a civil service in Europe, the idea of recruiting bureaucrats and civil servants of the state by examinations and so on, which was invented a thousand years ago in China was unheard of.* (Amin and Zeilig, 2017).

Amin's insistence on the power of global capital to subordinate the periphery to the centre and therefore to transfer value from the one to the other has by now been empirically justified not least by the work on capital flight from the periphery to the centre and its tax havens (Fjeldstad et al, 2017). Whether this is put in terms of a worldwide law of value, as Amin does, or whether it is put in terms of prices, as he also does, there is little doubt that capital is transferred in various ways from periphery to centre, even if that transfer is preceded by one going the other way which sets up capital investment in the first place. Workers in the periphery may have the same level of productivity as workers in the centre because they operate with the same level of technology, but there wages are lower and so profits are higher and are repatriated to the shareholders of the corporation in the centre.

Some might have expected capitalism to spread and bring the consumer benefits to the mass of the people as has happened at the centre, but so far the beneficiaries have been a small privileged 'middle' class and a small section of the working class. Indeed Marx himself expected the development of the railway system in India in the nineteenth century to result in a rapid rate of development but as Amin noted even Marx could not have predicted the way in which British imperialism, by destroying the Indian textile industry, ensured that there was no industrial rivalry to Britain to come from a developed India (Tharoor, 2017).

The development of capitalism in Africa has not resulted in significant structural changes to its economies. They are still largely dependent on the vagaries of world commodity markets, exporting raw materials and importing capital and consumer goods directed to a domestic market of higher income consumers, whose income derives from the high end of commodity trading, financial activities and their servicing, and those with larger farms and estates.

> "Peasant, family and improved, agro-ecological agriculture – along with a new relation with consumers and labour – are essential to overcome the destructive logic of capitalism."

Meanwhile large proportions of the African populations languish on or below the poverty line. The self-centred economy described in Amin's articles and books has as its 'central determining relationship': that of the production of capital goods for the production of consumer goods for the mass market. In the periphery on the other hand, that relationship is a 'peripheral-dependent' between earning export income in order to consume 'luxury' goods. In the capitalist developed countries this system had been achieved in Amin's approach, by a 'social contract' between increasingly monopolised capital and organised labour which allowed for some degree of 'planning' to avoid the cyclical fluctuations associated with capitalism before the second world war and especially between the first and second world wars. Amin defines the underlying contradiction of capitalism which causes these fluctuations as one between what the system allows to be produced and what, in its search for profit, it prevents people consuming; but he argues that ensuing cyclical fluctuations have been moderated by the 'social contract'.

However, in analysing the system in this way, Amin rejected the prevailing view in both the capitalist 'West' and the socialist 'East' that development entailed catching up with the developed capitalist countries. His key insight was to argue that given the way the global system worked, countries such as those of Africa were not going to achieve the status of a developed country by imitating their development trajectory, or by concentrating on their raw material export base and slowly industrialise by importing capital goods. The history of the world was not about followers catching up with leaders but about dominant civilisations being 'transcended' by peripheral ones as the former decline and the peripheral overtake them with different social organisations. In this case a socialist self-centred development would eventually transcend moribund capitalism. This required an overall strategy of 'self-reliance' but one built up from popular bases *'becoming aware of reality'* (Amin's emphasis) and allowed for the increasing domination of a 'self-centred' system. Of course the political activity required to achieve this in the face of an active and global imperialism has and continues to be the key issue, and not just in the periphery. As Amin observed:

> *It is quite appropriate to describe the task of transition thus: transition from the capitalist world system, based on hierarchies of nations, to a world socialist system, which cannot be made up of relatively isolated and autarkic 'socialist' nations. Here the true solidarity of the peoples involved in the struggle for reshaping the world comes to the fore, due to the limited prospects for*

> *progress in the Third World where the conditions for transcending advanced capitalism express nothing more than the weakness of the forces of socialism at the centre of the system.* (ROAPE, 1974:20)

He regarded the China of the Cultural Revolution as addressing this issue and indeed although China developed in a way that Amin may not have foreseen there is some basis for the view that it did first ensure an autocentric development path, only engaging with global capitalism when it was in a strong position to do so. Insofar as Amin has a working model it appears to be that of China. He now sees China as an exporter of manufactured goods with cheap labour using foreign corporates and subcontracted local manufacturers while at the same time 'constructing a national integrated modern industrial system'. Very little of the rest of the periphery has not undergone this autocentric transformation.

Even if there were countries which tried in some way to follow an independent path – Nyerere's Tanzania with its policy of Socialism and Self-reliance, for example – they never broke or were allowed to break with the system of capital accumulation in which profits found their way to the developed economies of the 'Global North'. To the extent that African countries such as Tanzania adopted a self-styled 'socialist' approach to development, for Amin this meant an increased state involvement in the development of capitalism. If there was no national bourgeoisie to do it, then the State had to take on the job of accumulating and investing capital.

The contradictions of capitalism at the centre are being at least temporarily resolved in ways which inhibit the periphery even further from a socialist self-centred development. In the past four decades we have lived through the triumph and the crisis of neoliberalism, the global financial monopolisation of capital, the colonisation of the State by private capital principally by the privatisation of state assets, and the liberalisation of the labour market with stricter anti-union laws and transnational freedom of movement resulting in the suppression of wages with the consequent increased social inequality and deprivation. African economies and the rest of peripheral capitalism have been ruthlessly subject to neoliberal policies which have made them even less able, even if willing, to pursue a self-centred path.

These developments are fundamentally a necessary reaction to the falling profit rates of the 1970s as wages, after pressure from organised labour, took an increasing share of the value of output. Capital's recovery of value from labour points to the central contradiction of capitalism that Amin set out: that the only way value can be realised in a mass consumption market is for the masses to have the power to consume. As consumers' incomes were squeezed under neoliberalism, this contradiction was resolved by increasing credit to consumers which led to the financial crash of 2007/8 and can only lead to another financial crash, which some believe is imminent. Underlying these developments is increased automation, computerisation and robotisation which reduces the need for physical labour, creates ever cheaper durable consumption goods and leads to a contradiction between technology and the way society is organised, or as Marx would have put it, between the productive forces and the relations of production. Samir Amin's later writings clearly recognised the changes that the world had seen since 1974 outlined above, but his conception of the period since 1974 as a long crisis of capitalism and his advocacy of peripheral countries 'de-linking' from the global economy do find their origin in his work four decades earlier. It is a mark of the power of his original insights that they are as relevant today as they were then.

Of course there are problems with his analysis. He himself lays out a capitalist centre which has all the cards and all the power and is adept at manipulating nation and class. It is also supported by a gigantic military and security machine with compliant governments around the globe and others whose loyalty is maintained by the supply of weaponry. Given Amin's deep analysis of the nature of modern capitalism in its new imperialist phase, what chance is there of effecting any break with the system in such circumstances? Is capitalism sowing the seeds of its own destruction and are socialist forces ready to effect change as capitalism sinks under the weight of its own contradictions? Certainly not at the present. So we have to share Amin's irrepressible optimism. For he embodied that Gramscian trope 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will'. In one of the interviews cited here, he told how in the context of the Egyptian spring, on the walls of Cairo,

> *you can read in more places every day: 'The revolution has not changed the system but it has changed the people.' I think it's beautiful, and it means a lot to Egyptians. We are not going to stop. And what is interesting is that this is written during the day and removed by the police during the night. In the past, slogans were written during the night and removed by the police during the day. A small fact – very small, but quite indicative.* (Amin and Bush, 2014) ■

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Rethinking the Skills question in South Africa

Resolving the jobs and skills crisis cannot be disarticulated from broader questions of political economy that mediate the context in which development takes place.

By Siphelo Ngcwangu

South Africa is facing a crucial challenge of creating employment opportunities in the context of a decline in employment prospects in many industries as the country's economy undergoes structural shifts which are influenced by global trends.

The South African government under President Ramaphosa has identified job creation as a strategic priority. This is one reason the government held a Jobs Summit in September of 2018. The last Jobs Summit that the post-apartheid state held was in 1998, at a time of considerable debate within the African National Congress (ANC) over the direction of macro-economic policy. The original vision of the ANC was captured in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP): a radical socio-economic document aimed at improving the conditions of the poor masses and redressing historical imbalances. The RDP adopted in 1994 by the ANC was replaced by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) which was formulated by a core of economic specialists who focused on fiscal austerity, deficit reduction and general macro-economic stability.

Buhlungu (2010) argued that GEAR was an acknowledgement by the new government that the South African economy could no longer operate outside the logic of global capitalism and its imperatives of labour market flexibility, fiscal austerity and deregulation of economic life. However GEAR also exhibited the ambivalence of a national liberation movement which had come to power in a world governed by neoliberalism but was compelled to address the needs of its working class constituency.

The National Development Plan (2011) argues that South Africa faces a severe skills shortage which, if not resolved, could place heavy constraints on economic growth and significantly limit South Africa's potential to compete with other countries in the world or take advantage of growth opportunities provided by technological advancement which depend on skills. This formulation is pervasive and heard regularly in mass media, television talk shows and radio programmes. Skills shortages or gaps include (the absence of qualified labour to fill vacant positions) and mismatches (when those who are seeking employment do not have the skills or qualification needed to fill vacant positions). These, as well as information asymmetry (when potential employees or employers do not have information that could improve matching), are some of the main issues identified by mainstream labour economists engaging in the skills discourse. Critics of the NDP see it as neoliberal and a 'copy and paste' of GEAR while those who support it either argue that it is only a vision or that certain parts of it require revision (Balwanz and Ngcwangu, 2015).

Skills are largely shaped by the contextual character of production and the nature of relations between management and employees. The concept of skill has changed over time, away from a definition strictly related to technical 'hard' skills, which are related to artisanal and apprenticeship types of work which is linked to vocational education. The definition now encompasses a broader set of skills including 'soft skills' which are related to human relations and professional ethos. McGrath (2002) contends that the language of skill has shifted from an input orientated concept of 'education and training' to an outcomes orientated language of skill due to the rise of globalisation and the increasing dominance of market led ideologies in society. The differing perspectives on what constitute skill and the search for a common language has implications for statisticians, researchers and labour market research in general. The term skill is central to the various distinctions within the labour force and the various hierarchies of remuneration.

Discussion over job creation in many ways is centred on the shortage or 'mismatch' of skills in relation to available skills. Not only is the debate over skills misplaced; it is also de-contextualised in mainstream political and economic analysis. I argue that the assumption of most South African state policies is that increasing 'supply' of skills through education and training is a singular solution to the jobs crisis, yet the jobs crisis is shaped by a range of factors that prevail in the capitalist labour market, many of which have very little to do with skills. However this is not

to imply that education and training are not important but to show that our approach to the skills debate has been strongly dominated by neo-liberal policy assumptions and human capital theory which distort the structural nature of the jobs crisis and make unemployment an individual problem which can be resolved through skill acquisition only.

Scholars such as Alice Amsden (2010) argue that purely emphasising supply provision or expansion without dealing with demand side restructuring in order to create jobs may prove futile for countries seeking to widen employment opportunities. Amsden (2010) argues that in the presence of high unemployment at all levels, improving the capabilities of job seekers will only lead to more unemployment and not to more paid employment or self-employment. To believe that improving only the supply side of the labour market is enough to reduce poverty without also improving the demand side, and investing in jobs, is logically flawed and subject to the same error as Say's Law – that supply creates its own demand (Amsden 2010:57).

Human capital theory advances a linear concept of change in which educational attainment equates to economic success, but this linearity is decontextualised from the configurations of power and the purposeful actions of capitalist producers. De-industrialisation has had an enormous impact on local communities surrounding industries which have experienced large-scale job losses. In other research we have conducted, we found that attempts at 'reskilling' ex-mineworkers have proven to be less effective given that local economies are depressed and communities lack the means to purchase the services offered by ex-mineworkers who are undergoing retraining.

This presents a complex challenge which shows that resolving the jobs and skills crisis cannot be disarticulated from broader questions of political economy that mediate the context in which development takes place.

Skills for Jobs or Jobs for Skills ?

Skills shortages or mismatch discourse has taken shape in South Africa over a long period since the 1980s and even earlier, and some scholars sought to show that the skills question is underpinned by a discourse of legitimation. For example, Chisholm (1984) notes:

> *The skills shortage, irrespective of whether there is an actual shortage or not, plays a powerful part in negotiating the discourse of legitimation. It appears to be used as a rationale for bringing about changes which cannot be brought about directly since various class interests are thereby threatened.*

The skills issue is framed by mainstream labour economists as being a problem of 'frictional' misalignment between 'supply' and 'demand', when the problem is actually more about a systemic misalignment, as Lehulere (2013) argued. The South African labour market has not only been divided along racial lines but is also fragmented due to the concentrated ownership patterns in the economy. Therefore discussing skills 'mismatch', 'shortage' or 'scarcity' has to account for the structure of the prevailing labour market (Ngcwangu, 2015).

> "The NUM has an agency that deals specifically with post-employment challenges of workers beyond reskilling."

Guy Standing (2011), in his seminal book, *The Precariat: A Dangerous New Class*, argues that there are no countries that have an accurate sense of skills available in their populations.

> *There is always a shortage, insofar as one cannot see a limit to potential human competencies. However, no country in the world has a measure of the stock of the skills of its population, and standard indicators such as years of schooling should be regarded as woefully inadequate. Is a gardener or a plumber unskilled because he/she has no secondary or tertiary schooling? One might claim rather the reverse – that modern market society has a 'skills excess' in that millions of people have bundles of skills that they have no opportunity to exercise or refine).*

The issue of skills in general is elusive as all attempts at defining skills shortages show there is no common understanding on what a skills shortage is. This implies that the problem rests not merely with definition but with the politics behind it. The notion of 'demand' for skills is problematic because it relies on an idea of demand based narrowly on employer needs. However, many employers are unable to explain exactly what demand they require and how it exactly fits into their requirements as those requirements themselves remain elusive due to the dynamics of capitalist turnover times and the lack of job opportunities.

A further dilemma is around the paradox of growth without jobs, which is critical in a context where many African countries have been growing their economies at high levels, with some, such as Ghana, at rates of 4–5% per annum (King 2009), yet being unable to create mass employment opportunities.

In 2016 (see Balwanz and Ngcwangu, 2016) we argued that there are ideological, theoretical, conceptual and methodological limitations to the 'scarce skills' discourse in South Africa. We identified 7 problems that underpin these limitations:

- 'Scarce skills' has become a discursive practice;
- The 'skills' argument is based on contested theory and ignores non-skill factors influencing the economy;
- Conceptualisation of 'skill' is narrowed when skill is defined as 'occupation';
- Methodologies for identifying scarce skills/occupations is highly contested and implemented in a highly inconsistent fashion;
- Theory and methods used to determine scarcity reflect discursive biases;
- 'Scarce skills' promotes a misguided conceptualisation of education and training reform priorities; and
- The evolution of occupations and skills appears to be better illustrated by models which emphasise co-construction and partnership as opposed to supply and demand.

Harvey (2011) argues that 'There are many advantageous ways for capital

to address problems of labour scarcity. Labour-saving technologies and organisational innovations can throw people out of work and into the industrial reserve. The result is a 'floating' army of laid-off workers whose very existence puts downward pressure on wages. Capital simultaneously manipulates both the supply and demand for labour'. This point is further accentuated by Brown (2011): 'Governments have a political duty to privilege their citizens, but capitalism has no such loyalty. Where it is given room to breathe, it tirelessly accumulates capital in whatever ways it can with scant regard for existing arrangements' (Brown, 2011:pg 113).

This implies that capitalists are continuously restructuring the workplace and making it increasingly difficult to determine with certainty their actual requirements for skills of potential employees. This is worsened by the phenomenon of de-industrialisation which simply means the decline of manufacturing as a contributor to the overall economy of a country. It results in significant job losses and subsequent economic decline in overall employment within manufacturing.

The effect of de-industrialisation on Communities and ex-Mineworkers

The decline of significant industries in manufacturing, steel production and mining has hit many communities very hard and affected the livelihoods of many families. Understanding the nature of the skills development of former mineworkers has been a neglected component of the skills development literature in South Africa and internationally. An overarching focus within skills development literature has been on workplace preparation and technical skills development for workers, overlooking the aspects that affect skills development for those outside formal employment.

In his insightful study of Arcellor Mittal (formerly Iscor) in Vanderbijlpark Hlatshwayo (2017) describes how the impact of the privatisation of the company coupled with the introduction of Lean Production techniques has resulted in a huge number of job losses. This is a production technique underpinned by a philosophy of elimination of waste, workforce reduction and cost reduction. It is associated with a range of industrial strategies linked to what is called 'Post Fordism'.

> *Between 1989, when Iscor was privatised, and 2015 when the company was acquired and controlled by Arcellor Mittal International, 46 642 jobs were lost in plants located in Vanderbijlpark, Vereeniging, Pretoria and Saldanha Bay. By 2015 the plant in Vanderbijlpark employed 4 500 people. Close to 10 000 jobs were lost between 1989 and 2015 at the Vanderbijlpark plant alone* (Hlatshwayo, 2017).

Other responses of the community included pressure on the Municipality to implement its Integrated Development Plans (IDP), solidarity amongst retrenched workers, service delivery protests, establishment of a youth development centre, and stokvels, cooperatives and similar organisations aimed at building solidarity among the residents in the context of decline of a company that was once their major source of employment.

The response of government policy makers and politicians has tended to promote 'reskilling' as a solution to the jobs crisis. The reality of the mining sector is that there is an increase in job losses in recent years due to economic factors, which has had a severe impact on mining communities. It is important therefore to understand how the community survives when mining goes into decline and 'wagelessness' prevails. Social and Labour Plans (SLPs) are legislated in South Africa and are meant to ensure that these include training and community development as a significant criteria to mining companies receiving a mining licence from the government. This is meant to ensure an example of responsible and sustainable human resources practices in the mining sector, the effectiveness of its implementation has not been formally undertaken through research. Both the immediate locality of the mine and the way in which economies of the 'labour sending areas' become affected. But how effective are 'reskilling' programmes in an environment of depressed economies? My colleagues and I (see Akoojee, Ngcwangu, Lolwana and Fobosi) compiled a report on *Reskilling ex-Mineworkers: Glimpses into post-employment skills*. In the research we interviewed a range of stakeholders: trade unions, government, business as well as workers in the Carletonville area in Gauteng's West Rand.

The area in which we did the research was heavily dependent on gold mining but the company which had provided employment closed due to a combination of economic challenges and problems related to a Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) deal which went wrong. The result was that many workers were retrenched, and some returned to their original homes while others stayed in the community in hope for a promised re-opening of the company under new ownership. The MQA and the trade union National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) tried to initiate programmes to retrain workers for further study, self-employment and re-employment. The training involved a focus on what are called 'portable' skills which involves bricklaying, carpentry, plumbing, painting, decorating, plastering and tiling. This training was meant to give the ex-workers skills they could apply beyond mining and to help them generate an income to support their families. These training programmes were aimed at both ex-mineworkers and 'proxies' who are relatives of ex-mine workers.

While benefits may not be on a huge scale what we found is that those small survivalist benefits are critical to provide a source of income for the ex-mine worker or proxy. The portable skills training in itself does not ameliorate the crisis sufficiently and in future may prove less effective if the local economy is not developing. The types of training on 'wet trades' that are being provided assume that there is consumption of the services on which training has been given. The ex-miners are people with families, and they saw benefits to themselves through the portable skills training.

> *Sir we can see the change in our lives. Because when people with nice jobs got a problem with their toilets, they come to us and we go and fix their toilets. After we done we say just give me R50. That is not the same as selling apples on the street. My hands can give me food, so the*

training was beneficial (anonymous ex-mineworker 1, 2015)

The cash generation potential of such training is critical in empowering the ex-mine workers. The main issue of concern is what type of market structure would best absorb these trainees and what prospects exist for the creation of a vibrant small business sector within the construction industry.

Other interesting findings that emerged from our study are, for example, that labour and business focused on broad issues that influence their varied responses to retrenchment or downscaling. Business sees a need for short term programmes that can be standardised and used by the MQA at any given time and adopted where necessary but broadly addressing the same principle of reskilling. Labour seemed to demonstrate more practicality. The NUM, for example, has an agency that deals specifically with post-employment challenges of workers beyond reskilling. The workers expressed more of a concern for further employment opportunities within the sector or for training in areas that will provide economic opportunities for themselves and their families.

A crucial trend is that the reskilling issue is not confined to the individual worker who has lost employment or been retrenched: a strong community dimension has taken shape over the recent period. The research we conducted contributes a critical dimension to the literature on skills development as it looks beyond the formal workplace by examining the notion of skills outside of the traditional employment relationship and problematises the concept of reskilling.

This article has shown through a combination of conceptual and empirical analyses that understanding the skills issue is quite complex given the social realities of South Africa. It is not merely a linear process linking education, training and the economy. In the build up to the Jobs Summit towards the end of 2018 there has been much discussion over some of the issues I have raised in the article. It is not clear if the 'New Dawn' will evolve new policy measures beyond the currently existing framework of the NDP. There is also no indication as to whether the ANC is giving much thought to the model of skills development which is encouraged through the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) system. Nor is it clear that there is currently a wider rethink of Post School Education and Training provision in order to ensure that it works for the masses of the poor and working classes.

I have shown in another paper (see Ngcwangu 2017) that the DHET's attempt to rethink skills policy beyond the third phase of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) shows a stronger appetite to strengthen the role of the state in skills development and support for community-based organisations unlike past iterations which were influenced by neoliberal thinking which resulted in weakening the capacity of the state by leaving provision to private service providers who saw skills development by training against unit standards as a lucrative market.

"Nor is it clear that there is currently a wider rethink of Post School Education and Training provision in order to ensure that it works for the masses of the poor and working classes."

There were no new radical measures that came out of the ANC's policy conference. The focus was more on #feesmustfall and the free education proposals. With regards to the contentious employment chapter of the NDP, there is likely to be continued debate about its ideological orientation and usefulness in addressing the employment challenge in South Africa.

The state has a number of interventions such as expanded public works programmes, internships, youth employment schemes, graduate placements, entrepreneurial training, reindustrialisation and a broad range of programmes related to the 'social economy' which includes the social welfare system. Rethinking skills development means that a better understanding of the current economic climate will be required, coupled with a thoroughgoing assessment of the entire post-school education and training system.

Funding priorities may have to be reconsidered with greater focus being placed on the National Skills Fund (NSF) which is an entity of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) that is designed to support non-governmental and community based organisations in their skills development training initiatives. The two cases of Vanderbijlpark and Carletonville areas that I have cited show the important need for us to look at the informal economy as a focus for skills development in light of the deepening capitalist crisis. Many of our policies are still largely geared towards meeting the needs of big business which prove to be elusive due to the ever-changing turnover times of capital accumulation. ■

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NATIONS and EMPIRES

By Michael Prior

When the United Nations (UN) was created in 1945 it consisted of 51 nations, slightly less than the maximum membership of its predecessor, the League of Nations, the prewar international institution which reached 58 in 1934 though its initial membership in 1920 was only 42. This initial UN membership now seems oddly imbalanced with 20 states from South and Central America, 13 from Europe and just 4, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia and Liberia from Africa. Three European states which had been members of the League, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia had disappeared inside the Soviet Union though two components of that country, Ukraine and Byelorussia, appeared as nominally independent countries. By 2011, the membership of the UN had grown to 193 with the admission of South Sudan, the level at which it now stands.

There are now very few parts of the world which could become members. There are just 16 "non-self-governing territories" as defined by UN resolution, including 10 administered by the United Kingdom and 3 by the United States, the latter including the US military base of Guam. Most of the 10 administered by the UK as 'overseas territories' would contest the idea that they are old-fashioned colonies as they function as largely self-governing tax-havens able to avoid the obligations of full nationhood by sheltering behind their ambiguous status. This means that significant new nations can only be created by the collapse or division of existing states.

The concept of nations and of nationalism as a political force is largely a creation of the late-nineteenth century, in particular in Europe. Most of this initial nationalist energy was devoted to the formation of European nations out of the literally polyglot geographical formations now known as Italy, Germany, France, Spain and all the other nations created in that century. (It is a curious fact that the main outlier to this was the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland which still manages to avoid being other than an assemblage of different nations). An important component of this process was the imposition of

a single language, usually the literary language of the most important component of the new nations. Thus in Italy, where at its national formation perhaps 2% of the population spoke the Tuscan language now called 'Italian', there still exist some thirty-four living languages or dialects in common use. Similarly, German was only standardised in 1901 using a form of High German. Worldwide, the only regions with settled states were the Americas, particularly South America where the twenty countries formed out of the partial collapse of the Spanish and Portuguese empires in the early nineteenth-century have remained impressively stable externally, if not internally, apart from the Chaco War fought between Bolivia and Paraguay in 1932-35.

Outside Europe, it has been the gradual collapse of other empires which has marked the formation of new countries in the twentieth century, or at least in its second half at the end of the German and Turkish empires after they lost WW1. This was largely accomplished by handing over their non-European components as various kinds of mandates to other colonial powers, principally Great Britain and France though Belgium, Japan and some British dominions also snapped up various morsels. Scrolling though the year-by-year list of new UN members[1] after 1945 is a reminder of the long and often bloody process whereby new nations were formed.

Israel (1949) was essentially a re-ordering of the old Turkish empire. Malaysia (1957) and Cyprus (1960) continued the collapse of the British empire after the botched independence of the Indian sub-continent, which continued to be mired in blood, through Kenya (1963) till its final African end in the formation of Zimbabwe in 1980. France fought against the liberation of its empire from 1945 in Vietnam and then in Algeria from 1954. Algeria became a UN member in 1962. The components of the Portuguese empire's long fight for liberation in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique was successful following the collapse of fascism in Portugal in 1974. The main components of the Japanese empire passed either into China or the two independent states of Korea in 1945. The Belgian empire, essentially the huge Congo basin, disappeared in 1960 as the Belgian authorities, which had run the country as one large commercial operation, simply upped and left, initiating years of turmoil and civil war.

Finally in 1991, the Russian empire began its spectacular collapse which, by 1993, had added a further twelve states to the UN tally with Ukraine and Belarus becoming fully independent members following their shadow existence within the Soviet Union. The disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1993 into four separate states can be seen as the final reorganisation of the old Turkish empire.

In 1971 the UN actually lost a member, Taiwan, when the Assembly formally accepted that only one China existed, the Peoples Republic of China, and that Taiwan was a 'province' of China. Its trade statistics are still excluded from official UN data.

Just how stable is this re-ordering of world governance? The question is worth asking given the alarming figures released by the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in June this year. They showed that an unprecedented 68.5 million 'forcibly displaced' people now existed around the world.[2] These included 25.4 million refugees plus 3.1 million asylum seekers and an astonishing 40 million 'internally displaced people' that is people driven from their homes and now living elsewhere in their own countries. Fig 1 shows the increase in these figures in the last ten years

Fig. 1 includes the relatively stable number of Palestinian refugees, 5.4 million, who are administered by a separate UN agency. Altogether,

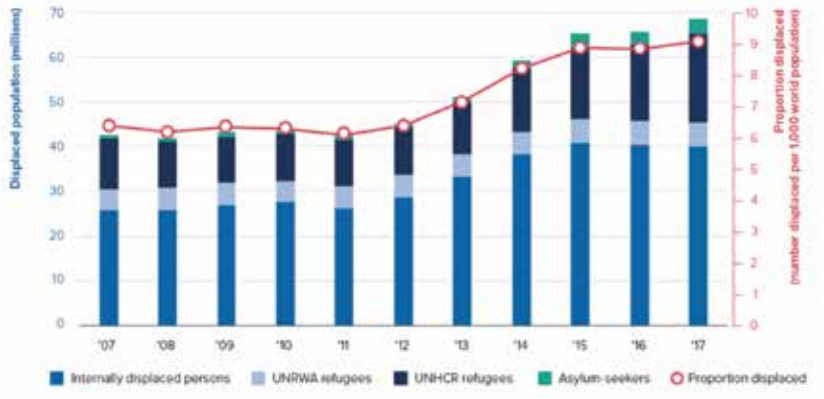

FIG 1: TRENDS OF GLOBAL DISPLACEMENT 2007-2017
Source: UNHCR

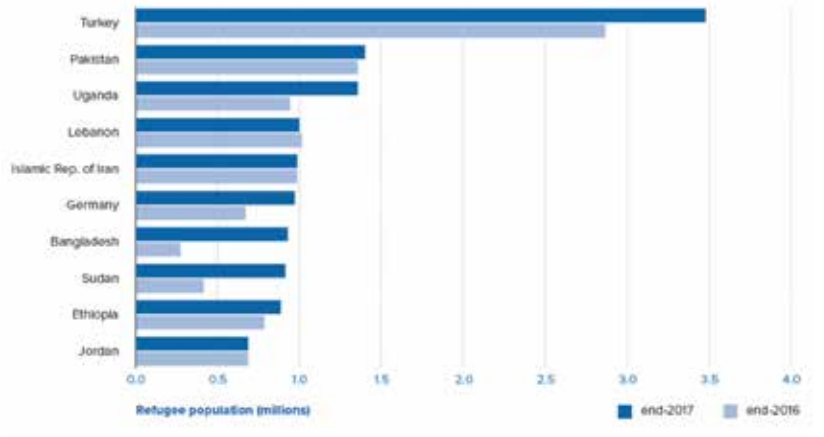

FIG 2: REFUGEE HOST COUNTRIES
Source: UNHCR

more than two-thirds (68 per cent) of all refugees worldwide, excluding Palestinians, came from just five countries:

- Syrian Arab Republic (6.3 million)
- Afghanistan (2.6 million)
- South Sudan (2.4 million)
- Myanmar (1.2 million)
- Somalia (986,400)

It is worth noting that according to the UNHCR, *"developing regions hosted 85 per cent of the world's refugees under UNHCR's mandate, about 16.9 million people. The least developed countries provided asylum to a growing proportion, amounting to one-third of the global total (6.7 million refugees)."* As Fig. 2 shows, only Germany appears in the top half-dozen countries which received refugees in 2017, taking in 970,00 people – slightly less than Iran and well below Turkey, Pakistan, Uganda and Lebanon, and slightly more than Bangladesh. As always, the poor take care of the poor.

One further battery of statistics: as noted in 2017 there were over 40 million internally displaced people. Fig 3 shows the countries containing these unfortunates.

It will come as no surprise that five of the top ten have come about as a result of external military intervention of various kinds whilst the largest IDP population has resulted from the complex low-level war pursued since the 1960s in Colombia by the Colombian government and various far-left guerrilla groups, notably the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) as well as various criminal organisations.

The stability of several existing states remains uncertain. The cauldron of the Middle East hardly needs any description whilst inside Africa, the vast Democratic Republic of the Congo, once the Belgian empire, devastated by two wars, has really never existed as a single nation. The future of Nigeria, originally formed as a single country in 1914 by the arbitrary decision of Great Britain to merge two separate colonies with quite different cultures, also remains precarious. The same can be said of Libya, Cameroon and Somalia, again arguably because of a disordered post-colonial transition. Outside Africa, problems of cultural diversity and post-colonial disorder have wracked Myanmar and Indonesia, leading in the case of the latter to the formation of the separate state of East Timor in 2002 after 25 years of military occupation by the Indonesian army. Just where Myanmar is heading remains a grim unknown.

> "Developing regions hosted 85 per cent of the world's refugees under UNHCR's mandate, about 16.9 million people."

It is possible that a few more nations will emerge in the next decade as a result of this post-colonial disorder. However in terms of global politics, the most important developments are likely to be the trajectories of the four remaining great quasi-empires: the USA, China, India and the EU. The description of even 'quasi' empires may come as a surprise but in many ways this is the best way to describe these political formations.

The USA

The idea that the USA is an imperial power would be disputed by most Americans. However, in the early part of this century such a description became the common parlance of many commentators. Take Niall Ferguson, a well-respected, rather right-wing and certainly not anti-American historian writing in 2004:

Yet the idea that the United States is now an authentic empire remains entirely foreign to the majority of Americans, who uncritically accept what has long been the official line: that the United States just doesn't "do" empire. In the words of George W. Bush during the 2000 election campaign: "America has never been an empire. We may be the only great power in history that had the chance, and refused, preferring greatness to power, and justice to glory." Since becoming president, Bush has in fact initiated two invasions of sovereign states, successfully overthrowing their governments in both cases. The Office of the President has produced a document on "National Security Strategy" that states as a goal of U.S. policy "to extend the benefits of freedom…to every corner of the world." But Bush himself has continued to deny that the United States has any imperial intentions.…

The Victorian historian J. R. Seeley famously joked that the British had "conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind." But the Americans have gone one better. The greatest empire of modern times has come into existence without the great majority of the American people even noticing. This is not a fit of absence of mind. This is mass myopia.…

Unfortunately, the American refusal to recognize the reality of their own imperial role in the world is one of the things that make their empire very different from—and significantly less effective than—the last great English-speaking empire.

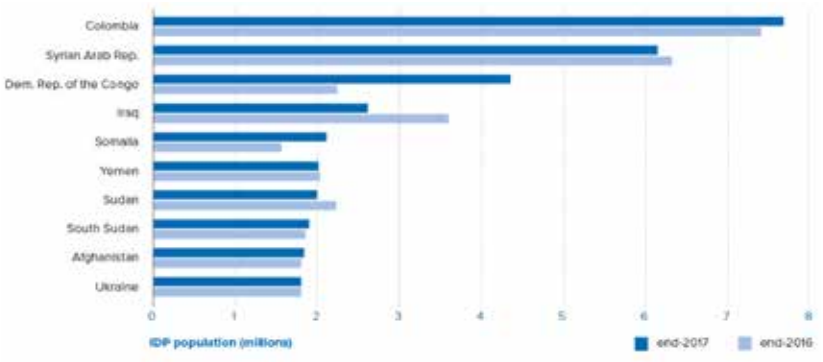

FIG 3: LARGEST INTERNALLY DISPLACED NUMBERS
Source: UNHCR

For a start, Americans feel no qualms about sending their service-people to fight wars in faraway countries, but they expect those wars to be short and the casualty list to be even shorter.

Moreover, compared with the British Empire, the United States is much less good at sending its business-people, its civilian administrators and its money to those same faraway countries once the fighting is over. In short, America may be a "hyperpower"—the most militarily powerful empire in all history—but it is an empire in denial, a colossus with an attention deficit disorder. And that is potentially very dangerous.[3]

Essentially, Ferguson bases his assessment on America's vast military force dispersed around the world and the reach of its economic power. He notes that

Before the deployment of troops for the invasion of Iraq, the U.S. military had around 752 military installations located in more than 130 countries, accommodating 247,000 American service personnel deployed abroad. On land, the United States has 9,000 M1 Abrams tanks. The rest of the world has nothing that can compete. At sea, the United States possesses 9 "supercarrier" battle groups. The rest of the world has none. And in the air, the United States has 3 different kinds of undetectable stealth aircraft. The rest of the world has none. The United States is also miles ahead in the production of "smart" missiles and pilotless high-altitude drones. Pentagon insiders call it "full spectrum dominance."

> "As always, the poor take care of the poor."

This external imperialism has another aspect. The late Tony Judt wrote that "the US is, for all practical purposes, an inland empire"[4], in effect that the country is a hodge-podge of separate cultures and identities held together by an extreme federalism and a shared sense of national purpose, 'one nation under the flag' and all that stuff. In particular, one might include in this precisely the sense that the destiny of the USA was to be a global leader best described as imperial, a leadership role which has existed for over a hundred years.

The problem with this American imperium is that, whatever one feels about its achievements in this hundred and more years, it is in obvious and increasingly precipitous decline. The basic reason for this is that it was always based upon the role of the USA as the world's major economic force, a role which is now diminished. To take one stark statistic: over the past 70 years, roughly the period of the US imperium, the share of the world economy made up by the US economy has shrunk from 50 percent to 25 percent. The US economy is still very large, of course, but it is no longer as globally dominant. It is also very skewed, with many manufacturing sectors shrunken almost to vanishing.

This is reflected in the persistent and growing problem of a huge trade deficit which in 2017 reached $566 billion. Whilst less than the record $762 billion in 2006 before the 2008 crash, it is large and likely to increase as the temporary drop was mainly a result of increased shale-oil production preventing the need for oil imports. Consumer products and automobiles are the primary drivers of the trade deficit. In 2017, the United States imported $602 billion in generic drugs, televisions, clothing, and other household items. It only exported $198 billion of consumer goods. The imbalance added $404 billion to the deficit. America imported $359 billion worth of automobiles and parts, while only exporting $158 billion. The main offset to this product deficit was a $244 billion surplus in services particularly in intellectual property, as measured by royalties and licence fees in surplus by $75 billion. As a result, economically, the US is now very skewed geographically with the once pre-eminent manufacturing regions in the mid-West states declining whilst the service sector is heavily based on the east and west coasts. The decline of these states is dramatically revealed in the effective de-population of some of its major cities led by 'motor-city' itself, Detroit, dropping by 30% between 2000 and 2016. These declining regions, the so-called 'rust-belt' were strong Trump supporters in 2016. Donald Trump won the presidency by turning the Rust Belt republican. He swept Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin – states that voted twice for Barack Obama. The 2018 mid-term elections only served to emphasise this

FIG 4 MAP OF CHINA IN 1820
Source: Wikipedia

deep geographical split.

A consequence of the massive trade deficit is that the USA is heavily indebted to other countries which, in effect, finance US consumer behaviour. The US debt sits at just over $21 trillion in Treasury bonds as of June 2018 and the largest investors in US Treasury bonds are other governments and central banks. In particular, China, which owned an estimated $1.18 trillion in such bonds in April, 2018, is the number-one investor among foreign governments. This amounts to over 21 percent of the US debt held overseas. This means that China could effectively crash the American economy simply by mass sales of these bonds, something which is unlikely if they wish to maintain normal trading relations. However, in abnormal circumstances, such as military hostility, or if the Chinese government simply ceased to trust US bonds as a reserve currency and decided to switch to, for example, Euro bonds then this could change.

The USA thus remains in the position of being a global empire with vast global military capability but with a weakening economy, huge internal regional disparities and serious potential problems with respect to its global indebtedness. This essentially contradictory position lies at the heart of America's policies. It is not a new phenomenon. Eric Hobsbawm, a respected though left-wing British historian wrote:

> *Frankly, I can't make sense of what has happened in the US since 9/11 enabled a group of political crazies to realise long-held plans for an unaccompanied solo performance of world supremacy. I believe it indicates a growing crisis within US society, which finds expression in the most profound political and cultural divide within that country since the Civil War, and a sharp geographical division between the globalised economy of the two seaboards and the vast, resentful hinterland, the culturally open big cities and the rest. Today, a radical right-wing regime seeks to mobilise 'true' Americans against some evil outside force, and against a world that does not recognise the manifest destiny of the US. What we must realise is that American global policy is aimed inwards, not outwards, however great and ruinous its impact on the rest of the world … Not that this makes it less dangerous — on the contrary: as is now evident, it spells instability, unpredictability, aggression and unintended, almost certainly disastrous consequences. In effect, the most obvious danger of war today arises from the global ambitions of an uncontrollable and apparently irrational government in Washington.*[5]

No, not Trump – but the previous Republican President, as Hobsbawm was writing in 2004.

The dangers which this declining empire pose have been highlighted in a recent statement by the Concerned Africans Forum which highlighted part of an interview with Henry Kissinger:

> *CAF recalls the words of the doyen of US foreign policy, Henry Kissinger, who, in an interview, on February 15th, 2013, brazenly said, "The United States is baiting China and Russia, and the final nail in the coffin will be Iran, which is, of course, the main target of Israel. We have allowed China to increase their military strength and Russia to recover from Sovietization, to give them a false sense of bravado; this will create an altogether faster demise for them. We're like the sharp shooter daring the noob to pick up the gun, and when they try, it's 'bang bang'. The coming war will be so severe that only one superpower can win, and that's us folks…. Don't forget, the United States has the best weapons, we have stuff that no other nation has, and we will introduce those weapons to the world when the time is right."*

> "The US economy is still very large, of course, but it is no longer globally dominant. It is also very skewed, with many manufacturing sectors shrunken almost to vanishing."

Just where Trump will turn US artillery in his efforts to assert the imperial might of the USA and stiffen his support in the decaying American heartlands is still uncertain. Perhaps the most fearful possibility is the one Kissinger emphasises, that the declining empire will inevitably turn its force towards the rising empire, China.

China

The extent of the Chinese empire remains a matter of some controversy as over hundreds of years its boundaries have expanded and contracted. At one time, it included both of the current Korean states and reached up into what is now Russia as well as the present state of Mongolia. It also included Taiwan, a country which also claims to be called China as it represented the last remnant of that country before the triumph of Communism in 1949. A consequence of this is that China managed to exclude Taiwan from membership of the UN in 1971, despite the support it received from the USA, and it still claims it as part of the Peoples Republic of China. Fig. 4 shows the height of the Chinese empire and also shows those places then regarded as vassal or tributary states.

China has had border disputes with most of its neighbours which have occasionally erupted into actual armed conflict, for example with the Soviet Union in 1969, India in 1962 and Vietnam in 1979 and, although some kind of border agreement has been reached with Russia and Vietnam, the border with India remains an issue. Ongoing ethnic violence and terrorism in Xinjiang province remains its most serious internal dispute whilst its sovereignty over Tibet remains an internationally disputed right. The major military problem is, however, in the southern seas bordered by China, Taiwan, Japan, Brunei, Vietnam and the Philippines where China claims sovereignty over areas also claimed by others. There is, potentially, a serious risk of armed conflict which could draw in the fading imperial power of the USA.

An article in *The Thinker* warned in 2013 that:

> *It is easy enough to outline what might be called a Sarajevo scenario for the region. A small clash between*

Chinese naval forces and coastal protection vessels trying to escort Chinese drilling rigs from a disputed zone escalates when a Chinese ship is sunk by a submarine. The Chinese respond by attacks on ships of the Japanese/Korean/Taiwanese/Vietnamese navy whose government then calls for support from the US navy under treaty obligations. Just how far such a scenario would run is entirely unclear…

War between these two great powers does seem unlikely, almost anachronistic, in these days of global trade and finance. However, as in the early years of the last century, conflict can be sparked by seemingly inconsequential incidents in backwaters. The danger lies not so much in national interests as in national sentiments. There are some indications that the Chinese government may use still-smouldering resentment against the Japanese as a shield against popular protest against corruption and the dip in the economy. American politicians in their turn could also use American resentments about losing their preeminent position in the world to whip up exaggerated responses to small humiliations. Hard to imagine, but the seeds are there.[6]

This still remains just a warning; but the Presidency of Trump has certainly resulted in an escalation of US belligerency in the region with US naval vessels moving close to Chinese-claimed islands with great regularity.

The greatest threat to the stability of China is, paradoxically, its great economic success. The impact of China in export markets is well-known. It is the world's biggest export nation, the second largest economy in the world, and the only country to have raised its share of world output by a significant amount since the 1990s, by a factor of five to be precise, to about 15 per cent. Perhaps less obvious is the huge expansion of China's internal market. To take one example; even twenty years ago, few took much notice of its domestic car market. Now it is the world's largest, selling about 25 million units a year and with roughly 149 million privately owned passenger vehicles on the road in 2016. In a measure of economic connectivity linked to growth and productivity between 2010 and 2016, China's metro and urban light-rail track length more than tripled to 4,000 kilometres. Its high-speed rail network quintupled to 25,000 kilometres, and its motorways expanded by 77 per cent to 131,000 kilometres.

The great driver of the Chinese internal market is housing which, according to a Bloomberg, accounts (directly and indirectly) for as much as 30 percent of gross domestic product.[7] The degree to which this has created a housing-bubble which is bound to burst is a controversial issue. But what is clear is that internal debt has increased massively following the boost in spending initiated by the government following the 2008 global financial crisis. In economic terms, the boost, in sharp contradiction to the crazy austerity policies followed in Europe, worked as economic growth bottomed out at around 4% and then returned to double-digit growth in 2011. A consequence of this was that debt as a share of GDP rose to 170% by 2012. Subsequently, debt has continued to rise sharply. In the words of one recent commentator[8] from whom much of the above is taken:

China's addiction to debt, though, had only just begun. By the middle of 2016, just four years later, the ratio of debt to GDP had risen to 255 per cent of GDP, and by the end of 2017, it was over 300 per cent of GDP. A recent audit and analysis of China's debt has estimated the stock of debt then stood at 329 per cent of GDP.

China has suffered crises in its banking sector before as detailed in the previous *Thinker* article, and, in principle, the sector is tightly regulated. However, the continued existence of the so-called 'bad banks' set up in 1999 to contain and liquidate the bad debts which precipitated the crisis, as well as a 'shadow bank' sector does raise concerns. A Chinese banking crisis would have worldwide implications and could cause significant internal political problems, particularly if coupled with conflict with the USA in the China Seas.

India

The other great Asian empire is India which is, in a sense, the modern reincarnation of the Mughal empire which reached its greatest extent in the 18th century after which it began to fall apart internally until it was finally dismembered by the East Indies Company to become a component of the British Empire. Indeed, India is the only place where this empire was formalised when Queen Victoria was declared its Empress.

The current Indian state established in 1947 has, ever since, faced both external territorial disputes with neighbouring countries and almost continuous internal armed insurrection in various parts of the country. External disputes have resulted in four wars with Pakistan (1947, 1965, 1971 and 1999), three around the disputed province of Kashmir and one resulting from the conflict inside Pakistan which resulted in the formation of the state of Bangladesh. India has fought one war with China in 1962 in both the eastern and western parts of the 3,225-kilometre-long Himalayan border between the two countries. It faced an insurgency in the Punjab in 1985-94, a state which remains as unstable as it was under British rule. There has been long-running unrest in north-east India, in the states of Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Assam and Nagaland which have resulted in the passing of several Armed Forces Special Powers Acts (AFSPA) to subdue insurgency in certain parts of the country. The law was first enforced in Manipur and later enforced in other insurgency-ridden north-eastern states. It was extended to most parts of the Indian state of Kashmir in 1990 after the outbreak of an armed insurgency in 1989. Each Act gives soldiers immunity in specified regions against prosecution unless the Indian government gives prior sanction for such prosecution.

There has also been a long-running conflict of somewhat obscure origin over many of the eastern states of India:

The Naxalite–Maoist insurgency is an ongoing conflict between Maoist groups, known as Naxalites or Naxals, and the Indian government. The conflict in its present form began after the 2004 formation of the CPI

(Maoist), a rebel group composed of the PWG (People's War Group) and the MCC (Maoist Communist Centre). In January 2005 talks between the Andhra Pradesh state government and the CPI-Maoists broke down and the rebels accused authorities of not addressing their demands for a written truce, release of prisoners and redistribution of land. The ongoing conflict has taken place over a vast territory (around half of India's 29 states) with hundreds of people being killed annually in clashes between the CPI-Maoists and the government every year since 2005.[9]

There is little danger of the Naxalites overturning the Indian government, but it does form a background of rural rebellion as well as a continuing military presence in disturbed areas. The current rule of the sectarian BJP party under the authoritarian leadership of Narendra Modi is unlikely to ease the situation.

Both India and China have effectively suppressed their problems of internal dissent by maintaining high levels of economic growth which have brought modest prosperity to many even if distributed in increasingly unequal ways. The same cannot be said of the fourth quasi-empire remaining in the world, the European Union (EU).

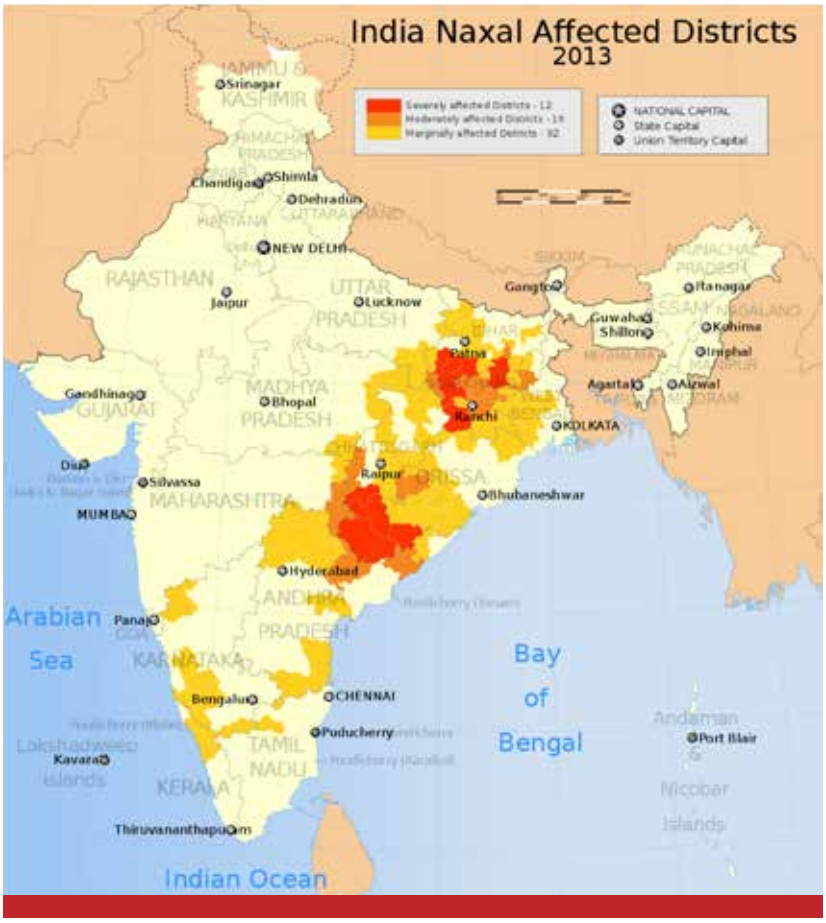

FIG. 5: AREAS OF NAXALITE DISTURBANCE, 2013

The European Union

This description of the EU may seem puzzling given its constitutional setup as a grouping of sovereign national states. However, its increasing control over legislative process, the use of a common currency in most of its member states, the existence of a separately elected parliament, albeit with limited powers, and, increasingly, its intervention in the internal finances of some countries gives it many of the trappings of empire. Certainly its main functionaries behave as imperial plenipotentiaries whilst there are moves to establish some form of common military force. In June, 2018, nine EU member states agreed to establish a European military force for rapid deployment in times of crisis. This extension of the role of the EU seemed inexorable until the financial crisis in 2008 plunged the euro-zone into a turmoil from which it has not recovered. The problems of the EU have been rehearsed in a previous article here.[10] Essentially they develop from the disintegration of the long-standing political system in the western states, essentially a division between social democrats and some

FIG. 6: THE MUGHAL EMPIRE 1526-1707

conservative right-leaning parties, and a corresponding growth of populist parties in both the west and the ex-Communist states in the east.

Although the label 'populist' is usually used to describe this political shift, it is seldom given any clear definition, and, indeed, it usually escapes any such effort. The Wikipedia effort starts "Populism is any political approach that deliberately appeals to 'the people' or to a large group of 'ordinary people' and their desires. It often juxtaposes this group against a smaller, less popular group, especially the rich & powerful or a subset of the rich & powerful" which provides the basis for the bold claim quoted in the previous article that "Populism is the new socialism. Almost all European populist political parties have an overwhelmingly working class voter base and most have policies towards economics and globalisation that have more in common with the left than the right, or might be better be described as statist/protectionist."[11] In other words; whereas socialism propounded a class-conflict of the proletariat against a ruling class, populism derives from a much vaguer conflict between the 'people' and some ruling elite. It is the very vagueness of this conflict which allows populism to chase off after so many political and social hares.

Populist movements in Europe have many different roots but they have two common characteristics. First, they have a common resentment about the neo-liberal economics which have characterised the main countries within the EU together with the European Central Bank and the European Commission. The main exception to this is the strange En Marche! (roughly, 'on the move' or 'forward') founded by the now-President of France, Emmanuel Macron in 2016 which won a huge victory in the National Assembly in 2017. However, there are clear signs that the neo-liberal policies that Macron, an ex-banker, has tried to implement are arousing huge popular protest as can be seen by the latest demonstrations in Paris and other parts of France. Perhaps the best explanation for the 'En Marche' success is that its only real political opposition was the neo-fascist National Rally (previously National Front) whose anti-semitic and racist policies were simply too much for most French people. Even so, National Rally remains a dominant force in both the south and the north of country. Elsewhere, governments which are often characterised as right-wing because of their authoritarian nationalism, such as Viktor Orbán's rule in Hungary, have often adopted policies of state intervention more characteristic of the left than the right. It is this aggressive authoritarian nationalism which has led to justified fears of a revival of a form of fascism in both western and eastern Europe. The rise of the Alternative für Deutschland in Germany, now the largest opposition party in the Bundestag, is just the most prominent of these movements.

> "The USA thus remains in the position of being a global empire with vast global military capability but with a weakening economy, huge internal regional disparities and serious potential problems with respect to its global indebtedness."

The second characteristic of European populism is its fear of immigration which has been characterised by the refusal of the Visegrád group of eastern European countries, comprising the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, to countenance any significant inflow of refugees. The recent despicable behaviour of the populist government of Italy, led by the so-called League and the Five Star Movement, to refuse entry to ships containing refugees rescued from the Mediterranean is a further example. In recent elections, the far-right Vox party took 12 regional seats in Andalusia which has received many of the refugees Spain has received this year.

The British exit from the EU, itself largely a product of these two forces, has produced ripples of uncertainty throughout Europe and is one reason why the U.K. has been given a hard time by the Commission in its exit negotiations. Brussels wants to make clear to any other possible leavers that it leads to a difficult place.

The stability of the EU must now be in considerable doubt particularly if next year's European parliamentary elections provide a majority for an ensemble of populist movements. The alliance between European Commission officials and the leaders of Germany and France, Merkel and Macron, has enabled them to economically crush Italy and Greece and to begin to impose political sanctions upon Hungary and Poland for breaches of democracy. The refusal of the new Italian government to obey their financial 'masters' and of Poland and Hungary to defy such sanctions could well lead to major clashes.

New and Old Empires

Any attempt to draw specific conclusions from a canvas as broad as this essay is bound to offer hostages to fortune. The potential for a clash between the new empire of China and the old one of America may yet dissipate in a puff of Trump's breath. American battle-fleets may quietly withdraw and Chinese ambition over economic expansion may become more diffuse. Trouble in the EU may dissipate in wordy rhetoric in its Parliament. Indian sectarian troubles may remain confined. The historic problem with empires is that they never last; in the end they overreach and decay. Perhaps today's quasi-empires will find another way through. ■

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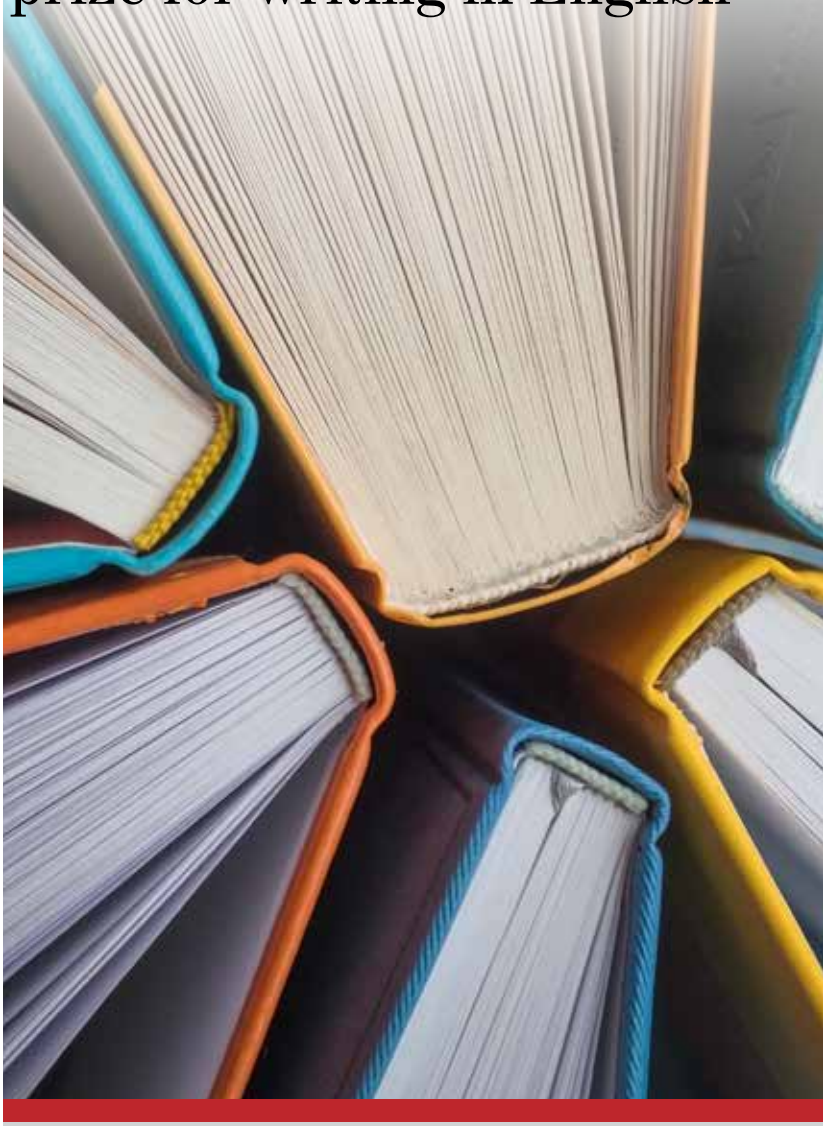
THE POLITICS OF LITERARY PRIZES

An odd analytical pairing of the Booker prize and the University of Johannesburg's prize for writing in English



As the University of Johannesburg has transformed and decolonised its curriculum, so too has its literary prize for English which reflects these shifts in institutional values.

By Ronit Frenkel

In a global cultural economy marked by uneven power relations between and within areas and nations, the authority associated with prestigious awards reflects broader concerns. Literary awards in general open questions around the value of literary texts because the assignation of value is not intrinsic, but contingent on historical construction and subjective taste. The patterns across nominated texts in literary awards therefore reveal a sort of cultural history of place, power and its current manifestations.

The Booker Prize is perhaps the best known and most prestigious of the English-language literary prizes. The recipient of this prize enters the realm of literary stardom and the sale of his or her book soars. The prevalence of Indian and South African writers among the short-listed texts necessitates a closer examination of the politics that undergirds the Booker and its relationship to these locales.

The University of Johannesburg started an English literary prize in 2006 and it has steadily gained a reputation as a prestigious intellectual prize for South African writing. The prevalence of historical bias in the cultural history of the Booker necessitates a closer examination of the politics that undergirds this much newer local award. I have chosen to discuss the Booker in relation to the University of Johannesburg's literary prize in English because of the prominence and longevity of the Booker, thereby making it a useful construct to help us think through the dynamics of other literary awards.

Hugh Eakin (in Huggan 1997, p.412-413) argues that the Booker, despite its multi-cultural consciousness, has done less to further the development of non-Western literatures than it has to encourage the commercialisation of what he calls 'commodity exoticism' in Western literary markets. The consumption of an exoticised other in the West, in the form of postcolonial literary texts, can be partly seen in the popularity of postcolonial fictions in the over developed world. Indian and South African writers have dominated the list of Booker short-listed texts from the postcolonial world with three

South African and five Indian writers being nominated for the award – far in excess of any other postcolonial literatures. In addition, the only writer to win the Booker twice is South Africa's J M Coetzee; while the award given in 1993 for the "Best of Twenty Five Years of the Booker Prize" went to India's Salman Rushdie for *Midnight's Children*. The centrality of India and South Africa in Britain's colonial past, with both countries designated as crucial colonial "possessions" in their respective regions, points towards a relationship between this colonial past and the dynamics around Booker nominated texts from these countries.

India and South Africa were both strategic British colonial holdings, with India supplying sought after spices and other raw materials, and South Africa offering a way station for ships, before its diamonds and rich mineral holdings were discovered. Edward Said's (1979) classic *Orientalism* has extensively covered the fascination with the 'Orient' in European cultural thought and, in particular, has examined how India became the epitome of Orientalist representations in Britain. Gauri Viswanathan's (1989) work has shown how standardised English was formed in India, rather than in England, through the colonial process. Similarly, Laura Chrisman (2000) has examined how representations of South Africa became central in creating a modern imperial identity in Britain. Renato Rosaldo's (1989) idea of 'imperialist nostalgia' applied these representations to British ideas of its colonial past in the present. South Africa and India are then central in British cultural history as these various studies illustrate. This centrality in British cultural history continues, in modified form in the present, through the cultural history established by the Booker prize.

The quality of Booker prize nominated texts is not disputed here, but is rather considered in terms of a cultural political economy that values particular things from particular places. Graham Huggan refers to this as the "alterity industry" which "involves the trafficking not only of culturally 'othered' artefacts but of the institutional values that are brought to bear in their support" (1997, p 412). These institutional values offer a nostalgic view of imperial history and deliver India and South Africa to the modern British reader as exotic sites for consumption within a revisionist view of the past. "Marginality," "authenticity" and "resistance" circulate as constructions that mark the postcolonial exotic as commodities in this market (Huggan 1997, p.412). While Huggan's (2001) later work discusses the privileging of colonial history in the thirty years of Booker history, the particular image of this history that is portrayed in Indian and South African nominated texts, adds an additional layer of meaning to such cultural history.

The concept of what of I am calling 'a politics of loss' seems to connect across nominated texts from India and South Africa which portray a bleak postcolonial world for Western readers. As such, this article examines the theoretical underpinnings of the Booker, which can be read as articulating a 'new' version of the old 'tensions of empire' where a politics of loss is expected from Indian and South African literatures. Richard Todd's formative study, *Consuming Fictions: The Booker Prize and Fiction in Britain Today* (1996), establishes the role of the Booker in the commercialisation of English-language literatures. He traces the shift away from English literature in general, and examines how focus is rather placed on literature published in Britain (Todd 1997, p.83). The relationship between empire and the Booker prize is then well-established. Eligibility for the award lies with literary texts from the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Commonwealth with entries from Britain (The Booker was opened to American writers in a controversial recent move), while the original prize sponsors, Booker McConnell, are a multinational agribusiness with roots in the slave and colonial economies of Guyana.

"The concept of what of I am calling 'a politics of loss' seems to connect across nominated texts from India and South Africa which portray a bleak postcolonial world for Western readers."

Yet, the Booker also offers a platform to alert international readers to novels from diverse contexts. The Booker has played a large role in such exposure, while simultaneously situating Britain as a multicultural society through the language of literary awards (Todd 1996, p.83). This challenges ideas of British insularity through what Edward Said calls 'literary worldliness'. The lines between Britishness and the rest of the world are negotiated through this award as the following quote from Moseley Merritt illustrates:

> *Reregistering a perennial complaint, Dalya Alberge observed in* The Times *that "none of the six novels contending for Britain's most prestigious literary award [in 2000] is set in modern Britain." This refers both to the common complaint that novelists won't write about contemporary life (or, if they do, prize juries won't reward them for it) and to the anxiety about domination by non-English authors*. (Merritt 2001, p. 441)

The 'tensions of empire' are reflected in debates around the Booker as Britain struggles to assert a new/old hegemony while retaining ideas of its cultural authenticity. How Britain or the West understands themselves and 'the other' is a topic that has been extensively explored. My question in this article is rather about what Booker nominated or winning texts from India and South Africa express about the dynamics of empire today. What does a politics of loss and depictions of unrelenting pathos articulate in this context? A few examples of Booker nominated texts can help to trace this pattern.

Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* and Achmat Dangor's *Bitter Fruit* are exceptionally well-crafted novels that depict postcolonial India and South Africa as places of bitterness and unrelenting historical determinism. A

similar argument could be made about other Booker nominated texts such as J.M.Coetzee's *Disgrace* or Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* or even Arundhati' Roy's *The God of Small Things*. *Disgrace* centres on disgraced academic David Lurie's inability to synthesise his actions as a white male in post-apartheid South Africa, with the novel offering a gloomy portrayal of South Africa's attempt to deal with the past; *A Fine Balance* is a novel of unrelenting pathos with its focus on the lack of options available to widows and the underclasses in Indira Gandhi's India; *The God of Small Things* bleakly portrays an inter-caste love affair and how the logic that criminalises such relationships ultimately leads to incest as the extreme application of such thought. Graham Huggan (2001, p.xi) argues that while these writers have "capitalised on the 'politico-exotic' appeal of their novels, they have also succeeded in sustaining a critique of exoticism in their work;" this 'strategic exoticism' is designed to both challenge readers and consciously profit from their expectations of what Britain's former colonies offer in an ironic twist to this analysis. These texts communicate a particular idea of history and culture that I have termed postcolonial pathos, and are intimately caught up in the mechanisms of empire; these sites are represented as being overwhelmed by their histories and marked by the triumph of loss or instability over love or redemption. Yet, these texts are also crafted by their postcolonial authors as a means of utilising this very same expectation of postcolonial pathos for their own ends.

The University of Johannesburg's prize for writing in English is an annual South African literary award with a debut prize for previously unpublished writers and a main prize for South African writing. The prizes are not linked to a specific genre. This may make the evaluation more challenging in the sense that, for example, a volume of poetry, a novel and a biographical work must be measured against one another, but the idea is to open the prize to as many forms of creative writing as possible. This award is largely judged by academics and has gained a reputation as a prestigious intellectual prize over the last thirteen years since its inception. It brings much needed publicity to the winning authors in South Africa's rather small book sales market where selling 2000 copies of a book would make it a local bestseller.

However, in a South African context, consumption practices of texts have a different resonance and literary prizes do not automatically catapult a text or its author into literary stardom as is the case with the Booker prize. Some critics such as Corina van der Spoel (cited in Meintjies, 2015), commenting on the country's low book sales, have controversially said that black South Africans do not buy books. While her position betrays racist stereotyping of black people being less brainy and therefore less likely to read than others, it is also based on a lack of understanding of how poorer communities that are still racially marked in South Africa operate.

> "Mda's setting is significant in that it marks a shift in South African writing where many writers are setting their works outside of South Africa and entering debates on human rights from a particular South African experience."

Isabel Hofmeyr's (1994) work on orality and literacy has shown how, in the context of impoverished communities where buying a book is a luxury and where some older community members are not fluent readers, one person would purchase a book and then read aloud to a large group of people and circulate it thereafter. In effect, one book is purchased but an uncountable number of people will then 'read' it in some form. I am drawing on this argument because I do not believe it is possible to account for popular books in South Africa only through conventional book sale figures. This is further complicated by e-book sales which cannot be traced by place, and are also easy to pirate and share.

The consumption figures of books can then only tell us a small part of what makes up popular texts in South Africa. Social media, new media, public discourse and the accoutrements of public culture (like when large numbers of people can be seen carrying a particular book because it has become trendy, such the phenomenon around Jacob Dlamini's *Native Nostalgia*) all need to factor into an understanding of South Africa's written literary culture. While Dlamini's *Native Nostalgia* won the University of Johannesburg's debut literary prize for 2009, its popularity cannot be linked to the debut prize that it won as no other debut winners have had the same effect. The book was marketed well with its minimalist pink cover with only plain text on its cover but its broad appeal can, I believe, rather be connected to its iconoclastic if controversial content. Eusebius McKaiser (2009) describes this book as follows:

> *What does it mean for black South Africans to remember life under apartheid with fondness? This is the question Jacob Dlamini explores in his debut book aptly entitled* Native Nostalgia*…It is worth reflecting on his main claim – which will surely stimulate debate in the months ahead – that many black South Africans harbour nostalgic memories of life under Verwoerd's government.*
>
> *His key premise is that life within South African townships during apartheid was rich and complex, contrary to widespread descriptions of them as mere sites of socioeconomic depravity. Life happened in the township both despite apartheid and in complex relation to apartheid. Fond recollections by blacks are not an inadvertent legitimation of an immoral political system. Of course, fear of being seen to retrospectively endorse apartheid explains why a book like Dlamini's might not have*

been written before – it invites a lazy accusation that the writer wishes apartheid had never ended.

Both *Native Nostalgia* and McKaiser's reading of it point to a text that was able to articulate something anathema to the dominant narratives of the mid 2000s: Dlamini was describing ordinary life in Kathlehong during the late apartheid years in ways that reveal the resilience of Black South Africans in a complex text that is not nostalgic for an abhorrent system, but is rather nostalgic for the community that cohered in opposition to it. In a sense, Dlamini also reveals what was lost in the mid 2000s when the magic of the first government of Nelson Mandela dissipated and became the ordinary governance of the Thabo Mbeki years. It is through Dlamini's depiction that the idea of nostalgia also being about the present (in that something from the past that was valuable has been lost) took form for a young generation of South Africans who were coming to understand both the past and present in different ways.

Imraan Coovadia's *High-Low In Between* won the Main category prize of the same year with a story about corruption in the health care sector and a portrayal of South Africa's large diaspora in relation to notions of 'home'. Coovadia's text heralded the beginning of South African public cultures becoming aware of irregularities in state institutions and the criminal activity that was emerging on its margins such as the selling of human organs from poor patients at state hospitals. Both Coovadia and Dlamini reflect discourses that were not dominant at the time, but rather revealed nascent narratives that contributed to a more layered and open public discourse.

Other winners of the University of Johannesburg's prize for writing in English highlight changing conceptions of South Africa and its relation to the world. Zakes Mda's *Rachel's Blue* (2013), for instance, does away with the stark divisions between good and bad that characterised much writing under apartheid and many post-911 American texts. Eckhard Smuts says, "One of the novel's strongest accomplishments is the ease with which Mda has transplanted his sensitivity to such issues – and to their human impact – from the more familiar South African setting of his earlier work to the apparently fertile grounds of the American Midwest."

The novel was written as a response to the legal situation that persists in many American states where the father of a child conceived as the result of rape can claim paternal rights. The novel is a damning critique on inequality and archaic legalities within larger debates on human rights as they relate to the poor and disenfranchised. Mda's setting is significant in that it marks a shift in South African writing where many writers are setting their works outside of South Africa and entering debates on human rights from a particular South African experience of systemic change and the ability to overcome immoral laws. This perspective is a valuable one in that it allows South African writers to penetrate other contexts in ways that extend meaning, much like Trevor Noah's extraordinary commentary on American public cultures of the present from his seat on The Daily Show in Los Angeles.

Other winning or nominated texts also reveal a young generation of black South African writers who are invested in imbuing present understandings with a synthesis of African traditional beliefs systems as a panacea for many contemporary psychological ills. Niq Mhlongo's *Way Back Home* (2013), Masande Ntshanga's *The Reactive* (2014), and Mohale Mashigo's *The Yearning* (2016), all deal with different sorts of violence and traditional healing systems as a mechanism for healing them. All the texts briefly mentioned form a pattern in The University of Johannesburg's prize for writing in English that reflects a value on texts that articulate innovative narratives, unearth buried narratives or give voice to nascent narratives in innovative ways.

There is also, however, another pattern connected to this prize that reflects the bias of previous panels. As this prize is chaired by the Head of the English department at the University of Johannesburg who then also chooses the panellists, the prize reflects the politics of the place. As I have coordinated the logistics of the prize through changing administrations for most of the last thirteen years, my subjective view on these shifts comes into play in this analysis. The early years of the prize saw the dominance of white writers as prize winners, with Ivan Vladislavic and Craig Higginson both winning awards twice and therefore reflecting the entrenchment of the institutional values of the past. As the University of Johannesburg has transformed and decolonised its curriculum, so too has its literary prize for English which reflects these shifts in institutional values. The patterns across nominated and prize winning texts in literary awards therefore reveals a sort of cultural history, making the University of Johannesburg's prize for writing in English a good barometer of the cultural history of both the country and the institutional values of one of its foremost public universities. While the Booker prize reveals its relationship to questions of empire and Britain's colonial past delivering an exoticised postcolonial subject to its readers, the University of Johannesburg's prize for writing in English reveals the pattern of decolonisation that the University has undergone as well as emerging trends in South African letters. ■

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China's Global Stratagem lies in the Pivotal "Heartland" Geopolitics

As the frail 'western democracy' in Africa ends, China might just be the timely 'model' of how states struggling to achieve economic stability need to be governed.

By Francis Onditi

I could not have developed this opinion piece had it not been for a sign I came across inside a Chinese restaurant at the shores of the Baltic Sea in Gothenburg, Sweden. We had just concluded the global conference at the University of Gothenburg and I thought I could learn a little bit more about the second largest city of Sweden. In a hidden corner of the restaurant, a signage read, '*wang*', loosely translated as *'China leading the world'*. The 'hidden' meaning, however, relates to 'power' or influence. Well, my intention was not to theorise the Chinese future. Chinese public intellectuals from within China are better placed to do this type of thinking. Therefore, when *The Thinker* requested me to develop an article for the New Year edition of 2019, I decided to delve into the geopolitical signposts that drive China to being one of the most influential countries in the world in the 21st century.

Without necessarily venerating the recent narrative about the emerging role of China in the 'New World Order' or at least in my view, the 'foreseeable world order', I took my time to study the works of some of the leading Chinese public intellectuals. One such inspiring scholarship is by Prof Zhao Tingyang who is based at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). Tingyang's prognostication points to the Chinese histographies. It also points to how such articulation is (re)constructing Chinese geopolitical positioning and international relations (IR) in the wake of renewed power balance. I will not adopt views narrated by historians who construct China through narrow rhetoric schemes. Neither will I fall into the trap of the parochial middling whose narratives misconstrue China-Africa relations as 'extractive'. Others have even gone further to reconstruct China-Africa cooperation as a parasitic relation with Africa playing the underdog. To me, this is ineffectual narrative short of foresight.

Instead, I will seek to help readers and my fellow analysts to understand why 'boxing' the 'China-Global' debate within a single strand only serves to rope individuals in neocolonial strops. Progressive debate, in my view lies in understanding China from a multidimensional perspective. Of course, I cannot study all these facets in a single article. Rather, I will take a geopolitical viewpoint to illustrate how some of the emerging international cooperation frameworks catalysed by

China might significantly determine the future of the international system. For the purpose of this article, I will focus on two frameworks: FOCAC (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation) and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Both frameworks involve China as a key player, and secondly, they undertake a variety of initiatives beyond 'extractive economics', including politics, normative power, technology and infrastructure as well as diplomacy. Before I delve into FOCAC and BRICS, I will shed some light on the *geogenesis* of the Chinese dream and explore why a political geography lens is critical in the study of international relations (IR).

China and the "Heartland"

Studying IR from a geographical perspective is an area that is under-researched, yet a pointer to the several factors (boundaries, borders, and spatial inequalities) that enable or bar countries from forging progressive allies. China is surrounded by a large portion of the southern seas making her naturally attractive to both powerful and weak states in the Peninsula and beyond. Sir Halford Mackinder (1904) put the idea of how 'geography' influences politics forward more than a century ago. He defined geopolitics as the "The Geographical Pivot of History". In Mackinder's conception of the foreseeable world order then, the world was made up of two geographies: the "Heartland" and the "Island". The *heartland* of the world stretches from the Volga to the Yangtze and from the Himalayas to the Arctic Ocean. Outside this pivotal area in the inner crescent China happens to be part of this typology. In this classification, Asia and Africa are part of the world's *islands*. However, China is considered among the 'Heartland' states.

Scrutiny of Mackinder's prognosis reveals the unique relationship that would emerge between China and Africa, in which the former plays the critical role of the 'heart'. Using the analogy of human body, it implies that China's role in the entire system is indispensable. The role of the heart in the human body is to aid in blood circulation in support of all other organs of the system. Asia and Africa being the Islands, cannot survive without the 'heart'. Considering Markinder's prognosis, it is natural that Asia and Africa would be linked to each other through nothing but the 'heart'. Thus, the relationship between the 'heart', which represents China, and the 'Islands' representing Asia and Africa is intimate. On this account, one would not be mistaken to believe that the Chinese central role in the global system borders geographical determinism. The challenge, however, remains whether China's new role will be 'disruptive' or 'peaceful'. The emerging global state of balance has elicited mixed views.

Indeed, Mackinder concluded that "whoever rules the 'Heartland' will command not just the Island, but the entire world". Thus, the saying goes,

"They have focused on filling the gaps that the west could not just fill – sophisticated road and railway networks, bridges, telecommunications, industrial hubs."

"whoever rules the World-Island commands the World". In other words, the power of a nation is very much determined by the country's strategic factors – location, natural resources, and more recently infrastructure. China has exactly that. The reception China receives across the world is not because of their value system, nor that they have a human heart, but they have focused on filling the gaps that the west could not just fill – sophisticated road and railway networks, bridges, telecommunications, industrial hubs.

Meanwhile, Chinese philosophers and scholars are helping Beijing in designing norms and a value system, hoping to win hearts and minds. The country has established more than 100 Confucius centres across the world. This implies that the notion of geopolitics is not only limited to the geophysics of the universe: a country may wish to influence the world through ideologies and norms. China has positioned itself in the regional geography in various forms including nationalism, economics, politics or militarism. As earlier indicated in this article, FOCAC and BRICS are among the interregional frameworks driving the Chinese global strategic agenda. So, let us understand how China is recreating the world through these frameworks.

Like any other super-power, China has attempted to define her value system as a means towards consolidating her force – both economic and political. On the one hand, the policy of "non-interference" has defined China's success in boosting Africa's infrastructure and micro-economic initiatives. On the other hand, many in the West view the Chinese investment in Africa as a 'bait' from Beijing to start syphoning natural resources from the continent. This school of thought believes that China is simply re-energising the neoliberal tendrils, and will give nothing constructive for the African states.

FOCAC

Whether this is neoliberalism or a win-win type of engagement, Chinese engagement on the continent through the *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation* alone has extended funding of US $60 billion to African states. The Chinese public and private corporation's investment through labour and fiscal resources in the infrastructure has transformed the continent's transport and telecommunication architecture. The success stories emerging from the FOCAC projects are anchored on the Chinese 'win-win strategy'. This is in contrast with the Western models of development that have been described as archaic, grossly ineffective and too immaterial to unpack the African development 'potential'. In fact, there is a strong and growing feeling that the political quandary and slow economic growth being experienced in Europe, combined with the US's declining diplomacy, provide a good prospect for a stronger China in the global power balance. It is against this progressive feeling about China that the development conscious Africa seeks

alternative models of development.

What then makes China the global source of an alternative development model, and does FOCAC offer any relief for a progressive global order?

The idea of establishing China-Africa cooperation was mooted by the former Chinese President Jiang Zemin through *Track 1 official diplomacy*. Beijing sent a letter in October 1999 to the African Heads of States and the Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) inviting them to a Ministerial Conference. The Ministerial Conference in Beijing on October 12, 2000 gave birth to the *Forum on China Africa Cooperation* (FOCAC). In the 16 years of existence, FOCAC has attracted more than 50 African states. Some critics have faulted this alliance by arguing that FOCAC should be like the *West-Plus* driven initiatives such as the *African Growth and Opportunity Act* between USA and Africa or the *Tokyo International Conference on African Development*. However, China's pragmatic approach to development cooperation is closely knit within the philosophy of 'shared future'. There are several lessons from the sixteen years of FOCAC existence.

First, the Chinese development model is deeply rooted in the country's political ideology *'thought socialism'*. The thinking around rejuvenating the ideals of socialism has received progressive improvement over the years that culminated in the historical 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in October 2017. Both political leadership and bureaucrats in China front the most important development priorities – poverty alleviation, anti-corruption, economic growth and people's livelihoods. Most of these issues are still unresolved in most of the African states. Chinese style of governance presents what President Jinping calls *'shared future for humanity'*. This philosophy is closely related with the FOCAC framework of development that offers alternative development modelling. As the frail 'western democracy' in Africa ends, China might just be the timely 'model' of how states struggling to achieve economic stability need to be governed.

Secondly, the art and the *thoughtfulness* by which the 'Chinese thought socialism' integrate development and politics gives the Chinese society governance competitive advantage over the Westphalia neoliberal democracy. It is sickening that African states remains tethered to some western remote models of governance that they themselves seem to be less than capable of practicing. Neoliberal democracy models have been described as 'hollow' because they are 'cut' and 'pasted' into the African context without due regard to the parallel complexities that distinguish African states from European nations. The epitome of China-Africa cooperation was well enunciated by the former President of Tanzania, Benjamin William Mkapa in 2007, 'in more and more African countries, both the leaders and the people have well realized that there is enormous potential in the China-Africa mutually beneficial and win-win economic partnership'. The former President's remarks resonate well with three outcomes that I think affirm FOCAC as a potential game-changer in today's global order.

> "Chinese philosophers and scholars are helping Beijing in designing norms and a value system, hoping to win hearts and minds."

Thirdly, while the cut and paste western neoliberal democracy provides for people's participation in important decision-making processes, the politics of patronage and clandestine and remote governance structures end up promoting exclusivity. It is for this reason that I contrast the neoliberal democracy with the new Chinese 'thought socialism'. The Chinese 'thought socialism', has been tagged as the 'Real People's Forum'– largely because of its participatory model. For instance, during the 2018 CPC Conference, more than 2,400 proposals received from various groups focused on providing basic needs for young people in areas that would be regarded as marginalised. Cities such as the Macao and Hong Kong were beneficiaries of this model of development-politics.

The balance of power with China's economic heavyweight will continue to pose a threat to the western powers. Worrisome responses from the US on several aspects of Chinese engagement on FOCAC are expected. However, to be fair to both the USA and China, it is critical to reflect on the facts and if they translate into wellbeing of humanity across the globe.

Chinese investment in Africa through the FOCAC framework has seen rapid increase in trade with Africa since 2000. As a result, China has become Africa's second largest trading partner in the world, after the USA. On the same indicator, France and United Kingdom lag behind China. It is for this reason that Professor Chun Zhang observes that Africa has become China's major overseas origin for strategic resources and investment opportunities. Indeed, in 2012 alone, China's total investment in Africa exceeded US$15 billion. China-Africa Trade volume grew from as little as US$2 billion in 1999 to US$107 billion in 2008. This instantaneous growth is due to 'push' factors, including the 'Special Funds of Joint Venture' and the 'Special Loans of SME Development in Africa'.

China is proud of its infrastructure projects in Africa. From 2000 to 2009, the completed volume of China's contracting projects in Africa grew nearly 25 times making Africa the second largest overseas project contracting market for Chinese enterprises. FOCAC also invests in complementary activities aimed at boosting Africa's capacity notably through scientific and technological cooperation and cultural exchanges. On cultural exchange, the Confucius Institutes at the University of Nairobi and University of Johannesburg are among the 45 institutes established under the FOCAC framework across the globe.

Additionally, FOCAC endeavours to strengthen social systems through

value-based cooperation. To this end, President Xi Jinping's visit to Africa in July 2018 emphasised the importance of building China-Africa cooperation on foundations of 'sincerity', 'real results', 'affinity' and 'good faith'. Indeed, the Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, putting forward the '461 cooperation frameworks', enhanced the idea that China and Africa are a 'community of common destiny' in 2014. Since then, the African Union (AU) has endorsed FOCAC's initiatives on the continent.

FOCAC is limited in scope and breadth, BRICS's presence goes beyond inter-regional cooperation.

BRICS

Can BRICS lead the world on reforming the international financial and economic institutions? Listening to the BRICS leaders during the 10th Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa 25-27 July, there was no doubt that the substance of discussion and the spirit represented an alliance of an emerging power in the global system. Reform is central to its global agenda. BRICS has been described as an association with tangible, diverse and complex initiatives. However, changing the world order also implies battling out the status quo and creating spheres of influence far and wide beyond the Big Five. Therefore, the question is whether BRICS is likely to transform the world beyond the five member states.

Despite the remarkable impact that BRICS has made during the last sixteen years of existence, skeptics continue to challenge the alliance. They argue that it could just be another form of neo-liberal domination or colonial imperialism from the East. Yet the BRICS countries have demonstrated in recent years that they represent a model of economic power that goes beyond the five member states. Compared to the Asian Tigers or the growth model of small size economies, the BRICS countries continue to project power based on the enormous resources, territory and population at large scale. Whilst BRICS has had a better economic performance than developed countries, there are both economic and geopolitical factors that are likely to sustain or militate BRICS.

The main factors that led to the economic expansion of the group were an increased input of factors, and enormous scales of population and resources. For example, Brazil and Russia's economies are mainly based on huge reserves of mineral resources and speculations made in international markets. China has an advantage of cheap labour and resources at low prices. India is also based on low-cost workforce. Finally yet importantly, all the BRICS countries, except Brazil, show very high rates of investment. The current concern is to estimate whether the BRICS countries will continue the same upward trend given the weaknesses identified within them such as the high level of corruption, different political ideologies, overexposure to commodities etc.

The BRICS grouping has, like IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa), sought to address several of the issues originally raised by the NIEO (New International Economic Order), including the reform of the international financial institutions (IFIs) to give the rising powers more influence in their operations. A key demand of BRICS has for example been the reform of IMF governance to increase the quota allotted to developing countries and to end the arrangement whereby the leadership positions of the IMF and World Bank are limited to Europeans and Americans, respectively. This cause was given added legitimacy in 2012 when the BRICS countries bolstered the IMF by contributing to the organisation's $430 billion bailout. India, Russia and Brazil all contributed $10 billion each, South Africa contributed $2 billion, and China a massive $43 billion, creating a total contribution of $75 billion.

> "China's pragmatic approach to development cooperation is closely knit within the philosophy of 'shared future'."

According to IMF estimates, world population growth in the period 1960-2015 could reach 138.2%, while emerging countries would be 165.1%. Until now, BRICS group increased by 132.7% of the population, compared to 192% in Latin America or the Middle East and Africa with an increase of 295%. In the last two decades of the last century, the average GDP growth was 2.9% in developed economies and 3.6% in developing countries, compared to the 2000-2010 period when average rates were 1.9% and 6.2% respectively. According to IMF estimates, the difference will remain between 2011 and 2015 (6.6% for developing countries and 2.5% for advanced one). In the developing countries group, BRIC countries China and India stand out because of their GDP growth with an average rate of 7.9% between 2000 and 2010, and 8.1% between 2011 and 2015. Similarly, there has been a rapid growth in GDP per capita in emerging economies compared to the advanced ones. The GDP per capita in emerging economies began to grow steadily since 1995, with an average of 1.4% by 2003, to 4.8% between 2004 and 2008 which represent a cumulative growth of 26% over the five years.

In any case, China, ranking 4th globally on gross national savings with the ratio of 50%, is considered as the 'factory of the world'. Moreover, the global financial reports by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) ranks China as the second largest source and destination of FDI globally. In fact, foreign exchange reserve nears US$4000 billion-more than 3-times the value of the FOREX reserve for Japan.

Should the world under China get concerned?

More often than not, discussions on China attract priority issues of global importance. 'Ethics' and 'ownership' of development cooperation are particularly central to this debate mainly because of the importance of building local capacities in order to prevent future forms of development dependency. Like any other cooperation prototype, FOCAC and BRICS are not immune from the possibilities of 'asymmetric perverse

effects' that we have seen with the west-dominated development models.

We are then left to grapple with the question of how to ensure that the world being constructed by China is firmly anchored on principles of 'mutual trust' and at the same time promotes values deemed important for human dignity and sustainable humanity – ownership, self-help, self-reliance – and cultivates the culture of dialogue as well as promoting a sense of responsibility.

From this analysis, it is emerging that Chinese power is vested in FOCAC and BRICS, more so in BRICS because of the multilateralism values embedded in the framework. My conclusions will therefore focus on the important entity that might just define the Chinese role in the foreseeable world order.

Some insights

- Whilst some of the members of BRICS such as India employ 'demand-driven' approaches to development, 'real' south-south, triangular and horizontal cooperation in all spheres of development and security will require adopting and adapting the Chinese philosophy of a 'mutually-beneficial' development model;
- While BRICS possesses the qualities of an emerging power, its members seem to act as individual countries rather than as an allied bloc on issues such as Universal Health Coverage (UHC). In order to attain a solid global influence, BRICS members need to adopt the 'social equity' norms as they create spheres of influence in Africa and beyond;
- Taking into considerations the escalation of tensions between West and East, it is evident that the Big Five are in search of a long-term cooperation. Nevertheless, the BRICS initiative will face threats; for example, the dominant position of the West as regards the conduits of international finance, trade wars as well as a pricing framework. In view of these threats, it is important that the BRICS Secretariat institutionalise an effective implementation framework anchored on the F3Cs (Forum for the Coordination, Cooperation and Consultation);
- In terms of spheres of influence, BRICS has been expanding rapidly; for example, between 2010 and 2012, China's medical funding served approximately 73 million people mainly from Africa; Brazil has initiated development projects in Mozambique, Timor-Leste, Haiti and Guinea Bissau; India's sphere of influence has been felt mainly in Bhutan, Nepal and Afghanistan;
- There is a trend in the emerging economies to integrate as much as possible in the process of economic globalisation, which makes them more susceptible to fluctuations in the foreign markets. Currently, there are some constraints related to BRICS trade, finance, exchange rates, etc. For example, the depreciation of the dollar could cause large losses for the BRICS countries because they hold more than 60% of their reserves in dollars;
- There is a strong sense of cooperation among BRICS countries given their common goal. However, at the same time they are in constant competition to win markets. Therefore, the cooperation and competition between BRICS countries have a dual role in their economic development;
- There are other developing countries coming behind the BRICS group, the so-called VISTA states (Vietnam, Indonesia, Turkey and Argentina), which puts pressure on the group regarding the operation of markets, global resources and their allocation; and
- There is some difficulty regarding the growth model in the BRICS countries. They focus more on the growth of GDP and less on quality, given the lack of creative minds and innovation incentives. Investments in technology and the education systems are insufficient; there is no motivation and entrepreneurial spirit, and there is no rational allocation of resources. ■

> "It is sickening that African states remains tethered to some western remote models of governance that they themselves seem to be less than capable of practicing."

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The System needs a Heavy Shock

One of the reasons for the success of the East Asian developmental states was that governments and leaders introduced radical mindset changes that thoroughly shocked the old social, traditional and political systems.

By William Gumede

Many of the successful East Asian developmental states, unlike African countries after the end of colonialism, deliberately and conscientiously pushed for a collective transformation mindset change to set these countries up to achieve high economic growth rates, industrialisation and global competitivity.

These societies create new "normal" behaviours, institutions and partnerships that were in most cases not there before. Scholars within the comparative institutional analysis discipline, such as Masahiko Aoki, argue that a developing country may find itself in inertia, struggling to come up with new innovative policies, and if it does, struggling to get the different components of the society's social system, institutions and customs to implement such policies. This happens because the different components of societies' institutional systems have complementarities which oppose social change and innovation, and reinforce inertia.

Using the argument of path dependence, old institutions, behaviours and customs of a country system will continue on the same path, unless there is a heavy shock to the system.

One of the reasons for the success of the East Asian developmental states was that governments and leaders introduced radical mindset changes that thoroughly shocked the old social, traditional and political systems, and set these countries on the path to successfully pursue industrialisation, lift economic growth rates and develop globally competitive companies.

Kenichi Ohno, a leading Japanese economic development strategist, calls the collective mindset change necessary for a country to move from poverty or middle-income to becoming a developed and high-income one, "a national movement for mindset change". Ohno argues that only if a "sufficiently large mass begin to behave differently, institutional and strategic complementarities of the old type stop working

and rules and customs start to change".

Several types of collective mindset changes drove the astonishing industrial transformation of the East Asian developmental states from poverty levels similar to those of their African and developing country peers, to levels of development similar to or better than their former colonial powers.

East Asian developmental states fostered a fundamental collective mindset change towards merit-based societies – for appointments to the public sector, government contracts and opportunities to be seen to be on merit, not based on politically connectivity to the ruling party or leader, or to the leading political faction or to the family or same ethnic group of the leader.

Successful East Asian developmental states push for new individual, community and society-wide behaviours which makes ethical behaviour at all levels the new standard, and dishonest and corrupt behaviour socially unacceptable. Furthermore, the reward structure in society was changed to reward hard work, honesty, innovation and merit.

These societies collectively learn to expect that leaders and governing parties must govern in the widest interest of all, rather than small elites; and that as countries they needed to rise not only out of the poverty in the shortest period of time, but to *surpass* their former colonial powers in the shortest period of time.

A key part of the success of action to change the collective mindset of societies is for leaderships to set the example. Leaders had to behave reasonably and accountably, and follow the rules and laws which others are expected to follow.

These societies equalised social status across the society, often breaking the power of traditional authority, landowner-based and feudal-based power, giving every citizen equal value. This unleashed pent-up energy for industrialisation.

Japan immediately after the Second World War introduced land reform to break the powers of the landbarons, 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.

Many of these societies equalised the status of women more broadly than many developing countries. They spend considerable funds into lifting the education levels of women. Education enrolment of girls between six and eleven years in Taiwan rose from 68.8% to 99.99% in 1989. By 2007 women in Taiwan achieved parity in all levels of education with men, with women outnumbering men at university level by a 10% margin.

In Singapore, by 2010, 93.6% of women between 15 and 34 years had received a secondary education. The participation of women in the labour force had increased from 21.6% in 1957 to 58.6% in 2014.

> "East Asian developmental states fostered a fundamental collective mindset change towards merit-based societies."

These societies made building a well-educated workforce as quickly as possible their new comparative advantage. Countries with little mineral resources changed national mindsets to focus on expanding human capital as a competitive advantage for their industries. Their ambition was to, in one generation, educate their countries to similar levels or to surpass the education levels of former colonial powers. Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea dramatically expanded education, particularly engineering and other industrially relevant technical skills in the workplace, through life-long education and at higher education institutions.

These societies copy cutting-edge Western technology and when they have mastered this newly acquired knowledge, they build new products, which they then sell back to industrial countries and developing countries. Japan was an early exponent of this process, before eventually using it to create competitive Japanese exports which industrial and developing needed. South Korea in the 1970s embarked on the Green and White Revolution which introduced technology into agriculture to raise productivity.

Redistribution strategies in these countries focused on boosting human capital, entrepreneurship not linked to the state, and creating *new* globally competitive export industries not present or underdeveloped in the country.

These countries transformed into pragmatic societies, rather than ideologically driven ones. Cobbling together development policies in these countries involved many different societal stakeholders rather than only an elite few. The East Asian developmental states, when it came to economic policy making, focused on partnerships between governments, private business and civil society.

Partnership between the state, business and civil society gives the state a deep knowledge of industry, the knowledge to effectively govern the market and to come up with quality industrial policies.

South Korea developed cooperative entrepreneurial partnerships between business and government to build up the country's industrial base. The government provided the funding, policy support and competition protection for new industries selected to become global competitors.

These countries changed to the mindset of entrepreneurship, of creating private and state businesses which can *outcompete* industrial country equivalents. Many East Asian developmental states mobilised their populations behind national movements to change their societies' collective mindsets to one that would encourage growth. The Japanese government used galvanising slogans such as "Catching up with Britain" (1953-1957) and "Doubling Income"

(1960-1967) to mobilise the mass citizens behind its campaign to catch up with the West.

Singapore in the 1950s was among the poorest countries in the world – now Singapore mathematics is taught in industrial countries. Children at the schools of the former colonial power, Great Britain, now use Singapore mathematics. This is what successful decolonisation should look like.

The East Asian developmental states created a mindset of more caring versions of capitalism, in which business owners partner with employees, provide welfare to employees and upskill employees. Japan, Taiwan and South Korea have combined aspects of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, such as cooperation, morality and accountability within their varieties of capitalism.

South Korea in the 1970s started the Saemaul Movement to increase the productivity in rural towns and villages. This included fostering a new appreciation for hard work, teamwork, innovation and productivity. In the 1980s, Singapore set up a national movement to bring about popular mindset change, getting people to buy into increasing productivity in their areas of work to boost overall national growth.

Most African countries since independence have been unable to pursue collective mindset changes, which transform old institutions, beliefs and behaviours that are growth inhibiting.

The Japanese thinker Kenichi Ohno, describes developing countries stuck in such "bad" historical behaviours, beliefs and institutions as "institutionally solidified". Most African countries since the end of colonialism are suffering from being "institutionally solidified" with a set of institutions, traditions and rules which make it very difficult to transform their growth, development and industrialisation patterns. These African institutional solidities were legacies of colonialism, white minority rule and apartheid *and* pre-colonial African traditional cultures, traditions and patterns of behaviour.

> "These societies equalised social status across the society, often breaking the power of traditional authority, landowner-based and feudal-based power, giving every citizen equal value."

In Africa, power based on patriarchy, social and gender status, whether one is from the dominant ethnic group and how politically connected one is, means that talented individuals falling into the *wrong* category will never secure a top position, business contract or be elected to become a national leader in many societies.

In many African countries merit is normally not the guiding principle for appointment to elected, public service and civil society leadership. In many African societies there is the expectation that a leader must look after his own family, village or political faction, rather than the interests of the whole of society.

Patriarchy which infuses African society, politics and economics means that leaders often solely decide on policy. In patriarchy-based, "connections"-based and small-elite run African societies, there would naturally be little incentive for power elites to boost the education of the wider populace. The more educated a society becomes, the more the newly educated will challenge patriarchy and the hegemony of small-elites who dominate African societies.

> "The government provided the funding, policy support and competition protection for new industries selected to become global competitors."

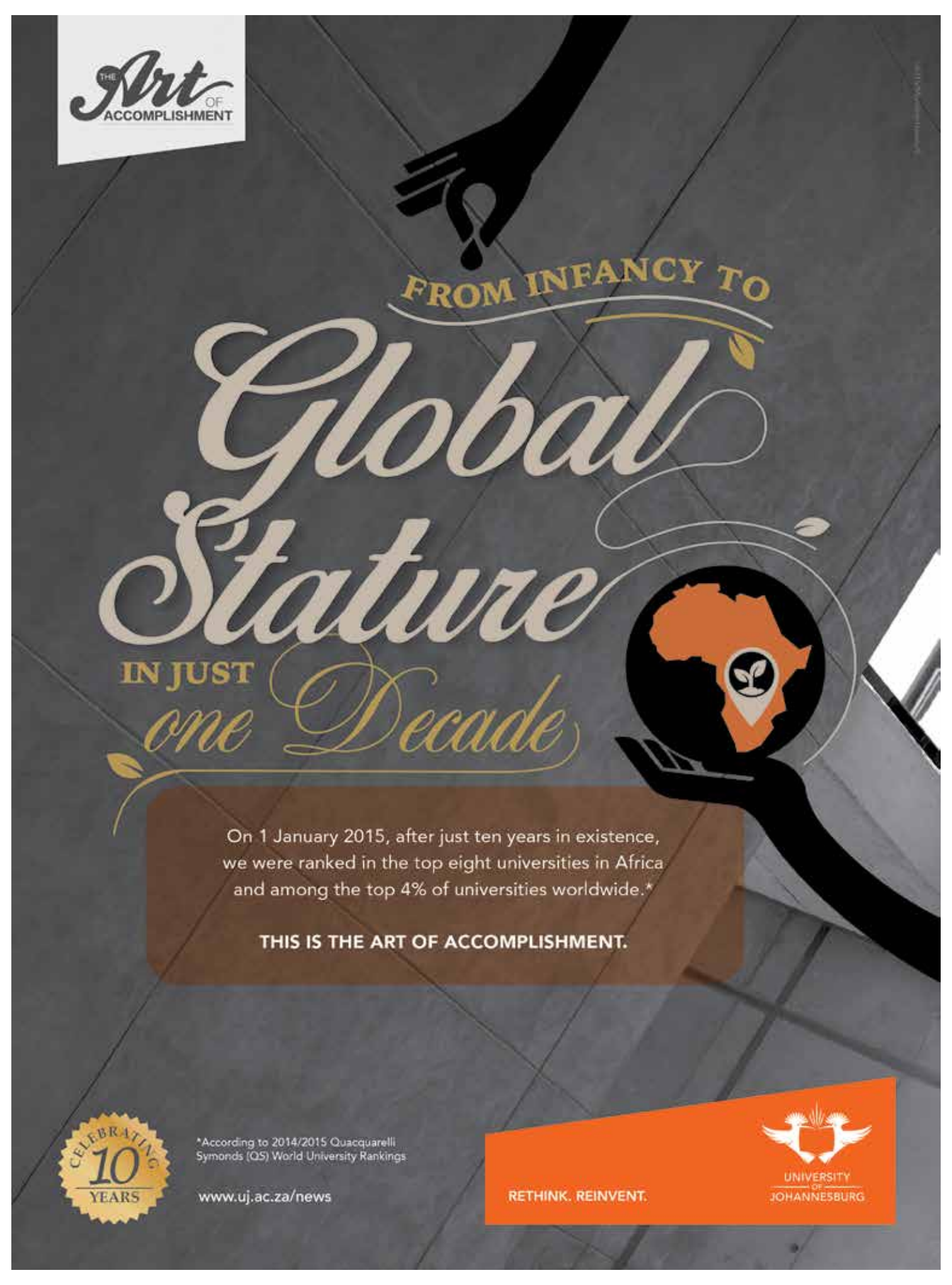
In many African countries, enterpreneurship is not encouraged as the pinnacle for development, but often seen as "bad", as "capitalist" and "exploitative". An enterpreneur, described by the celebrated economist Joseph Schumpeter as "an individual who introduces something new in the economy, a method of production not yet tested by experience, a product with which consumers are not yet familiar, a new source of raw material or of new markets", is rarely encouraged. In recent times, getting rich through living off the state, or tenderpreneurship, the opposite of entrepreneurship, is celebrated in many African countries.

Furthermore, when African post-independence governments lead the private sector, they often have very little deep knowledge of specific industries, the state often smothers the private sector, rather than encouraging it, or the state encourages tenderpreneurship, which undermines genuine entrepreneurship and distorts markets.

In conclusion, redistribution strategies can often be counter-productive, exacerbating the problems of the state as a whole and the disadvantaged groups within it.

Redistribution strategies in many African countries are often focused on getting formerly disadvantaged communities to live off the resources of the state and seizing private assets from previously advantaged communities for redistribution; rather than on expanding human capital and creating new private businesses. This means the state is expanded and private businesses are shrunk.

Redistribution strategies in Africa often destroy genuine entrepreneurship, encourage tender-preneurship and cause the destruction of value. Redistribution strategies often cause deindustrialisation – whereby products that were produced in a country, provided local jobs, investment and income, are displaced by foreign imports. ■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Jair Bolsonaro and demise of the center-left politics - what lessons to learn?

A New Dawn should enable our country to transition from the capitalist colonial-apartheid legacy that has so far refused to go away, despite some redistributive measures undertaken since the dawn of democracy.

By Chris Matlako

As the dust settles and the reality sinks in, the Brazilian Left, and indeed progressives across the world, who exalted the 'Lula-Moment' are hard pressed to find explanations and reasons of what could have gone wrong in that left-experiment in Brazil. This in the aftermath of the presidential victory for the far rightwing Jair Bolsonaro. Much is going to change, based on his rhetoric and generally what he represents – politically. There are important lessons to learn for progressives seeking to build progressive and left transformational trajectories in the Third World, to bring about fairer and more egalitarian societies.

The African National Congress (ANC)-led Alliance should heed the warnings of this reality, as it goes into the elections in 2019. Bolsonaro's victory can be traced to a number of factors which arise from critical mistakes made by left progressives; and the unraveling of centre-left politics and parties, which have dominated neoliberal politics and governments over the last period.

In 1988 a group of centre-left politicians and academics who had opposed the military dictatorship that governed Brazil from 1964 to 1985 set up a new political organisation, the Party of Brazilian Social Democracy (PSDB). It's then eminent leader Fernando Henrique Cardoso, wrote: 'We advocated a blend of free-market reform and social responsibility' like that espoused by Felipe Gonzalez in Spain, Bill Clinton in United States and Tony Blair in Britain. Under Cardoso they governed Brazil between 1995 and 2003. As the party shifted to the centre-right, it became one of two rival anchors of the political system, along with the leftwing Workers Party (PT). 'In six presidential elections between 1994 and 2014 it averaged almost 40% of the vote. And now, suddenly, the PSDB is a spent force and looks far closer to extinction than its symbol, the toucan', writes *The Economist* (November, 2018).

The Workers Party (PT) has been at the receiving end of ongoing and steady attacks which resulted amongst others in the jailing of Lula and impeachment of Dilma Rousseff who became President of Brazil after Lula. Coupled with the internal decay, leading figures of the PT were found to have been on the wrong side of the law in respect of corruption charges. This created a huge trust deficit and social distance between itself and the masses, and allied social formations which had cohered around their programme. The global crisis of capitalism compounded the problems for the PT and its allies and subsequently led to key popular social programmes which had been the mainstay for bettering the conditions of the poor, marginal communities and indigenous population being rolled back.

> *Implementing its policies now required a democratic mandate that, although feasible in principle, could be achieved only if the party submitted itself to the logic of campaign finance, coalition-building, piecemeal reforms, painstaking negotiations with conflicting interest groups and the imperatives of 'efficiency' and 'delivery' on local government. In this way, the democratic transition satisfied the essential political demands of the left, but it disconnected them from the economic demands of the majority*, argued Saad-Filho and Morais.

2018 - Enter the strongman politics of far-right Jair Bolsonaro

We are in for a bumpy ride. Liberal capitalist democracies around the world generally, are in a deep social and economic crisis. In the Americas, Europe and Asia the right, and in some places, the far-right has been winning elections after years in the margins of mainstream politics. These rightwing movements all share similar ideas: populist rhetoric, and/or a supposed break with the establishment, or as is the case in Italy's now in-power Five Star Movement, the idea that 'they represent neither a left or rightwing ideology'. But, as we know this is

not entirely true. From the Five Star Movement in Italy, through to Donald Trump in the US and Brazil's president-elect Bolsonaro, the writing is on the wall – the rightwing agenda of immigrant scape-goating for economic and social problems, racism towards minorities and indigenous groups and a complete disregard for women's rights, anti-LGBT policies and a clear pro-business neoliberal economic agenda, form the hallmarks of these formations. They pose the gravest dangers to human civilization as we've come to know it in recent times. It is a retreat into the laager.

How did we get here?

In Latin America the so-called 'Pink Wave' of left-leaning political parties swept the first decade and half of the 21st century in half a dozen countries, including in two of its biggest economies: Brazil and Argentina. For people in those countries this meant huge expansion of social welfare programmes that subsidised education, energy and many more key areas. It meant tens of millions of people were lifted out of poverty. All this was backed by the revenue generated in state controlled and regulated energy producing countries. But, while these left-leaning governments succeeded in gaining mass support with their reforms, it waned as the oil booms ended. Certain austerity measures were implemented to offset economic pressure, and the political persecution of its former leaders served as the last nail in the coffin.

Today Chile and Argentina, under rightwing presidents Pinera and Macri, who in the past have given tacit support to the last military dictatorships in their countries, either by denying it was dictatorship or downplaying the number of people who were tortured or disappeared – have seen a rise in police presence in the streets to combat growing discontent. This discontent is especially noticeable in Argentina where Macri has reintroduced IMF loans to mitigate the economic crisis; whilst meanwhile the banks are producing record profits.

In Brazil the far-right politician Bolsonaro – an open supporter of the former military dictatorship which arrested, imprisoned, tortured and killed progressive activists including communists, will assume the federal republic's presidency soon. Bolsonaro has taken advantage of endemic disillusionment in the Workers Party (PT). He's promised to use the military to crush dissent and exterminate the Left. Brazilians have already seen a sharp rise in violence, especially towards LGBT people, most notably the murder of Marielle Franco – a socialist lesbian city council member who was a respected activist, who stood for everything Bolsonaro is opposed to: equality for the Afro and indigenous communities, and LGBT, women's and workers' rights.

In Europe, the effects of the 'war on terror' – Islamophobia, has resulted in the mass displacement of people and the huge refugee influx into Europe. This created a prime opportunity for the right to start scapegoating refugees and immigrants. Long festering racism was exploited as migrants and refugees made their way to the European Union (EU). In Hungary refugees were met with violence by rightwing mobs; even a Hungarian reporter was caught red-handed kicking a refugee on camera. In Italy, Salvini has instituted a total anti-immigrant policy blocking foreign NGOs from providing aid to migrants fleeing violence. France's Marine Le Pen and her rightwing party nearly made it to power in the last election, but instead neoliberal centrist Emmanuel Macron became president.

> "The political tragedy unfolding in Brazil holds important lessons for the Left, as it is symptomatic of something much bigger than factional squabbles over corruption."

Macron has been praised by the world but despised at home, where he's been undoing labour rights, declaring states of emergency and implementing austerity measures. Germany has seen a resurgence of white supremacists, both in the streets and in parliament; and similar far-right movements have been emboldened in the UK, Scandinavia, Greece and Austria just to name a few.

In India the rightwing Hindu nationalist BJP party led by Modi won the national elections in 2014, and has since become the largest political party in the country, governing in 21 of the 31 Indian states. The rise of the BJP came as centrist parties became embroiled in corruption amidst unemployment, high inflation and stagnation in political reforms. The BJP out-organised the other parties, campaigned on a populist platform and reached out to groups of people normally ignored in the political arena. But since it won, India has seen a rise in lynch mobs towards Muslims, violence against women, political repression and neoliberal austerity.

Moreover former Trump aide Steve Bannon embarked on a far-right tour advising Bazil's Bolsonaro, and hoping to create a European coalition to bolster the prospects of far-right movements across the continent.

Indeed, many of the people voting for these rightwingers are deeply racist or homophobic themselves. But what we have seen with Trump, Bolsonaro and Modi is that they win because of a rejection of the politics of the centre-left. The centre-left has been prepared to compromise its own principles when the going gets tough. The right has seized on the disillusion caused by these weaknesses, coupled with a smart strategy to out-organise the centre-left and target people who have felt a complete dissatisfaction with the status quo. So these 'outsider' populist-types become representatives of change and hope. Their self-styled brand stands in contrast to status quo politics.

For the Left, this period should serve as wake up call. Unfortunately post a series of left-leaning governments in Latin America, the Left itself is actually now in disarray. The reintroduction of the United States into the region's politics doesn't bode well either for the immediate future.

On the flipside, in this same period, a women's activist movement

has emerged strongly in Argentina, with ripples of this 'Ni Una Menos' movement seen across Latin America, from Chile to Mexico, alongside a return to mass protests in the streets in Brazil. In India the leftwing activism in the streets by a new generation of activists not tied to any particular political party, is showing potential for a leftwing alternative that says 'no bigotry against Muslims' and 'no violence against women'. And the rise in the US of varied left voices represents the beginning of a new Left in the belly of the beast.

The progressive forces in the US seem to have learnt some lessons about how to organise and have an effective electoral strategy, challenging and winning many elections and achieving the Democrats' majority control of the House of Representatives. Socialism is openly discussed and the White House has recently found it appropriate to produce a counter-argument against socialism by publishing anti-socialist commentaries.

How far will we let the far-right rise? That depends on how willing and able our side is to prioritise protecting the rights we do have – the rights we have already fought for and won – and being able to react to every instance of attack by the right when they come for abortion clinics, our trans brothers and sisters, our communities regardless of race, ethnicity or religion, and the basic foundations of our living standards.

In their book *Neoliberalism versus Democracy*, Alfredo Saad-Filho and Lecio Morais argue that at the heart of the problem is the incomplete business of transitioning from neoliberalism to a more sustainable alternative which deepens genuine democracy.

> *The Brazilian democratic transition was shaped by conflicting forces; on one hand, mass demands for political freedom and economic equality, in the other, elite pressures for the renewal of the structures of inequality and social domination. These forces created a shallow democracy. For example, while civil liberties, at a formal level, are at least as substantial as those in most 'old' Western democracies, in practice the legal and judicial systems are geared to the protection of privilege and the reproduction of the poor. The constitution has been amended frequently and the law is often disregarded when it conflicts with the reproduction of power or the exclusionary foundations of the state.*

Post-apartheid South Africa is no exception and experiencing the tensions between political and economic democracy, as these play themselves out in varying degrees and ways. Indeed, as Saad-Filho and Morais note, the tensions between political and economic democracy help to explain the patterns of exclusion and social injustice in Brazil and some other countries. These tensions also contribute towards poor economic performance, as some constitutions consistently fail to address the shortcomings. Others have incorporated neoliberal aspects, which are inimical to growth and the emerging welfare state.

The Endemic nature of Corruption

Corruption has become the most pertinent issue in this period. Whether real or perceived, many of the Left parties that won power in Latin America and elsewhere have become enmeshed in a disturbing web of alleged corruption. In the melee of the economic crisis, downward dropping commodity prices and spiralling unemployment a torrent of corruption scandals became thoroughly enmeshed. The rightwing mainstream media trumpets daily that these (Left) parties are at the center of a web of thievery without precedent. In Brazil both Lula and Dilma Rousseff were accused of corruption with Lula subsequently sent to jail. It is also true that the mainstream media has conspired to use corruption to cast aspersions about the credentials of Leftwing governments, for example in Ecuador.

The Left has also experienced internal crises and splits in some countries and in others it has lost its legitimacy. The political tragedy unfolding in Brazil holds important lessons for the Left, as it is symptomatic of something much bigger than factional squabbles over corruption. Saad-Filho and Morais argue that:

> *These developments are symptomatic of the effort of the neoliberal elites to destroy the fragile balance in the Constitution between the expansion of citizenship and the reproduction of privilege, and their attempt to upset the fragile equilibrium between democracy and neoliberalism that has defined Brazilian political life since 1998. The Constitution has become too small to hold two contradictory principles, and the Brazilian elites have sensed that the time is right to impose their choice.*

Bolsonaro's recent presidential victory vindicates the point.

Conclusion

Indeed, we need a New Dawn – which is touted as the platform for radical socio-economic transformation in the post-Nasrec era! However such a New Dawn should enable our country to transition from the capitalist colonial-apartheid legacy that has so far refused to go away, despite some redistributive measures undertaken since the dawn of democracy. We need to conceptualise a new set of politics beyond the neoliberal orthodoxy that has characterised much of the last 16 or so years of democratisation in our country. The second more radical phase as espoused by the South African Communist Party (SACP) programme, particularly after the 11th Congress, has argued for creating and building a convergence between the political democratisation process and transforming the material conditions of the majority of the people, who are the working class and poor. The New Dawn era should be characterised by the advance and deepening of tenets that will overcome the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality which has deepened over the past few years. The unsustainable levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment are veritable ingredients for a toxic set of politics characterised by anti-progressive politics. It goes without saying that the left must reject corruption and repress corrupt practices. And we need to listen to Saad-Filho and his colleagues who argue that "…the left must also reject neoliberalism as a system of accumulation." ■

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CHALLENGE

Social Cohesion in our Nation

On that day, at that moment, South Africans achieved a reference point for the nation to strive for national cohesion, for the first time in three centuries.

By Mongane Serote

We cannot talk about social cohesion in our country without walking through our history, heritage and culture as a Nation; and we are a nation of activists, creative people, some of whom organised within the ANC and the Movement. As South Africans who participated in one of the most protracted struggles for freedom, we know that we will do justice to the subject if we also ask: do art forms have a role in social cohesion? Because singularly and collectively, art forms are a cultural expression. Do music, theatre, dance, literature, plastic arts, film or photography have roles in a Nation, and if so, what are those roles?

As it is with all South Africans, we have a deep sense that once more, as a people and a country, we have arrived at the crossroads. We are faced, eyeball to eyeball, by a historical question: what must we do?

On the 8th of May, 1996, President Mbeki made his poetic 'I Am An African' speech in the Parliament where the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was adopted by the Constitutional Assembly: what happened in Parliament that day, and since then, what does the speech say to the South African Nation? We were at a crossroads then, and we had chosen our way forward.

On that day in Parliament, almost all the leaders of the different political parties as if they were a choir also declared: 'I am an African…' as they delivered their responses to President Mbeki's speech at the podium in Parliament. I am suggesting here that on that day, at that moment, South Africans achieved a reference point for the nation to strive for national cohesion, for the first time in three centuries. The leaders of the various political parties represented in Parliament knew, without any doubt, that they represented their followers by so declaring. The speech pronounced and stated the deep feelings and aspirations of the majority of South Africans.

I may dare and become philosophical as I write here. However, it is my objective to be as practical as possible as I do so.

On the one hand 'challenges facing our country and nation from the perspective of social cohesion' is a theoretical concept, seeking that we probe the past issues about this matter in our country, as we also find the theoretical references to expose and lay bare the problems and challenges facing us as a people and how these must be resolved.

On the other hand, implied in the challenge is also an expectation that the question: what then must be done? must be answered in a practical manner to resolve the contradictions uncovered by the historical analysis.

Our national cohesion (or lack of it) is embedded in our history as a people and Nation. It is a history which has been deeply conflictual but whose people have been most creative in seeking the solutions to the deep conflicts which still characterise us. This Nation has emerged from the past of a deep division of people based on gender, race and ethnicity, and yet has still laid a basis for the emergence of a non-racial, non sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

Our Nation is a Nation which declares in the preamble of its 1996 Constitution, in part, that:

We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

Let me pick up this last sentence: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity." This is a very important declaration about us as a people and also us as a Nation. It is a declaration forged in struggle; it is a declaration formed and informed by the history of this country and it also gives expression to a vision of the future of the country, people and Nation. We are a people, South Africans, "united in our diversity".

This heritage, our constitution, is firm and direct in expressing the will and wishes of the people. It also expresses and defines the future which must be lived by those who inherit it, living it and being it, so that the past before it, of apartheid, is a past forever, and the present and future which it expresses, must be lived, is lived and will be lived with hope and boundless possibilities.

The "unity in diversity" of the people will prevail given the culture and history of the land. This hope, this will, this basis for the defence of our country, and also the promise which is issued here and made a reality forever, is enshrined in the constitution – it is the foundation of the South African Nation. It emanates from a deep understanding that culture is a result of history, and also that culture defines history.

Let us leaf through a page in the history of our struggle, which is a history of our country and people. It is also a clarion call forever, not only in South Africa but throughout the world, if we observe that the international Anti-Apartheid Movement straddled the whole world. Once more, we do so to emphasise the role of culture and the role of history.

It is history that in 1956 mothers and the women of our country marched to Pretoria. While on the one hand the march was against the pass laws, it is not an exaggeration to also state that the march, inspired by the Freedom Charter, was against imperialism, colonialism, and apartheid, as it was also a march against sexism. Slogans on banners, placards and posters carried by the marching women were wide-ranging, including " We shall not rest until we have won for our children their fundamental rights of freedom, justice, and security", "An injury to one is an injury to all", "Forward with the workers' struggle" and "With passes we are slaves". The women sung the now famous struggle song "Wathint' abafazi wathinti' imbokodo" – "When you strike the women you strike a rock!"

However, more importantly, the march of twenty thousand women will be forever a cultural reference point seeking to reconstruct gender relations, relationships within families, communities and nations. The march was a positive cultural expression of the possibilities inherent in the Nation to achieve and to let emerge a united, non racial, non sexist South African Nation.

> "The apartness of the past is forever present; as also the gains and realities of the struggle midwifed by the fight for freedom are present and alive and must not be miscarried or aborted."

We have before us, beautiful challenges – or ugly ones – depending on the culture we create through our interactions with each other and with the universe, and emanating from our collective national activities. Let us select three strategic milestones in our country which are the corner stones of our Nation, namely:

- The African Family
- The people of our country
- The land to which we belong.

The dynamics of our Nation emanate from its diverse communities, whose foundation is the families within them. Families nurture individuals who are reflected by the communities, but who also reflect these communities, as the communities express the nation. If the foundation of any nation is its family, and if the individuals emanate from families and are the dynamic of communities, and communities are the dynamic of a nation; then, the South African Nation is a complex heritage expression which forever reflects the dichotomy of its social structure because of the past impact of the Apartheid system.

The protracted struggle for freedom was led by the ANC, supported by most South Africans, and with a strong international support from the people of the world who were outraged by the apartheid system. It was waged to achieve freedom for all South Africans and was supported precisely because it expressed in no uncertain ways that Motho ke Motho Ka Batho philosophy – this, the heritage of the South African people!

What is heritage?

Heritage is all the activities and tangible things, positive or negative, which are forever passed on from the past to the present and to the future by different generations of ancestors of any Nation.

Whatever ancestors leave behind as the fingerprint of their lives, they do so with the objective and aspiration to hand over what is intact, meaningful and aimed at improving the lives of those who inherit that heritage. The effect of the Apartheid social structure, passed from generation to generation resulted in the apartness of the South African people which make up its communities and therefore the nation, separated on the basis of race.

The objective of the apartheid system was to separate blacks from whites, in favour of the white people who were buttressed and given a false superior status and dominance socially, politically and culturally, for their maximum economic benefit. The black people were turned into beasts of labour to be super-exploited maximally, this enhanced by their being oppressed. Given this history the

principle of redress as the new South African Nation emerges is important and must be upheld to ensure cohesion in our nation.

The cultural processes we let emerge to address these heritage challenges affirm the black people of South Africa, create and let emerge a culture which seeks to liberate them, but as the constitution states, that affirmation must also ensure that it does not negate the fact that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity".

It was correct in my view for the Pan South African Language Board (Pansalb) as legislated by Parliament in 1996, to legislate for eleven official languages, but affirm that the board must seek to promote, protect and innovate all the nine African languages, to unfold a redress process for the African languages, while also ensuring that Afrikaans and English are recognised as South African languages, as history has so determined.

What that must mean is that, on the one hand, a national consciousness and a deliberateness must be exercised to empower the nine African languages to be spoken, within the non-racial, non-sexist and democratic context, so as to empower the speakers of the nine languages in the nation, to liberate the African voice in the diversity of the nation; while on the other hand upholding English and Afrikaans still as part of the official South African languages. One of the objectives of Pansalb is to create the language redress process, to let emerge the diverse culture of South Africa, which will empower the language speakers as being South Africans. In this way, the individuals in African families are part of an expression of South African cultural diversity which not only defines the family, the communities and the national diverse expression but also nurtures cohesion in the family and therefore also contributes to the cohesion of the national fabric.

Let us now briefly focus on this family of the oppressed, which has to be redressed and liberated; this institution, this primary organisation of a community among communities of a nation endowed with a positively dynamic diversity of cultural expressions. This primary organisation which exists within the diverse South African nation, while similar to the others, is also very different in structure, purpose, and expression. The question is why was it so structured? Why were the institutions of Rakgadi and Malume so elevated to be at strategic levels? That, in my view, is a matter to be thoroughly examined elsewhere but suffice to say here, and remind us that the family , whichever form it takes, is the cornerstone of the Nation.

Both the women as Rakgadi and the men as Malume have defined roles in an African family. All the women and men in this institution are bestowed with a role and responsibility. Besides these roles being practised within the family, they are also part and parcel of other institutions, Bogwera, Bojale, Bogosi, Bongaka, Letsema etc. There are men and women in those institutions, and therefore Malume and Rakgadi are present, active; guided by their roles.

> "This was to be a heritage challenge which would drip human blood as those who revolted paid with their lives."

They are the convenors of family processes, they are the interpreters of traditions, culture and heritage of the family but also of the communities, as also they are the negotiators in the family and even in their communities.

The key questions which has to be asked about this institution – the African family – is why was it created in the manner it was? What is and what was the impact of colonialism and apartheid against it and therefore what are the challenges facing this institution presently and how can it be innovated to be part and parcel of the twenty-first century? These questions must be asked and answered together with other questions which address the institution's challenges, which result in all kinds of negative impacts and degeneration in the nation – crisis of identity, deep lack of self esteem, lack of a sense of belonging, disintegrated communities, crime; and eventually, lack of patriotism, pride and belief in our Nation.

The challenge for the nation, in terms of the African family, whose rudimentary elements still exist, is can it be renewed? Can it, as some of its key pillars exist, are functional and are retained, be protected by law, and maintained by law so that it is part and parcel of the 21st century?

One of the key processes which might help to illuminate these issues would be to translate the constitution of the country into all the nine African languages, so that national consultation processes can be engaged as it is taken to the people and the people are taken to it, this key heritage which is a result of one the most protracted struggles in the world, which also included armed struggle whose strategic objective was to nurture a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic Nation.

The people, who are the content of this Nation, are the heritage of South Africa. Whether they were fighting to entrench the apartheid system, or they were engaged in struggle to establish and achieve the strategic objective as stated above, on both sides, they had the intention to create something – a heritage – which would be passed on to the coming generations of the Nation. On both sides, political, social, economic and cultural expressions of history, were and are determinants of whether the history emanating from those cultural expressions will have a positive or negative effect on the quality of the lives of South Africans.

And, indeed, they have been passed, challenges and all, to the next generations. The challenges of the apartheid system, and the those of the non-racial, non-sexist and democratic anticipated Nation are juxtaposed with each other. The apartness of the past is forever present; as also the gains and realities of the struggle midwifed by the fight for freedom are present and alive and must not be miscarried or aborted. This is the mother of the heritage challenges, and on it depends whether we are able to ensure this cohesion we speak about!

The apartheid system is the child of the colonial system. I use that metaphor to emphasise that both systems were

deliberately and consciously created by human beings. What that must mean is that it was in the interest of some settlers, and some South Africans, to maintain and sustain those systems for hegemony, for profit and for privilege. This consciousness had to also create the means to ensure not only the functionality but also the means for gain from the systems.

On the other hand, there were also some South Africans, the majority, I dare say, who resisted and revolted against these systems as it has been illustrated above. This struggle was to be protracted and to become a burden of three and half centuries on the South African masses. This was to be a heritage challenge which would drip human blood as those who revolted paid with their lives.

While the formal revolts and rebellions against these systems were formally terminated in 1994, and 1996, through democratic elections and the constitution of the land respectively, because the systems of oppression and exploitation were made by human beings for specific reasons, it can never be said that they have been vanquished forever and that those objectives have been abandoned.

Therefore the responsibility to ensure that the gains of the national democratic revolution are irreversible is a permanent responsibility project for all revolutionaries. It can never be said that those who have narrow objectives about our country are inactive and they do not work towards and promote the intentions of their objectives. It is therefore not just a challenge but a crisis which threatens the non-racial, non-sexist and democratic heritage which is slightly more than two decades old, even as it has been nurtured for over a century, consciously and deliberately. It is a heritage challenge and a culture which must make us ask the historic question: What must be done to entrench it in the minds and hearts of the South African people?

We can follow up from the last subject to the assert that those who people the family of any kind are a living heritage of the nation.The primary and most important heritage of a people is the people and their land. The evidence seen and known and that which is not seen and is not known, is how the question of the land has wreaked havoc in our Nation but also how it defines one of the most beautiful challenges for us as South Africans, to find a permanent solution which will offer justice, freedom, peace and security to all the people of this country – black and white. Beautiful because as it was when we, as a people were faced with having to destroy apartheid and the remnants of the colonial system, one of the most cherished heritage of human beings, which was produced by the struggle was the South African constitution – once more the struggle offers us this beautiful opportunity which instructs the earth: "Earth, do not cover my blood; may my cry never be laid to rest!"(Job 16:18). This is, and will always be the clarion call of demonstrations, protests, strikes, boycotts – in other words, all forms of struggle against imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, sexism and all forms of chauvinisms… .

"It is therefore not just a challenge but a crisis which threatens the non-racial, non-sexist and democratic heritage which is slightly more than two decades old, even as it has been nurtured for over a century, consciously and deliberately."

Umkhonto we Sizwe, MK, was founded on this basis, on this understanding: whatever the viciousness of the apatheid regime against the South African people, and no matter what divisive tactics it used, the strategic objective of the South African struggle was and is to defend and protect and ensure the emergence of non-racialism, non-sexism, and democracy, these being the foundation upon which the South African Nation must emerge and stand. Faced with having to make a choice: to "fight or to submit", once more, in order to ensure that the fight, arms in hand, against the apartheid regime did not degenerate into a racial war, MK embarked on a restricted armed struggle. Put blantly, MK was not an army against white people; it was, and had to be, an army founded to defend the cohesion of the South African Nation.

While we must never ever and can never ever forget the bloody cost of land seizure in our history, we cannot and must not overlook the lessons which are inherent and intrinsic to this extremely sensitive, but also important factor of human life. The National Democratic Revolution, as waged by the people of South Africa against the Apartheid system, as the march, led by the Federation of South African Women, indicates, and states categorically, was always in defence of the cohesion of the South African Nation – black and white people. The black and white women marched to make one of the most important statements of the South African nation, the liberation of women! Consciously and deliberately, the women marched, and portrayed this cohesion through the representatives of the organisations from which the women had come: the ANC, the South African Indian Congress, the South African Congress of Democrats (COP) and the South African Coloured People's Organisation (CPO). However, it must not escape us as a people that the women said: "We women have stood and will stand shoulder to shoulder with our men folk in a common struggle against poverty, race and class discrimination". Also, a draft constitution was drawn up stating the aims and objects of the Federation as being "To bring the women of South Africa together, to secure full equality of opportunity for all women, regardless of race, colour or creed; to remove social and legal and economic disabilities; to work for the protection of the women and children of our land".

Let us go back to the preamble of the constitution of our land so that we can hear, be educated and be informed. Let us also remember that, besides our having said that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it,

united in our diversity" we have also said that the land belongs to "those who work it". This is one other of the strongest statements in our history of the National Democratic Revolution which declares and calls for every single South African, black and white to defend the cohesion of the South African nation. These are some of the pillars of the South African National Question. I believe that the foresight gained through struggle and study has informed the Nation on how to engage this extremely sensitive matter. But also very important, the question must be asked: where in the world, and in human experience has revolution not ushered in traitors, who seek to betray it? We are no exception.

In 1969 the architects of the South African National Democratic Revolution, led by OR Tambo, together with J.B Marks, Yusuf Dadoo, Reg September and Joe Slovo, together with other revolutionaries, at the Morogoro conference of the ANC adopted the four pillars of struggle namely: mass, underground, armed and international struggles. These were to be complimented by the results of the June 16th 1976 youth uprisings against the apartheid system – now a heritage, then an anti-apartheid cultural expression seeking to contribute to national cohesion in our country.

In the eighties, the apartheid regime was fiercely implementing its so called "Total Onslaught" through rampart, brutal and ruthless violence – detention, murder and violation of soverign states in defiance of international law. It was at this hour of struggle that the history of the South Africa, articulating in myriad ways the breadth and depth of participation, combined with skilful execution of the strategy and the tactics to wage the struggle to express a South African culture born of struggle through unity in action.

Each of the pillars of the struggle – mass action – emerged by reflecting the depth of the participation of South Africans in the struggle for the creation of the cohesion of the South African nation, through the United Democratic Front, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, Youth, Students' and Women's organisations; the Underground and armed struggles,

> "MK was not an army against white people; it was, and had to be, an army founded to defend the cohesion of the South African Nation."

and the activities of the South African Communist Party, which were organically linked, low key as they were, effectively in action and solid through a cultural expression steeped in race, gender and class struggles. The unity in action of all these struggle efforts had a ripple effect in terms that their actions sent a clear message to the people that the Movement is not only present but that it is active in ensuring that the South Africa which will emerge, is a South Africa which will nurture quality of life for all South Africans, in terms of its values, culture, heritage and traditions. The cherry on top of the cake was the visible and practical activities of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, all over the world, in support of the freedom struggle as waged by the People of South Africa. The Movement's political activies, which, through action reflected the aspirtions of the people, also influenced the manner of action and creativity of the cultural and creative sectors of the South African Nation.

The organisations of the arts: Congress of South African Writers, the South African Music Association, Performing Arts Workers Equity and

> "Do art forms have a didactic role? Do art forms entertain and set emotions alight, asking them who are you, do you know you, and do you know where you belong? Do they have the potential to mobilise masses of people?"

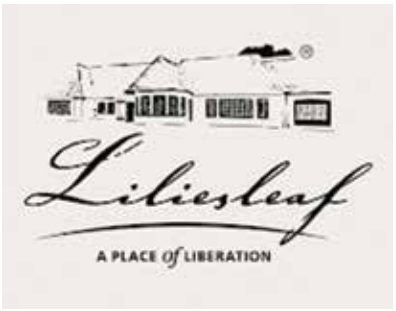
the Arts and Culture Community Centres: the Alexandra Arts Centre, Fuba, Funda, the Market Theatre, Dorkay House and other similar intiatives throughout the length and breadth of our country took off as if a storm, into the heart of the nation. These followed on from the many efforts of the ANC at Arts and Culture of the fifties and sixties, and the early seventies of the Culcom days of the Black Consciousness Movement which also inspired arts and culture activity in the country, especially poetry.

Are these the stuff whose content and fibre have the means to penetrate into the minds, spirit and emotions of a people? In other words, do they penetrate into that place where there is consciousness, where reasoning and emotions reside, where decisions do anchor and find expression? Do art forms have a didactic role? Do art forms entertain and set emotions alight, asking them who are you, do you know you, and do you know where you belong? Do they have the potential to mobilise masses of people? Did the Amandla Cultural Ensemble mobilise the world against the apartheid culture, was it able to inspire people, who were far flung from South Africa, not only to be curious, even if that is important, but did it move them to action? Did the revolutionary songs and the toyi toyi dance shape defiance and move people to action?

Collectively, was this the expression of a revolutionary culture, which influenced masses of people to take a united whole, for action, to risk their lives, for a humane society and nation to emerge?

The five major cultural summits which were held in Nigeria 1977 (Festac) Botswana 1982 (Culture and Resistance), Netherlands 1987 (Culture in Another SouthAfrica), Britain1989 (Zabalaza), South Africa 1993 (Culture and Development) did set the reference point for an Arts and Culture discourse in our country. All of these cultural and artistic activities which were organised by South African cultural workers, did not only emerge but had as their objective to conscientise and encourage resistence and action against the onslaught of the apartheid regime. ■

Liliesleaf remembers the role of the GDR in supporting MK



2019 marks the centenary of the murder of Rosa Luxemburg by far right soldiers during Germany's first democratic revolution, at the end of the First World War. Her legacy as a democratic socialist, a campaigner for international solidarity, and against war and colonialism, as well as being a strong woman and feminist, guides us in our work around the world, especially in the South African context – where the struggle for liberation took longer and was more brutal than in most of the world. Rosa Luxemburg's belief in a democratic socialist revolutionary transformation inspired many South Africans throughout the 20th century. While many other socialist theorist or models are now rightly discredited, her approach can still inform our thinking and action. Mostly, it is up to us to ensure that the ideas of the 20th Century revolutionaries that fought for a more just and democratic world and against the oppression of colonialism are not forgotten.

The Liliesleaf Foundation has taken important steps to preserve the "memory against forgetting". It is important in the current situation of South Africa to remember to what extent the struggle against apartheid was embedded in the global context, and solidarity with the oppressed majority became a cross-cutting unifying theme between civil society activists across the world, even transgressing the boundaries of the cold war. It was a global movement full of contradictions but with a shared vision: helping the liberation of the South African people. Of course, the most important action was taken by South Africans in and around South Africa.

The "Rivonia Generation" as they can be called, are shining examples of those decades of resistance against evil. The strategic decision to form an underground army and to arm the struggle was taken in light of the radicalisation of the apartheid state. The formation of uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the armed wing of the African National Congress, was the first serious step to challenge the apartheid military and security services. It was also the acknowledgement that peaceful transformation of a regime that was committing human rights violations on such a large scale could not be expected. The Rivonia Trial and everything that followed were a watershed in South African history.

I would like to focus on a large scale research and remembrance project which The Rosa Luxemburg Foundation has sponsored. For years, we were impressed with the work Liliesleaf was doing with regards to the support Norway and Sweden gave to the struggle, in particular the role of a great leader like Olof Palme. But, there was a topic that was closer to home. While in the context of the cold war, West German civil society had been very supportive to the ANC, it was East Germany that gave strong ideological and material support to uMkhonto we Sizwe in exile, and to the cause of the ANC. It remains a reason to be ashamed how long and how intensely West Germany collaborated with the apartheid regime. Thus we undertook the remembrance project to gather the broadest possible collection of oral history in South Africa and Germany, of people who were active in supporting the ANC and the roughly 2000 fighters in exile who went through military training in East Germany. *Sechaba*, the magazine of the ANC in exile, was printed in the GDR.

> "The struggle against apartheid was embedded in the global context, and solidarity with the oppressed majority became a cross-cutting unifying theme between civil society activists across the world, even transgressing the boundaries of the cold war."

Of course, it remains a paradox: While denying its citizens democratic and human rights at home, the GDR supported the liberation struggle abroad. Just as South Africa embarked on its way to democracy, the people of the GDR created a democracy themselves. Those contradictions form part of our history and memory. The role of the GDR and her people, with regard to the liberation in South Africa, is an important one and lessons can be learned from it, especially when put in context of her demise as well. The struggle for democracy is inseparable and not just one-sided. We hope that further research in the broader context of the armed struggle and international solidarity can be conducted in the future.

The 20th Century shows the interconnectivity of the fight for liberation and social justice, from Rosa Luxemburg to Mama Albertina Sisulu. Many of those fights are still to be continued into the 21 Century. What we can learn from the 20th Century, is that international solidarity remains the single necessary ingredient of this. ■

Jan Leidecker, Director of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Southern Africa Office

BETWEEN SETBACKS AND INNATE POTENTIAL

The African Union and the African Security Landscape

The funds for implementing regional peace and security initiatives in Africa are all dependent on foreign partners who have to approve of the initiatives to ensure that they dovetail with their policies and visions for Africa.

By Bhaso Ndzendze and Emmanuel Matambo

Facing the continued rampage of conflict in the continent in places such as Libya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and the Sahel, and also compelled by its foundational role and potential, the African Union (AU) has tasked itself with ending conflicts in the continent. Indeed, "the vision of a conflict-free Africa constitutes one of the bedrocks of the AU [Agenda] 2063 articulated in May 2013, and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies is among the new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations in September 2015."[1] The organisation's record has been mixed, with victories in some instances (Burundi, Comoros), and seemingly unsuccessful forays in others (Somalia, Darfur), while stalemates also abound (e.g., the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic).

This article reviews the organisation's work, and areas of strength and weakness. It will firstly give an overview of the AU's security structures and functions as well as its history of involvement in remedying conflicts throughout the continent with an aim of distilling what accounts for the success in the successful case studies as well as what has held it back in those cases where it has encountered and continues to encounter difficulty. Many of these are rooted in the structure of the AU; characterised by sound policies and strategy documentation, the AU is failed by its lack of application. Thus, any hopes of empowering the AU beyond its current, almost *ad hoc* modus operandi in security matters will require concerted overhaul and reform within the countries and the regions. But there are already some early indicators that it may be moving towards this. Chief among these are two factors: there is the rise of a new crop of leaders on the continent, who also appear eager to be accountable to civil society; along with what we may term "conflict exhaustion". This may be the beginning of a process of renewal for what is Africa's most universally legitimate body.

Overview

The transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union meant not only a shift in nomenclature, but also an intensification in the amount of work the new organisation saw for itself; not only did it task itself with intensifying the provision of security in the continent, it also saw an ideological shift from non-interference to non-indifference.[2] This shift was substantial and arguably a germane principle that responded to allegations that non-interference was at variance with the norm of the responsibility to protect (R2P) which the AU adopted.[3] The African Union has conflict management and resolution mechanisms that guide its undertakings. It is further guided by the principles and objectives stipulated in its Charter. Poverty and underdevelopment are key to the prevalence of conflict and instability in the region, apart from the structural weakness of the African state.

"There is the rise of a new crop of leaders on the continent, who also appear eager to be accountable to civil society; along with what we may term "conflict exhaustion".

The AU's member states, bureaucrats, and external donor states have since busied themselves with building a set of institutions and instruments – commonly referred to as the "African Peace and Security Architecture" (APSA) – that would enable the AU to play a much greater role in conflict management. APSA includes three instruments for conflict prevention: conflict management and peace building by the AU; the regional economic communities; and the regional mechanisms. We can note greater involvement by African leaders in fostering peace and security through peace-making and peacekeeping initiatives in the continent, as evidenced by the work of institutions such as the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), whose seats are apportioned per region (with Central Africa having three, Eastern Africa three, Northern Africa two, Southern Africa three, and Western Africa four seats), the AU Panel of the Wise and the evolving AU Standby Force.

The Peace and Security Council and the Panel of the Wise

The PSC is the standing organ of the AU for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. It is a key element of the African Peace and Security Architecture. The PSC was established to be a collective security and 'early warning' arrangement with the ability to facilitate timely and efficient responses to conflict and crisis situations. The PSC's core functions are to conduct early warning and preventive diplomacy, facilitate peace-making, establish peace-support operations and, in certain circumstances, recommend intervention in member states to promote peace, security and stability. The PSC also works in support of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction efforts as well as humanitarian action and disaster management.

The PSC's authority derives from the Constitutive Act together with Article 2 of the 2002 Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and in turn its decision making body are the heads of state and government of the 15 members who compose it. Of these, ten are elected to a two-year period, whereas five to a three-year period (according to the text of the Protocol, this is to ensure continuity).[4]

The PSC wields deployment decision making abilities over the nascent African Standing Force. The ASF is an attempt to link the African Union, regional organisations and member states in the assembly of a Pan-African peacekeeping force. Examples of the ASF include regional brigades such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's East Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG) and the Economic Community for West

African States' Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), among others. When it comes to regional efforts towards implementing the ASF agenda, the East African and West African regions score highly. Despite milestone achievements, however, there is the blight of the conflict in the Horn of Africa and the Mano River Region. Progress has been made by SADC in its efforts towards establishing the SADC Standby Brigade (SADCBRIG). It appears that it has been easier for sub-regions to establish standby forces than for the African Union to do so at the continental level.

The Panel of the Wise is another component of the APSA. It was inaugurated on 18 December 2007. The Panel was established to support the PSC and the Chairperson of the AU Commission in their efforts in the areas of conflict prevention, promotion and the maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa. The members of the Panel are respected and eminent political leaders from the continent with first-hand experience and expertise not only with conflict resolution, but also the moral and thought leadership that could buoy ideas into application.

The AU and Interventions

One of the issues facing the AU has been the debate about the Responsibility to Protect. African regional organisations are arguably the best-suited agents to intervene in conflicts in the continent since they are bound to be more affected security-wise if they do not intervene. This turns the national sovereignty argument on its head somewhat; it is in the interest of regional players to see to the stability in their region and indeed they have set precedents which make it justifiable to intervene, in instances where the state is unable or unwilling to ensure the security of its people. Further, these regional entities are better positioned to possess knowledge of the local terrain and political dynamics, and of the challenges inherent in selling the concept to national governments and regional organisations.

The African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB) was deployed in April 2003 during the Burundian Civil War and serves as the first case of African peacekeeping which came at a time when international political will towards peacekeeping in Africa was somewhat scarce.[5] It was composed of troops from South Africa, Mozambique and Ethiopia, and remained in the country for a year, when it was replaced by the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB). The official transfer of authority from AMIB to ONUB took place on June 1, 2004. The South African component of the force remained and was formed into the African Union Special Task Force (AU STF). AMIB for many serves as the epitome of African readiness to conduct peacekeeping in the context of the UN's unwillingness or inability.[6] Overall, success in peacekeeping missions and post-conflict reconstruction has proved an onerous yet possible task.

> "Not only did it task itself with intensifying the provision of security in the continent, it also saw an ideological shift from non-interference to non-indifference."

The African Union was also active in managing and resolving conflicts in the Comoros which were caused by secessionism. The three main islands (Anjouan, Grand Comore and Moheli) showed major differences economically and politically. Anjouan in particular cited lack of equal distribution of international grants by the central government in Moroni. This resulted in the call for secession in 1997 – this was perhaps the earliest test to which the AU responded, and arguably without Comoros, Burundi would not have been possible.

> "The PSC also works in support of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction efforts as well as humanitarian action and disaster management."

Through negotiations and mediations, beginning in 2002, the African Union played an active role in managing what could have transpired from a crisis into a conflict in the Comoros. The continental body helped resolve the conflict by negotiating between the central government and the island of Anjouan which resulted in agreements contained in the Antananarivo and Fomboni Agreements. The African Union sent special envoys and helped in facilitating talks between the islands of Anjouan, Moheli and the Central Government (Cherotich, 2010). There was recurrence of conflict when Colonel Mohamed Bacar in 2007 refused to step down after his term had come to an end, which saw an AU-France joint intervention. The approaches taken included the use of the African Union Electoral and Security Assistance Mission to the Comoros (MAES), negotiations and mediations as well as the joint 'Operation Democracy'. The African Union also had to send an observer mission to monitor and ensure that democratic elections were being held.

The AU, therefore, has a definite and strong precedent, especially considering its early phase and the amount of challenges it has faced. Nevertheless, the organisation is still replete with some weaknesses which have limited its potential. These are in turn discussed below.

Some Deficiencies of the AU

The AU faced major obstacles during its first decade of existence. As a result, its practical achievements fell short of its declarations of intent; its leaders struggled to keep the organisation working effectively and efficiently and its member states were often divided over how to respond to Africa's conflicts. From a Council on Foreign Relations assessment, the AU's deficiencies stem from three problems.

First, the AU attempted to

refashion the continent's peace and security architecture at a time when crises and armed conflicts engulfed much of Africa. Local governments and external donors were thus forced "to build a fire brigade while the [neighborhood] burns." Second, the AU took on formidable conflict management challenges without possessing any big sticks or many tasty carrots. It thus lacked sources of leverage crucial for resolving armed conflicts. Third, AU reform efforts became entangled in broader debates about the appropriate relationships between the United Nations and regional organizations.[7]

These coincided with the AU's thin funding base. For example, as seen in May 2004, AMIB was replaced by the United Nations Mission in Burundi and while we can conclude that collaboration of the UN and the AU in Burundi witnessed improvements in coordination and delivery, it was also symptomatic of the AU's financial strains. This points, then, to the second issue raised above: the AU's lack of incentive mechanisms for states to 'play along' with its designs and give up something of their sovereignty. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is an example of this.

IGAD was established in 1996 and since 2006 has been seen as elemental for the AU's efforts in Somalia, and its role in the Somalia and Sudan conflicts almost indispensable, on paper at least. However, some are sceptical about its effectiveness, arguing that it is one of the weakest links in the African peace and security architecture. Sudan (whose leader has been referred to the International Criminal Court) is one major hindrance to IGAD's embracing of R2P given the country's "vociferous opposition to interference in matters of state sovereignty."[8] Despite the lack of explicit mention of R2P in IGAD documents, there have been moves towards affirmation of R2P principles by IGAD, as a result of concerted advocacy by civil society in the Horn of Africa. The leadership would appear to be the only major obstacle to its full empowerment for intervention.

Further, another weakness of the AU is the prevalence of ill-defined

> "AMIB for many serves as the epitome of African readiness to conduct peacekeeping in the context of the UN's unwillingness or inability."

objectives due to states pulling in different directions. As a result, it has had to learn by doing. As Kajee (2011) argues, "the international community abrogated its responsibility to protect Darfurians from 2003 to 2005 because of a weakly mandated peacekeeping mission. Earlier peacekeeping intervention in Darfur, specifically the African Union Missions in Sudan (AMIS I and II), have been renowned for their weak mandates, inadequate resources and small stature which contributed to fatalities of the peacekeeping mission and failure to achieve set objectives."

Further, as the Kagame Report (2017: 4) notes, the AU is in a state of financial inadequacy, with its ambitions far exceeding its financial capabilities at the present. Ani and Matambo have also noted that the funds for implementing regional peace and security initiatives in Africa are all dependent on foreign partners who have to approve of the initiatives to ensure that they dovetail with their policies and visions for Africa."[9] One of the more immediate side effects of this reality is that it creates a breech into which operation or function should be better funded. Non-African actors might step in, thereby vitiating prospects for realising the ideals of African solutions to African problems. As will be discussed below, this is an issue which can be remedied in the

> "The AU is in a state of financial inadequacy, with its ambitions far exceeding its financial capabilities at the present."

short-term with an itemised, outcome-based utilisation of some of the newcomers on the continent such as Turkey, the United Arab Emirates as well as some traditional but resurgent players such as China, India and Russia.

A final AU deficiency has been its dependence on personages. Due to the relatively ad hoc nature of its operation – stemming from the lack of enforcement mechanisms – or perhaps as is the nature of institutions in general, the AU has registered uneven success rates depending on who occupies which seats, either at the AU itself or in the 54 capitals; for example, enthusiasm about NEPAD, with all that it encompassed, would appear to have dissapated when South African president Thabo Mbeki stepped down. This essentially means that the fate of the policies generally relies on the individuals' forces of personality and capacity for vision implementation. This could render the AU somewhat dependent on there being the right people at the right time. This is seen in the attachment of names of leaders to its apparatus and documentation, including the Kagame Report itself, along with the near equivalence of the African Renaissance with the former president.

Yet the AU maintains a number of strengths which could be leveraged both for enhancing the institution, and for the initiation of new pathways.

The AU's Path to Renewal?

Chapter VIII of the UN Charter grants much scope and role for regional organisations in conflict management. This grants the AU immense legitimacy; most probably no other organisation outside of the UN itself enjoys greater legitimacy for security provision on the continent. This has largely been endorsed by the international community. It is a major strength for the AU, as it places on African leadership the right and burden to shape or shrink from the security concerns confronting the continent. Article 52 in this Chapter states that

Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace

and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations.

The criteria – consistency with UN principles and purposes – are met by the AU as its end goals are consistent with what the body was envisioned to bring about in the wake of the Second World War. This lends a great deal of credibility to the AU and the regional institutions dealt with in preceding sections.

The AU has also entered into strategic partnerships with countries and bodies that, for their own reasons of national interest, are invested in a more secure Africa. These include the European Union, China, and the US along with some other new actors such as Turkey, India and the United Arab Emirates who have shown interest in the Horn of Africa, which is in the Middle East's neighbourhood, as well as on crucial trade routes in the Indian Ocean. These partnerships could be used strategically in the short term, with item-based cooperation based on the AU's own initiative and diagnostics of problems on the ground. As one US study observes: "As Chinese and Indian influence spreads and explicitly challenges the US development model, Africa is an arena of intensifying great power rivalry. And, critically, Africa remains the major epicentre for mass atrocities as well as a potential source of transcontinental health pandemics. Consequently, stabilizing the continent should be a core US policy goal".[10]

Furthermore, the AU's plans have been stifled by the presence of autocratic regimes, eager to avoid bolstering the organisation, whose aims are to advance not only security but also democracy, which they find anathema. While still populated by undemocratic leaders, the continent has also seen sweeping transformations in leadership; Burkina Faso and the Gambia have been the most recent democratisers of the past few years, and removal from power of presidents past their term limits in Zimbabwe and Angola has taken place – meaning there are new leaders

> "It is the organisation with exclusive and near-total representation of the African continent."

eager to style themselves as democrats. This, combined with the conflict exhaustion among the populace, could be a budding strength which could be used for reforming the AU.

Some scholars have argued that the combination of these factors could be the critical enabler needed for the reform to take place. For example, Ebo and Powel (2011) discussed the concept of security sector reform, and called for multilateralism of "the people to drive the agenda instead of multilateralism of the states." They also discussed what they perceived to be the shift from state-centric and territorial security towards notions of human security which include economic, political and environmental security of all citizens. They highlight the changing nature of SSR – "towards more emphasis on poverty reduction, good governance, civil-military relations and increased confidence in state security institutions" (Ebo and Powel, 2011). Essentially, their work draws attention to the need for non-state actors to play prominent roles in SSR programmes, hence the

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notions of local ownership and broad-based participation.

This rise in democratic leadership means that when the PSC is filled with mostly democratic heads of state and government, one of the routes which could be taken is the reforming of the PSC and removing some of the obstacles for initiative (such as the veto powers, which are often used by states which seek to block important resolutions).

Finally, the AU has an indispensable role in the African security landscape in that, minimally, it serves an epistemic purpose because it is the organisation with exclusive and near-total representation of the African continent. Therefore, it is a conduit for understanding conflicts throughout the regions within the continent and serves as a best practices transmitter. In this way, it is an informational coordinator that transfers useful knowledge derived from each conflict and is a forewarning for what to avoid and to note what works best under specific conditions. Further, and if nothing else, "at least [the] AU raises the alarm for the international community to intervene."[11] ■

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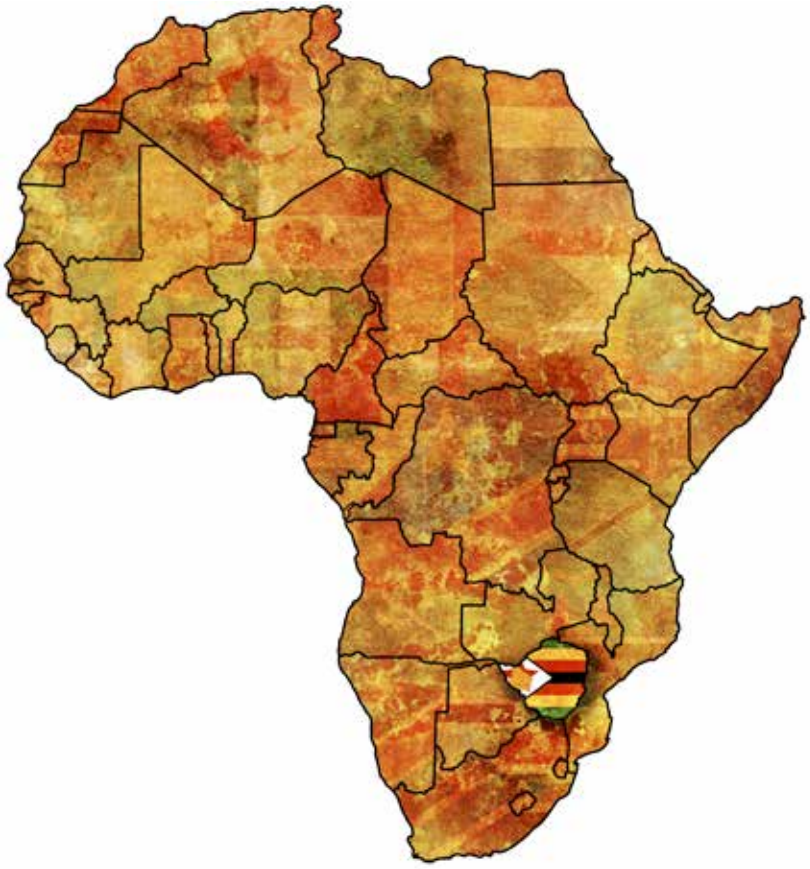
Why Zimbabwe should accede to the African Peer Review Mechanism



Moving from 6 founding member States in 2003 to 37 in September 2018 on a voluntary basis demonstrates the willingness of African Heads of States and Governments to improve their governance.

By Lennon Monyae

This article discusses some factors that may benefit Zimbabwe if it pays more attention to Pan-African multilateral institutions such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

Zimbabwe's domestic and foreign policy in the period following the watershed July 2018 Presidential elections, will be imperative in generating a positive perception for Zimbabwe, and ease the country out of the turbulence of the previous regime's legacy that had crippled the economy and subsequently its people. Since the departure of Former President Robert Mugabe, the world is optimistic about Zimbabwe's economic recovery and possible increased international relations participation. The landmark land redistribution of the 2000s, the political violence, the attacks on the fundamental political, democratic and human rights of ordinary citizens and the steady erosion of the public service was used by the European Union as well as the USA to impose sanctions on Zimbabwe. This had a catastrophic impact on the Zimbabwean economy and the working and living conditions of its people.

Despite post-election violence which claimed the lives of 6 Zimbabweans, all election observers including the AU Election Observer Mission (AUEOM) led by Hailemariam Desalegn Boshe, former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, assisted by Minata Samate Cessouma, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, declared the election relatively peaceful and well-administered.

The endorsement by the AU and other international election observers thus enabled Zimbabwe to reclaim its space as an important player in the African and the international arena. The country can join the APRM as a powerful turnaround from governance regression. In fact, the act of signing of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) by Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa on 21 March 2018 on the sidelines of the recent African Union (AU) Extraordinary Summit held in Kigali, Rwanda, is a sign of the new government's commitment to upholding the values

of good governance. Consequently, Zimbabwe's accession to the APRM will indeed serve as a paradigm shift from prior isolation to reintegration with the global community vis-a-via the quest for good governance on the African Continent.

From an optimistic and enthusiastic young African's vantage point, Zimbabwe's agreement to accede to the objectives of the APRM will be a major step in its evolution into reintegration and globalised social development. It will also set Zimbabwe on the right path towards sound governance and regulation, a prerequisite for rapid socioeconomic development.

Prerequisites for Social and Economic Development

Statistics from the AU Peace and Security Council and research institutions such as the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution and Disputes, the Centre for Systemic Peace, the Uppsala Conflict Data Project and the Institute of Security Studies all allude to the 1980s as Africa's lost decade. However, the Mo Ibrahim Governance Index on good governance supports Africa's positive outlook by explaining that in the past 10 years (2007-2017), 40 African countries have improved in overall governance. Without a doubt, the positive trend is fuelled by accelerated progress in inclusive participation with free and fair elections as a major indicator, the transparent exercise of democracy and the valuing of strong democratic institutions and structures.

It is widely accepted that peace and security form a vital foundation for good governance which can be a platform for economic growth and development. In addition, developing countries in Africa and the world at large have clearly illustrated that good governance is critically important for transformational and sustainable economic development. The APRM as an institution has promoted good governance on the continent for 15 years and has demonstrated the exponential benefits that come with acceding to the APRM. Member States use the country review reports from the peer reviews to leverage further bi- and multi-lateral agreements and assess their own progress in all areas of governance.

President Adama Barrow of the Gambia, in acceding to the APRM mandate, provided a view of Gambia's governance following the forced removal of the previous leader, Yahya Jammeh. In so doing the government of President Barrow is poised to build from a clean slate and a position of knowledge of their strengths and challenges.

The number of African countries voluntarily joining the APRM has exponentially increased. In 2017, President Hage Geingob of Namibia acceded to APRM. Botswana, Africa's shining example and beacon of hope in good governance has indicated its imminent accession to the APRM. These are Zimbabwe's neighbours who have identified the APRM as a process that can add value to their quest for improved governance.

> "For Zimbabwe's new government, national reconciliation must be a priority for ensuring social cohesion."

The increase in African sovereign leaders identifying the peer review process as a governmental priority is indicative of governments' and leaders' political will to focus on the improvement of their people's lives, and transparency, which richly affects confidence and investment. Good governance for Zimbabwe will usher in rapid economic development as it has done for most of its peers. If the APRM's recommendations are adequately implemented in Zimbabwe it will most likely join countries like Ghana, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Senegal and Tanzania as Africa's fast-growing economies.

The current government led by President Mnangagwa has already launched the, "Zimbabwe is open for business" campaign and this mantra should not be relegated to lip-service. Harare should be more active in multilateral governance platforms such as the APRM to effectively transform rhetoric into practical steps that will boost investors' confidence and international communities' trust in the country's intentions to become a more inclusive society.

About the APRM

The Africa Peer Review Mechanism is a Specialised Agency of the African Union (AU), and was initiated in 2002 and established in 2003 by the AU in the framework of the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It is widely heralded as the jewel in Africa's crown for its pioneering initiative of being the only governance self-assessment and peer review system in the world.

The Mechanism is founded on 4 thematic areas, namely: Democracy and Political Governance; Economic Governance and Management; Corporate Governance; and Sustainable Socio-economic Development. Reviews conducted by the APRM vary depending on the circumstances of the country to be reviewed. They are as follows:

- Base Review – carried out immediately after a country becomes a member of the APRM;
- Periodic Review every four years;
- Requested Review – requested by the member country itself outside the framework of mandated reviews;
- A Review commissioned by the APR Forum (highest decision-making body of the APRM) when there are early signs of pending political and economic unrest.

The APR Forum of Heads of State and Government adopted the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and the APRM Statute at the 25th Summit of the APR Forum held in Nairobi, Kenya. This policy framework currently guides the operational trajectory of the mechanism. In addition, in 2017, the 28th AU Assembly of Heads of States and Government further extended the APRM's mandate to include tracking of the implementation and overseeing the continent's key governance initiatives. Moreover, the AU Assembly extended the mandate of the APRM to include monitoring of the implementation of the African Union

(AU) Agenda 2063 and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Agenda 2030. The APRM is a tool for sharing experiences, reinforcing best practices, identifying deficiencies, and assessing capacity-building needs to foster policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration.

APRM Member States participate in the self-assessment of all branches of government – executive, legislative and judicial – as well as the private sector, civil society and the media. The APRM Review Process gives member states a space for national dialogue on governance and socio-economic indicators and an opportunity to build consensus on the way forward. Participation in the APRM remains voluntary; an interested country must volunteer to be reviewed by acceding to the APRM Mandate and signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Continental Secretariat based in Midrand, South Africa. The preamble of the APRM Statute highlights this "voluntary accession", as a founding principal which makes the APRM unique.

The Benefits of Joining the APRM

The important benefit of joining the APRM is the Country Self-Assessment Process. A Country Self-Assessment Report is drafted by a board church of stakeholders such as trade unions, civil society, political parties, youth and women represented in the APRM National Governing Council (NGC). The NGC is the national statutory arm of the APRM which leads and supports domestic interests of all citizens. Its mandate is to project the voice of the people. In addition, the consultative nature required in drafting the self-assessment report means that citizens are afforded the opportunity to paint a true picture of the country. This then becomes a mirror for ordinary people to reflect, comment and add value to national governance.

Those who form part of the APRM have procedural and reflective governance self-assessment exercises that are outlined below:

1. Self-Reflection

When an AU Member State joins the APRM, it is expected to independently complete the APR Self-Assessment Questionnaire which gathers inputs from all stakeholders. A draft paper outlining the nation's issues and a National Programme of Action (NPoA) with clear steps and guidelines on how it plans to conform to APRM's codes and standards emanating from international legal instruments. The Country Review Team is then set up to write a report outlining issues to be focused on during the review mission, which usually lasts for approximately three weeks.

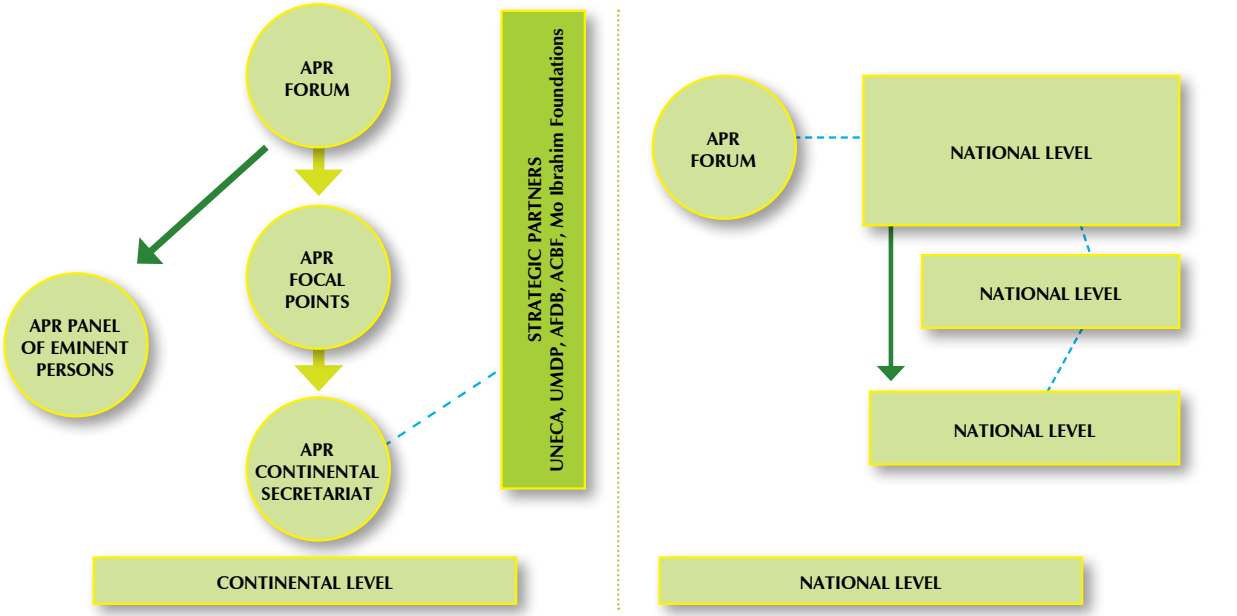
Self-reflection is of utmost importance to any nation but produces even richer results when paired with the aims of the APRM. Post-2018, Zimbabwe will have to have an honest view and reflection of the past, and then plot a route towards a prosperous future. The APRM process can potentially expedite this purpose.

A key benefit of the APRM is that it allows participating countries to not only take account of their own policies and practices, and monitor progress towards improvements, but also to learn from other African countries that have successfully implemented policies that have driven their growth.

2. Inclusive Participation

For the APRM to be effective, it requires the participation of all stakeholders in the country, including government, political parties, parliament, NGOs, private sector, academia, women's groups, youth groups, trade unions and the community at large. This is because the APRM's philosophy is grounded in inclusive participation.

For Zimbabwe's new government, national reconciliation must be a priority for ensuring social cohesion.



APRM Governance Structure

Again, the APRM can serve as a vehicle to usher in dialogue on difficult issues. For example, the Liberia review mission gave opportunities to communities affected by civil war to talk about their experiences and most importantly to communicate with the government on their wishes.

3. Peer- Learning

Peer reviewed countries usually take lessons from the APRM Report and develop NPOAS which become part of their National Development Plans. Zimbabwe's new leadership will be focused on mapping out a new path for the country. In this case, APRM can be a valued addition to this process.

Zimbabweans are spread all over the world in positions of power and influence. If Zimbabwe were able to harness the power of their human capital in the diaspora, they could expand their potential output including attracting foreign investments. Countries like Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya and South Africa have a large diaspora community; their review reports can shed light into how Harare can better manage her relations with citizens abroad.

The challenge for Zimbabwe is the efficient and profitable use of its resources and businesses to uplift generations who have been locked into poverty. Economic growth and development is essential for the country to successfully get its population out of poverty. APRM's Corporate Governance standards and codes can be harnessed with increased Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) on the continent. Zimbabwe can be rebuilt, and her industries and businesses will thrive as the country is home to vast mineral resources with untapped platinum and gold reserves. In fact, Zimbabwe according to the latest audit has 92 recorded State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and 70% of them are technically insolvent.

4. Peer Review

The Peer Review takes place at the level of the APR Forum, using the APR panel's report on the team's findings as a basis. The APR Forum made up of APRM Heads of States meets annually to discuss governance issues in APRM reviewed countries. The last APR Forum witnessed President Museveni of Uganda accounting for the governance developments in his country. This means that APRM's participating heads of states and Governments not only account to their citizens, they also receive guidance from fellow Heads of States and governments in the spirit of Pan-Africanism.

5. Early Warning Conflict Prevention

APRM Country Review Reports have previously served as early warning conflict prevention tools for reviewed countries. The APRM is currently working on a joint project with the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) with the aim of Silencing the Guns by 2020 (based on the Agenda 2063 roadmap). Countries that have undergone APRM review processes can be assisted in implementing their NPoAs to quell the underlying causes of looming crises.

> "The Liberia review mission gave opportunities to communities affected by civil war to talk about their experiences and most importantly to communicate with the government on their wishes."

Zimbabwe is not immune to violent conflict given the levels of polarisation which have developed from electoral disputes and ethnic tensions. The early warning system can assist Zimbabwe to identify possible future conflict areas and with the assistance of the APRM take steps to prevent such conflicts from arising.

6. African Union Agenda 2063, United Nations Agenda 2030 (SDGs) (APRM Expanded Mandate)

The Proposed transformation of the AU led by President of Rwanda and current AU Chairperson, Paul Kagame, is outlined in the AU January 2017 report entitled, "The Imperative to Strengthen our Union: Report on the Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reform of the African Union" (commonly known as the "Kagame Report"). In an AU Assembly Decision /AU/Dec.631(XXVIII) on the Revitalisation of the APRM during the 28th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 30 - 31 January 2017, it was recommended that the APRM be strengthened to monitor and evaluate the implementation of AU Agenda 2063 and UN SDGs 2030 as well as track and monitor the implementation of key governance areas on the continent.

Conclusion

Since the launch of the APRM in 2003, many positive developments have emerged from this African good governance institution. Moving from 6 founding member States in 2003 to 37 in September 2018 on a voluntary basis demonstrates the willingness of African Heads of States and Governments to improve their governance. As the Mechanism celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2018 with a goal of universal accession of all AU Member States, Zimbabwe has an ideal opportunity to realign its governance standards with global accepted governance standards by joining the APRM. Many States have come from even worse conditions only to turn their societies around by facing their sometimes very painful realities in order to start with a solid and stable foundation based on truth. From this base, infrastructure, economic and social development is easier because of the constant collaboration and objectivity of important institutions such as the APRM.

The majority of APRM founding members such as Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Algeria have started presenting themselves for second generation reviews. Kenya and Uganda are pioneers, having undertaken second generation reviews. Egypt, Lesotho, Mozambique and Cote d'Ivoire have also indicated their willingness to undergo reviews, a key indication of the trust that member States have in the mechanism. The timing seems perfect for Zimbabwe to join the APRM family. ■

Harnessing the Fourth Industrial Revolution to advance the SDGs in Africa

By Department of Science and Technology

The United Nations Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), agreed upon in September 2016, provide us with a framework of 17 goals, with 169 targets, developed in order to bring together global efforts towards ending poverty within 15 years. The SDGs present us with a vision for achieving "a better, more equitable world" through sustainable development – using resources, investing, and developing technologies that will enable development in such a way as not to compromise the well-being of future generations.

Not only does the agenda intend to be fully inclusive, and to "leave no one behind" but also urgent – 2030 in only just around the corner!

The Goals are strongly inter-linked and inter-dependent and they can be grouped in a number ways. For example, issues of women and gender equality are directly, and obviously, relevant to Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17, which are: no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, decent work, clean energy, reduced inequality, peace, justice and strong institutions and partnerships to achieve the goal, respectively.

Similarly, Goal 2, Zero Hunger, cannot be viewed separately from the Goals on poverty (1), health (3), education (4), clean water (6), energy (7), and decent work and economic growth (8), and so on.

To achieve the SDGs, countries will need to bring about major changes in all areas, including health, education, urban and rural environments, use of resources, and many others, and they will need to involve support and funding from all sectors – government, business and community.

Against this complex framework of pressing priorities, the era of digitalisation, often called the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), is upon us. The evolution of digital and cyber-technologies is leading to the rapid re-thinking of processes and new development of machines, to integration of data from widely

varying sources, and creating networks where artificial intelligence and data science are enabling new ways of connecting – the Internet of Things is one expression of this.

For Africa, there is an opportunity to "join the dots" between the SDGS, the 4IR and our position – this is a key moment where the advancing wave of digital and cyber technology, with all of the anticipated intersections, and rapid progress towards greater connectedness, can converge to position Africa in a unique way. Rather than following the same developmental pathways that have already been followed elsewhere, we can seek ways to "leapfrog" forwards by adopting new technologies and adapting them for regional application.

We need to develop the competencies that will enable us to advance our use of digital technologies. We need to continue to expand the connectivity that is at the heart of the digitalisation era – not to reinvent anything, but to customise it for our needs. In addition, we need coordination. Few African countries have developed national coordination and implementation strategies to address the SDGs, nor systems for monitoring progress.

Researchers in Africa are, understandably focussing deliberately and proactively on the Sustainable Development Goals, as they move forward with their research agendas for the 21st century. In fact, nowhere is the research community better linked to the real work of achieving the SDGs than in Africa. It is understood that research should address societal needs, and should be developed and conducted collaboratively with contributions from communities and network partners on the continent. Transdisciplinary approaches are key and can bring people together to work on sustainable development, and Africa's continent-wide networks can provide a mechanism to support this.

The fourth thing we need is skills that will fit with the jobs that people will do in the future – technological skills to enable the use of digital technologies, in the creative industries and design as well as ICT; social skills to provide for future needs in terms of care, education, health and well-being: and cognitive skills to engender critical and creative thinking, self-motivation, and the capacity to learn and re-learn.

New activities such as mobile and social computing, gaming, and the use of smart devices can enable communication, connectedness and, importantly, new ways of working. Africans are already entrepreneurial, and many are "tech-savvy" in a unique way that has grown out of necessity, in a region where land-based communication has often been lacking or inaccessible. Mobile devices are more abundant, and are used more creatively, in Africa than many other regions of the world.

As we move into a 21st century future where 25% of the world's under-25 year old people will be in Africa and seeking a living, the critical contribution we can make is to educate them for self-driven ways to work, and provide them with a globally connected continent. ■

Professor Stephanie Burton is the Vice-Principal, Research and Postgraduate Education at the University of Pretoria.

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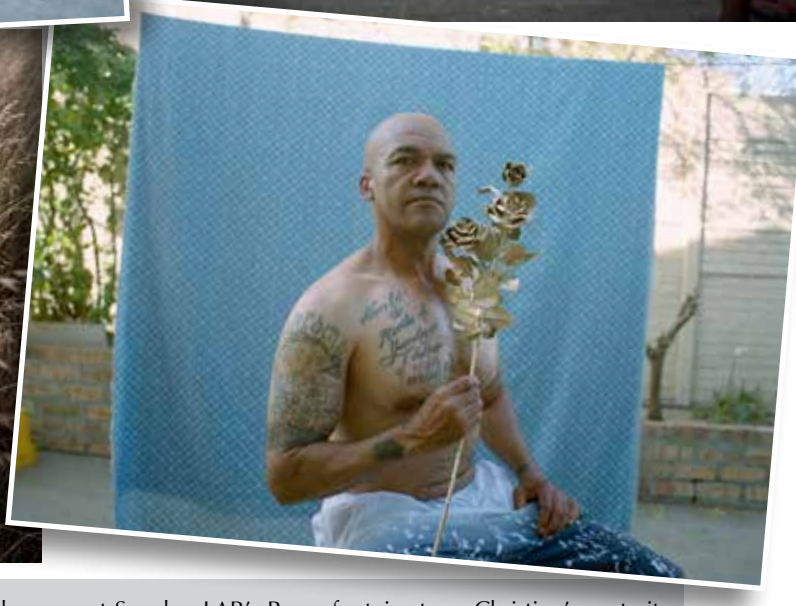
The Editor welcomes contributions that take into account The Thinker's vision of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and caring South Africa. Submissions of poetry and the written word should be brief. For visual material, a high-resolution document is required (300dpi Jpeg). Please send your work electronically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

THROUGH A CREATIVE LENS

By Imraan Christian

Cape Town artist Imraan Christian has paid tribute to the women of the community of Hangberg in Hout Bay with his latest visual art exhibition, Ma se Kinders. It features a series of portraits shot by Christian, as well as a short film, and illustrates some of the community's most pressing challenges, like gangsterism and drugs.

Christian already works closely with the youth in Hangberg on various creative projects to help keep them off the streets and away from drugs and gangs. He has included some residents in the short film, as well as in the portraits.



The exhibition is sponsored by Sneaker Lab, and can be seen at Sneaker LAB's Braamfontein store. Christian's portraits will also be sold from there and all proceeds will be pumped back into uplifting the Hangberg community through various initiatives.

CIVILIAN MILITIA AND THE DEMISE OF THE SOVEREIGN STATE

Is International Law Viable?

Civilian militias are factually capable of engaging in physical conduct with real consequences. Notwithstanding, the effect of their conduct is simply ignored by international law.

By Marcia Williams

The "nation State" is a legally inappropriate juridical structure to guarantee the sustainability of the global legal order, let alone legitimise it.

International law fails to account for the empirical reality of the emergence of private civilian militias that have risen from within the civic society of the nation State. Militia such as Boko Haram govern and control parts of the Sudan and Nigeria; likewise Al-Shabaab in Ethiopia and Eritrea; the self-proclaimed Caliphate of the Islamic State which traverses Iraqi and Syrian Borders; and the 'State within a State' - Hizbollah in Lebanon.

These groups have mobilised armies and usurped state functions within the State and in spite of it. They exercise these functions within their territories to the exclusion of concurrent power held by the normative (formally legal) State. These militias are in fact the real and legitimate powers that exercise the power of government and constitute a *de facto* State. The international legal order perpetuates the proliferation of these *de facto* States in denying their legal capacity and insisting upon the post-colonial State as the only legal person in International Law and international relations.

Legitimacy and statehood

The fiction of the nation-State together with the imprecise features of sovereignty, have impacted on the effectiveness of the substantive law, so as to deprive Statehood and sovereignty of real tangibility and credibility. In turn, international law is unenforceable, ineffective, illegitimate and irrelevant. The friction between normative international law and reality is played out in the menagerie of the rules of self-defence between States and civilian militia. This very contentious issue illustrates the fundamental weakness of the international legal order: the fictions of legal personality and sovereignty as constituted in the State.

Normative narratives obscure the very complex ethical issues that ensue commensurately with civilian militias. To the extent that international law does not exercise recognition of these powers it lacks effective legal authority or jurisdiction in and against civilian militia territories. The power of the normative State and, therefore, the reality of the sovereign State has been de-legitimised by the usurpation of real political and military power by civilian militias who exercise effective and political power within the territories under their control. The fallibility and failure of the normative State in international law is seen in the armed conflict between States and civilian militias where international law simply ceases to be effective law. The reality of the force of civilian militia is ignored in favour of the fictitious sovereign State.

In post-colonial States, where the population is an amalgam of numerous tribes, cultures and languages, the matter of simply defining a State in legal terms has most certainly prejudiced the legitimacy of the domestic and international law and social adherence thereto. Illegitimate Statehood conferred on post-colonial States is a legal fiction, not in the sense of positive law only, but in the technical sense of the term, because these States lack legitimacy and in most instances suffer a democracy deficit.

The illegitimacy of the normative fiction of the sovereign State is obtrusively evident in the emergence of civilian militias. Civilian militias challenge the theory of the super-imposed post-colonial State as a legitimate legal structure. The super-imposition of nation States during de-colonisation is marred by a legitimacy deficit in the sense that obedience to the law and cognisance of it is an organic effect of grass-roots allegiance. This is why we are witnessing and can expect to see an increase of the alternative political person, the civilian militia as a *de facto* State. Inimically, the normative State is not necessarily organic but rather superficially imposed. Within post-colonial States it cannot be presumed that obedience to the law is a result of a legitimate civilian recognition of the State within that legal system.

That civilians foment and legitimise governance and statehood and other forms of political organisation such as civilian militia is realised in the quagmire of the Palestinian quasi-State.

The Palestinian Authority grew out of the Palestine Liberation Organisation – a civilian militia that responded to the legitimacy deficit within the State structure of international Law. The birth of the PLO as a political resistance movement which became a civilian militia has given impetus to subsequent Islamic militant organisations whose followers identify with the religion, sect and sometimes tribe. The Palestinian nationalist discourse has become theocratic and against the secular State in the form of HAMAS. The civilian militia yield more allegiance to the said political organ of the relevant militant organisation, and this merits them with greater legitimacy in the absence of a normative State.

The legitimacy deficit fed into how ISIS/IS was able to shape its own territorial boundaries within Iraq and Syria. In those territories, the effective control was vested in IS and not Iraq or Syria. However, international law took no cognisance of this very protuberant and material fact, instead conceding to wallow in indeterminacy of theory and irrelevance of doctrine over normative fictions and imputation.

Legal personality

The jurisdictional basis for most legal systems is Person and Territory. The international legal system has jurisdiction only by consent over certain categories of legal persons. Jurisdiction, therefore, is not compulsory and applies only to a certain class of persons in certain instances, the first being the State. The State is seen as possessing the most complete legal personality i.e. it is the bearer of all rights and obligations in international law and it is assumed, therefore, that it is the only person that is legally (normatively) capable of engaging in armed attack.

Inversely, the doctrinal or normative assumptions are that non-State actors are not factually capable of engaging in conduct that would warrant an act of self-defence by a State. The legal formalist interpretation is conceptually incapable of allowing for non-State actors as independent persons in self-defence. Law propitiates derivative capacity in order to account for presence in the international relations arena. Their conduct is deemed to be legal fiction animated through imputation – specifically attribution.

Attribution

"Attribution", as an aspect of vicarious liability in private domestic law, is hideously imposed on culpability of State in a criminal context. State and sovereignty as aspects of legal personality have emerged in an incongruent manner. "Attribution" is applied where the conduct of one legal person is imputed to another with legal capacity. The principle made its way into international legal discourse under Article 11 of the Draft Articles on States Responsibility (hereinafter "the Draft Articles") prepared by the International Law Commission. However, the Draft Articles were contemplated in the context of the Private Law of Obligations, not self-defence, which derives in the field of Criminal Law.

Special Rapporteur Roberto Ago commented that attribution is inappropriate for self-defence where the "insurrectional movement… has reached a stage of development making it a separate subject of international law" (Ago:1972). Ago clearly makes the case for the separate legal personality of civilian militias, dispensing with an over-stretched explication of "attribution". Yet in the 1986 International Court of Justice's (hereinafter "ICJ") judgement of *Nicaragua v the United States* (1986), the Court proscribed any legal cognition or capacity in relation to civilian militia. It reasoned that the conduct of civilian militias must be imputed to a State in order to invoke self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. Not only is this fictitious in its very formulation, but the judgment in itself is misread and abused by normative scholars.

Civilian militias are factually capable of engaging in physical conduct with real consequences. Notwithstanding, the effect of their conduct is simply ignored by international law. Ignorance is not bliss in this instance, it is fatal.

Sovereignty

The second constitutive principle of jurisdiction is sovereignty. Sovereignty is an unholy mixture of law and politics and smacks of power politics under the guise of objective law. It is equally as abstract, fictitious and troublesome. Conventionally, sovereignty was recognised and exercised as a result of factual and effective control over a geographical territory. Consequently, juridical rights and obligations followed from exercise of such factual and effective control. The UN Charter has since dissected sovereignty into juridical as negative sovereignty, which is nothing more than a normative fiction, and factual sovereignty as positive. Negative sovereignty is openly political. Contemporary notions of sovereignty have fused and confused the two forms and now a State has normative sovereignty even if it does not have effective sovereignty.

The dualism in sovereignty allows international law to believe in its own objectivity as a science without confronting the reality of the politics of sovereignty. Sovereignty is at most a political concept that cannot claim to be an independent legal principle. Most certainly, when squared against the reality of civilian militias, sovereignty is yet another empty fiction of normative legal theory.

Effective control

Effective control is a precondition for effective and positive sovereignty. However, negative sovereignty seems to have subjugated the effectiveness of positive sovereignty to the realm of its own fictitious domain. When States fail to effectively exercise factual power and control over certain parts of their territory they cease to be a whole sovereign State. They are at most a failed, ineffective or fictitious State.

Domestic analogy

The concepts of legal personality and sovereignty are apprehended more easily, if we compare the International Legal Order to a Domestic Legal Order. Law is derivative of organic society. International law is the macro end-product of an embryonic rule system in micro-social structures. It is an extension of domestic law. International law must have some organic relationship to domestic law and thus it is reasonable and appropriate to compare international law with its originator, domestic law.

The principles of international law

are drawn from domestic law. For example, legal personality, self-defence and sovereignty have corresponding values in domestic law. Sovereignty can be seen as being equivalent to individual liberty and objectivity within the Rule of Law.

In a domestic legal order, the legal persons are both empirically individual and/or normatively vicarious. A vicarious person is a fiction created in domestic legal systems to give singular legal capacity to groups of persons such as charities and companies. In this way, vicarious persons are deemed to have acted in a singular mental capacity and conduct is imputed to them. The real person in domestic law is imbued with normative legal personality as a result of their factual existence. Factual circumstance is the cause for legal circumstance.

Public International law enjoys no such empirical reality. Herein is the beginning of the conundrum. A purely fictitious notion, the State, gives rise to what is erroneously referred to as legal fact, not empirical fact. Fiction dominates international law, not fact.

Factual reality and law

The vast discourse on the debate shows that international law is paralysed on the matter of extra-territorial conduct by civilian militia groups. Journal articles and books present either a normative or empirical proposition, swinging the pendulum between the apologetic restrictive interpretation of self-defence, which would prohibit armed attacks against the said militants, to the empirical which does not prohibit self-defence against them. The debate appears to be circular, relying on interpretation of treaty law or customary international law and shows no sign of escaping this circular narcissism.

Whilst international law debates indulge in the luxury of uncertainty, the case for the irrelevance of international law looms. Take for example the many UN Security Council Resolutions on armed militant groups. The Resolutions have been used both for and against the legal arguments in respect of military action against civilian militia. To say that the law is clear is an apologist under-statement.

Imperatively, the debate shows approaches that are more symptomatic than diagnostic. The theoretical constructs belying international law appear to be the cause of the problem. These can be identified as the fundamental deficiencies in the foundational legal concepts that compose the law of self-defence and sovereignty. If the premise is wrong, then the conclusion is inevitably wrong. The fundamental unit of international law, the State, is in an identity and definitional crisis. There is a conflict in legal theory that can be identified as normative versus the empirical. Are Statehood and sovereignty normative or empirical or both?

Even the over-idealised romanticism of collective self-defense under Chapter VII of the UN Charter provides no respite. Collective self-defence has hardly ever been invoked because of the veto powers of Security Council Members. Again, the contradiction prevails. The UN has no legislative capacity outside of Treaty, yet Chapter VII vests a quasi-judicial discretion within the undemocratic and politicised Security Council. Undemocratically and illegitimately, seven member States decide when to enforce the law and when not to. The process lacks clear objectivity of the Rule of Law and antagonistically feeds arbitrariness into the very same. Not only is international law unable to address the problem, its incapacity to thwart the danger is commission by omission of the furtherance of threats to global peace.

Conclusion

The crisis within the fiction of the nation State is the most fundamental problem in international law. The basic constituent unit of the legal order, the State, is fragmented and fictitious.

While post-Charter international law was conceived in a spirit of promoting peace through consolidation of sovereign States, its purpose contradicts the reality. International law is not addressing the threats to peace and the global order that are presented by civilian militia and failed States. The paralysis may be a commission by omission; it is in fact allowing the proliferation of breaches to peace.

The main reason for the failure is that legal or normative aspects of Statehood and sovereignty have dominated the empirical; there is an absence of nexus between real and ideal in State and sovereignty. The constituting concepts on which international law is premised are faulty. The legal approach cannot be coherently held.

The sustainability of international law urgently and imperatively demands the apprehension of a jurisprudence which colludes between normative and empirical. The monism of the State needs to dissect into a dualism of legal personality so as to legally cognise civilian militia as real participants in the global order. Consequently, the different forms of social governance possessing factual power should be recognised and brought within the Rule of International Law along with the State. The inter-play between International Law and its subjects could then expect to coalesce more viably in manageable international relations. If effectiveness were to be embedded into the criteria for legal personality and sovereignty, legal arguments would broaden beyond the limitation of the monistic State, dispense with the fiction of attribution and draw non-State actors into the playing field of international law. Claims to inviolability of Sovereignty would be validated.

Final Thought

The indictment in this article leads to a more serious and urgent question: Is international law and its States system implicit in the suppression of a Palestinian identity and cause? Palestine and the Palestinian Authority is not a State in normative theory even though it is, empirically and factually. Its limited "recognition" in international law has provided very little respite to the ordinary Palestinian. Has the suppression of identities of ethnic groups within the super-State system in fact been the cause of the rise of civilian militias? The States system in international law has turned on its head: it can no longer claim to be a beacon of peace and order. International law has become a system of global oppression. ■

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