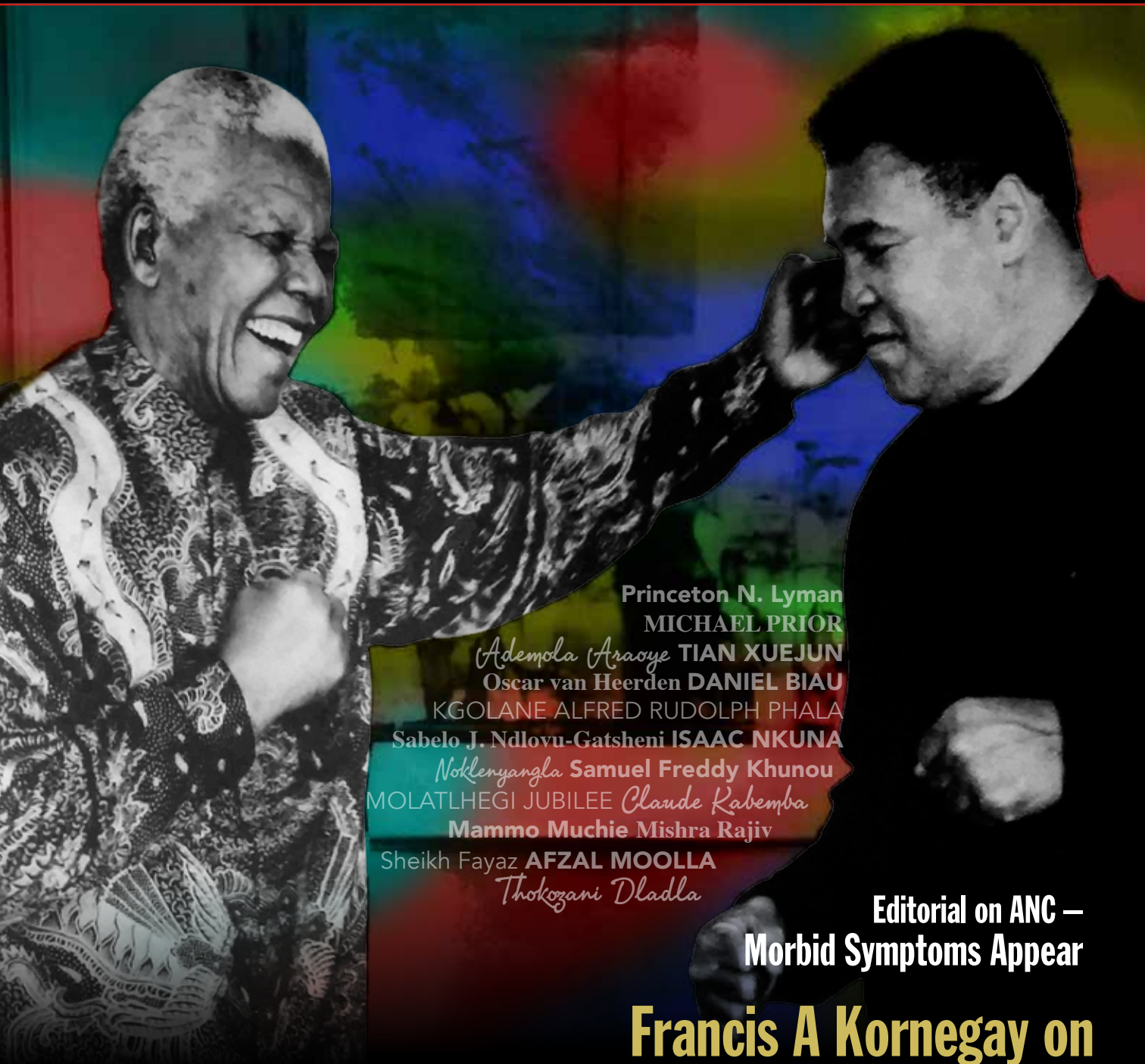


The Thinker

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A PAN-AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS



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Editorial on ANC –
Morbid Symptoms Appear

Francis A Kornegay on

MUHAMMAD ALI

Requiem and Reflection 1942-2016

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NEW JOBS OVER THE NEXT 7 YEARS



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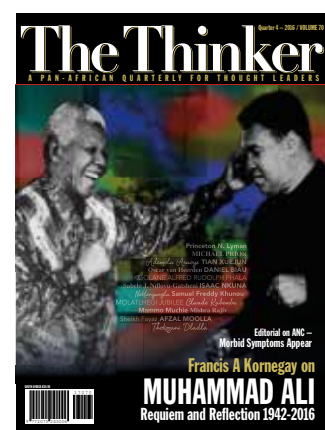
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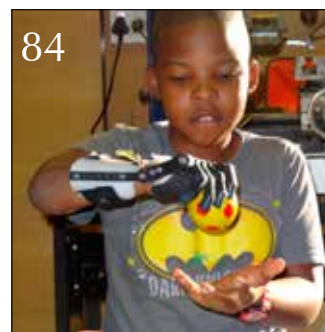
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On the Cover:

*Two iconic Freedom Fighters,
Nelson Mandela and
Muhammed Ali*

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A Great Variety of morbid symptoms appear (Gramsci)



The outcomes of recent local government elections are a telling symptom of the extent to which the ANC has failed to use the levers of power to deliver on its historic mandate of liberating South Africa from the scourges of racialised poverty, inequality, and unemployment. A major normative and philosophical dilemma which the ANC has not adequately addressed is its transition from a liberation movement to a governing party in a modern state system with great social delivery and accountability challenges. The role which the ANC has played in advancing the frontiers of freedom, democracy, non-racialism, non-sexism, and development in South Africa is uncontested and is a noble one to be celebrated as part of the country's collective memory. However, the art of managing the complex policy and institutional machinery of government has often eluded those trusted with ensuring a better life for all, especially the most disadvantaged of our society.

Instead of developing the strategic literacy and tactical intelligence of using the instruments and authority of government to deliver the greatest good for the greatest number of South Africans, there has been a descent into a patrimonial and predatory type of politics which is alien and antithetical to the core values of the movement which the ANC stands for. In this vein, we are reminded of what Antonio Gramsci wrote in his Prison Notebooks: "The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born: in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear."

The election outcomes could thus be seen as an expression of this Gramscian moment where rather

than being front and centre in dealing with the morbid symptoms of South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy, the ANC has in many ways contributed to their multiplication in the form of factionalism, corruption, abuse of public trust, wastage of resources, lack of accountability, poor governance and so on. And herein lies a major conundrum for the ANC: that is its ability to constantly renew and reproduce itself as a political party on the one hand; and to promote an organic ideological dialectic in its Alliance with COSATU and the SACP on the other. On both fronts there has been political decay and an atrophy of ideas in generating the necessary balance of forces for progressive change within the state and society at large.

Indeed, it can be argued that the recent fractious nature of the Alliance and the creeping organisational and policy differences have had a direct bearing on the ANC's decline as the ruling party, the most egregious manifestation being the recent elections results.

The SACP and COSATU have hardly been complementary and supportive structures in guiding the ANC in how it continues to broaden and deepen its hegemony and legitimacy across the state and society, especially during the divisive aftermath of Polokwane and the undignified 'recall' of President Mbeki. Rather, a new conjuncture has been established, characterised by a regime of patrimonial and patron-client politics while it was widely acclaimed that a new threshold of struggle had been reached "for the soul of the ANC". The regeneration of the ANC has often been lost it would

seem in the interstices of being both a liberation movement and a political party.

Amid the ANC's existential dilemmas, community and social protests took on a destructive life of their own as expressions of growing social alienation and discontent among the country's poor and marginalised. The ANC was therefore fast losing its moral authority to govern South Africa, a gain that was painstakingly won since its establishment in 1910. This was coupled with a growing dissonance between the ANC as the most powerful force behind South Africa's liberation and its reality as a governing party.

In the process, the perception and reality of a new ruling ANC aristocracy since 2009 which was more concerned with self-enrichment and the plundering of state resources undermined the very substance and neutrality of public power. In an almost zero-sum game, as the ruling elites grew wealthier and more aloof from their popular base, the general welfare of the majority experienced a relative further decline if indices of poverty, inequality, and unemployment are anything to go by. Matters were not helped by the severe knock-on effects which the global financial crisis had on the deterioration of South Africa's already fragile economic fortunes. The erosion of the ANC's popular base thus found its way into the changing political and electoral

landscape of the local government elections of 3 August 2016.

On a national scale the ANC registered a sharp decline in its votes from 63% to 54%. In some of the provinces it was dangerously worse. Gauteng -14.62%, Limpopo -13.92%, North West -16.04%, Free State -10.05% and Mpumalanga -8.45%. Furthermore it lost its majority as well as power in crucial metros such as Nelson Mandela Bay, Johannesburg, Tshwane and Mogale City.

The consequent shockwaves which reverberated through the ANC should not be surprising. The gains of the DA, the EFF, and other smaller parties are less of an indication of their growing political traction and ideological resonance among the voting public but have more to do with 3 million plus voters consciously withdrawing their votes from the ANC by abstaining.

This development has widely been attributed to the ANC's "arrogance of power" and its inability to maintain itself as a progressive force for fundamental change and transformation among its support base. Here again Gramsci is very instructive when he writes: "At a certain point in their historical lives, social classes become detached from their traditional parties. In other words, the traditional parties in that particular organisational form, with the particular men who constitute, represent, and lead them, are no longer recognised

by their class (or faction of a class) as its expression. When such crises occur, the immediate situation becomes delicate and dangerous because the field is wide open for violent solutions, for the activities of unknown forces, represented by charismatic men of destiny." Recent political developments in South Africa speak volumes of the consequences which arise from the delicate and dangerous terrain the country has entered because of the vertical and horizontal detachment of the ANC from its foundations among all sectors of South African society.

The major challenges for the ANC going forward are to disentangle itself from being synonymous with the state, because herein lays the core of the internal contradictions which have led it down the path of organisational decay characterised by a patrimonial syndrome of politics. This syndrome does not distinguish state power and resources from the party as a steward of the public will. In a crude formulation, the party has become the state and vice versa. As such, power and power relations become informalised, institutions are abused for narrow personal and parochial interests, political and constitutional values are subordinated to economic advantage and exogenous demands, and the prerogatives of the party precede the interests of the state. In such a patrimonial environment of patrons

and clients spread across institutions of the state and compradors in society, the stage is set for politically deviant behaviour that is devoid of any ethical content since the use of political office provides the fastest route to wealth accumulation and the promotion of individual and corrupt interests above agreed public goals.

As a result of the ANC's performance in the local government elections, there is a school of thought which argues that the outcomes are an important harbinger for what is to come in the provincial and national elections in 2019. If the ANC's trajectory of decline in delivery and governance continues, it will register major losses as the pre-eminent force of change and transformation in South Africa. It will thus cede ground to the agents of reaction and opportunism who are now intent on harvesting the ANC's support base where its vulnerabilities are now even more exposed. The ANC has to move away from the easy platitudes of "taking collective responsibility" for its poor showing in the local government elections to reclaiming its tenuous moral authority to lead and govern South Africa. This will only occur if it takes the challenge seriously of moving from being a liberation movement to becoming a modern political party that is capable of renovating and overhauling its internal structures, leadership cadres, and modes of operation as the current political juncture now demands. At a fundamental level, this demands a new ideological grammar and a different intellectual vocabulary in order to foster a culture of organisational renewal and leadership change in South Africa's noisy and volatile political marketplace.

In this issue we publish articles by Alfred Phala and Oscar van Heerden which analyse and dissect the serious crisis confronting the ANC. Oscar in making a call for 'out of the box thinking' writes: "For example, the top six officials of the ANC could be elected by the entire membership of the ANC throughout the country before an elective conference; that way the focus of conference would not be on leadership elections but on substantive policy, where members could concentrate on discussing the serious

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Residents seen in April 2016 at the canvassing tent of the ANC in Imizamo Yethu township Hout Bay in the Western Cape –

social and economic matters plaguing the country. Another possibility could be that the ANC have a reduced National Executive Committee, returning to the 40 members directly elected and perhaps they too can be elected by the entire ANC membership. This would go a long way towards ensuring efficiency and cogent discussions at the various conferences. Also, there must be a quota on how many of the NEC members can be in the Executive branch of government because currently, when you want to express a serious point which could be contrary to that of the President of the organisation, you could be reluctant to express it in full without fear or favour because he or she may also be your boss in government. And as much as comrades say that this will not negatively impact on you as an NEC member it does demand maturity and strength of personality in the incumbent."

He also suggests that the ANC should "constitute a Council of Elders, tried and tested Cadres of the movement, who have no material interest nor do they seek leadership positions." To take Oscar's view further: a Council of Elders of about 30-40 persons, chaired by former President Kgalema Motlanthe, should be given the leeway to carry out a serious strategic analysis of the pervasive rot and paralysis affecting the ANC, and to recommend radical measures, without fear or favour, to prevent the ANC from descending further into the political abyss.

What is to be Done? (Lenin)

The ANC must:

1. Take immediate pro-active measures and decisive action to win back the votes it lost. It must convince the electorate that it is creative, transparent, optimistic, accountable, humble and a source of inspiration and renewal; that it will be tenacious in defending the core values, traditions and democratic culture that define the ANC we know and love.
2. Reflect, respect and give voice to the aspirations, concerns and expectations of the youth. The youth in particular, those that are unemployed and barely surviving on the margins of society need

special attention. Is it not time to consider introducing a Basic Income Grant for all South Africans? The demand for a Basic Income Grant is gaining traction in some developed countries and has much to offer as a means to deal with the poverty, inequality and joblessness of millions of our youth. Negative voices will point to the cost of such a remedy. However research shows that the benefit to society as a whole would be greater than the cost. Such a radical move would help to convince the new and first time voters that the ANC remains a great movement, passionately committed to dealing with the serious challenges of poverty, inequality, unemployment and underdevelopment.

3. Intensify its work amongst minorities. The catastrophic loss

“It can start by acceding to the proposal by ANC veterans, members and some structures that the leadership convene a consultative conference – like the Morogoro Conference – initiated and led by veterans of the struggle”

of support amongst the coloured and Indian community may be indicative that the ANC is no longer the party embracing all our diverse people, regardless of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religious belief. The ANC must demonstrate in words and deeds that it remains the Party of Choice for all South Africans.

4. Convince the people that it can deal decisively with the negative consequences of a "government at war with itself." There is a substantial gap between policy and implementation which needs to be closed as a matter of priority. There is a Japanese proverb that is

illuminating: "Vision without action is day-dream. Action without vision is nightmare."

5. Bring about radical economic transformation. This requires the courage to act and take risks to defend and promote the interests of the masses of our people. The ANC government should not be held hostage by the demands, threats and interests of powerful, dominant forces in the market including rating agencies. Our people need inclusive economic growth, sustained development and a fair and just redistribution of the fruits of their labour power – and they need it now!

The local government election result is not all doom and gloom for the ANC. As JP Landman, a renowned and perceptive analyst, wrote in his newsletter (8 August, 2016): "It is important to retain some perspective. The ANC still got two votes for every one the DA got – 8.1 million against 4 million; and it got 6.6 votes for every one the EFF got. It will control 161 local councils, as against the DA's 19, the IFP's 7 and the EFF's nil.

The numbers of the DA and IFP will increase following the coalitions and other arrangements arrived at by the DA, IFP and EFF in the 27 hung councils. The warning signs are clear. Long before 2019 the ANC has to get its house in order. It can start by acceding to the proposal by ANC veterans, members and some structures that the leadership convene a consultative conference – like the Morogoro Conference – initiated and led by veterans of the struggle including the suggested Council of Elders. Such a conference could pave the way for an elective conference devoid of factionalism, slates and vote buying.

It is not too late for the ANC to once more emerge as a glorious movement representing the will, interests, aspirations and expectations of the majority of South Africans. The people of South Africa, the region, the continent as well as progressive humanity are yearning for a united, cohesive, progressive and just ANC. ■

This editorial was written by Garth le Pere and Essop Pahad.

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PROPERTY AN ATTRACTIVE ASSET TO INVEST INTO

Property, as an asset class, can form an important part of almost all diversified investment portfolios. However, for most investors, there are a variety of ways to achieve the desired levels of property exposure. In essence, there are three basic channels available to anyone looking to invest in property: the direct channel, the listed channel, and the institutional channel, each with unique characteristics.

Direct property investment, such as purchasing an apartment or home for rental, generally requires a significant initial outlay of money, as well as an ongoing maintenance effort. Furthermore, the value of a direct property investment is often tied to the physical and economic conditions around the specific property in question, entailing a high level of concentration risk. Listed property investments, by contrast, involve the purchasing of shares in a listed property company. While this can be done on a relatively small scale, it also requires a certain sacrifice of time and energy in the analysis of the company invested into, and it can become relatively expensive to build up sufficient levels of diversification, as proportionally higher transactional fees may eat into the value of your capital.

Property Investment Channels			
Features	Direct	Listed	Institutional
Ease	×	×	✓
Expertise	×	×	✓
Diversification	×	✓	✓
Income & Growth	✓	✓	✓

Many investors, however, have the option of utilising the institutional channel, which entails entrusting your savings with a professional investment manager, such as Oasis. The benefits of this alternative include significantly less effort on the part of the investor, as you benefit from the analysis and expertise of the chosen manager, thereby minimizing your own research requirement. Furthermore, far higher levels of diversification are often achievable through this channel, with the potential to provide greater downside protection, especially when your investment is pooled with other investors to benefit from greater scale. All the while, good quality institutional property investments can maintain all the benefits of the other property investment channels, such as the generation of a recurring income stream from the underlying properties through long term leases, as well as the potential for long term real capital appreciation.

However, it is important that investors understand the various regulatory and liquidity profiles available within the institutional property framework. As many South African households have discovered, investing in an unregulated and illiquid property syndication can be notoriously opaque at best, and at worst can involve fraudulent or Ponzi-like behaviours. As such, we encourage our readers to engage with their financial advisors, or call Oasis directly, to understand the benefits of investing in the trusted and highly regulated range of Oasis funds.

A Word on Financial Matters

In June, we launched the Oasis Crescent Property Endowment Fund in order to provide our clients with another strong compliant property investment opportunity. By providing exposure to both listed and physical property investments, our aim is to generate superior long-term capital and income growth for our clients, driven by positive

property fundamentals and high levels of diversification. In fact, Oasis has established a track record of delivering consistent real returns in its global and South African property portfolios over the past 10 years, and within this fund you'll get exposure to high quality direct property, local listed property investments such as the Oasis Crescent Property Fund, as well as global listed property investments like the Oasis Crescent Global Property Equity Fund. Endowments are also a great way to save in a disciplined manner towards your long term goals as they come with a fixed term structure, and can be a tax efficient savings option if your personal income tax rate is greater than 30%. For more information you can visit our website at www.oasiscrescent.com or call us directly in 0860 100 786.

In the News

Oasis commitment towards improving access to education continues to be a priority. During the month of August, the Group made a R250,000 allocation to Harold Cressy Alumni Association towards the funding of a project that will ensure the completion of the school's hall. Receiving the cheque from Oasis executives was past principal, Dr. Victor Ritchie and Chairman of the school's Alumni Association, Dr. Shafick Ismail.



It was with great excitement that Oasis received notification that the Oasis Crescent Global Low Equity Balanced Fund has received the award for Mixed Asset Fund of

the Year at the 2016 Global Fund Awards. This fund, which has also received Lipper awards earlier this year is also available through the recently launched, Oasis Crescent International Balanced Low Equity Feeder Fund to ensure that South African investors are afforded every opportunity to benefit from this award winning and well-diversified investment product.



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All contributing analysts write in their personal capacity

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articulates decolonial theory and its relevance for Africa in the 21st century.

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Ambassador Tian Xuejun has a long and distinguished career in the Department and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. From 1985 to 2004 he served in various capacities in Kuwait, Bangladesh and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2004 he was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to the Hellenic Republic. Prior to coming to South Africa he served as Director General (2007-2012) of the Department of Personnel in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC. He is Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC in South Africa. ■

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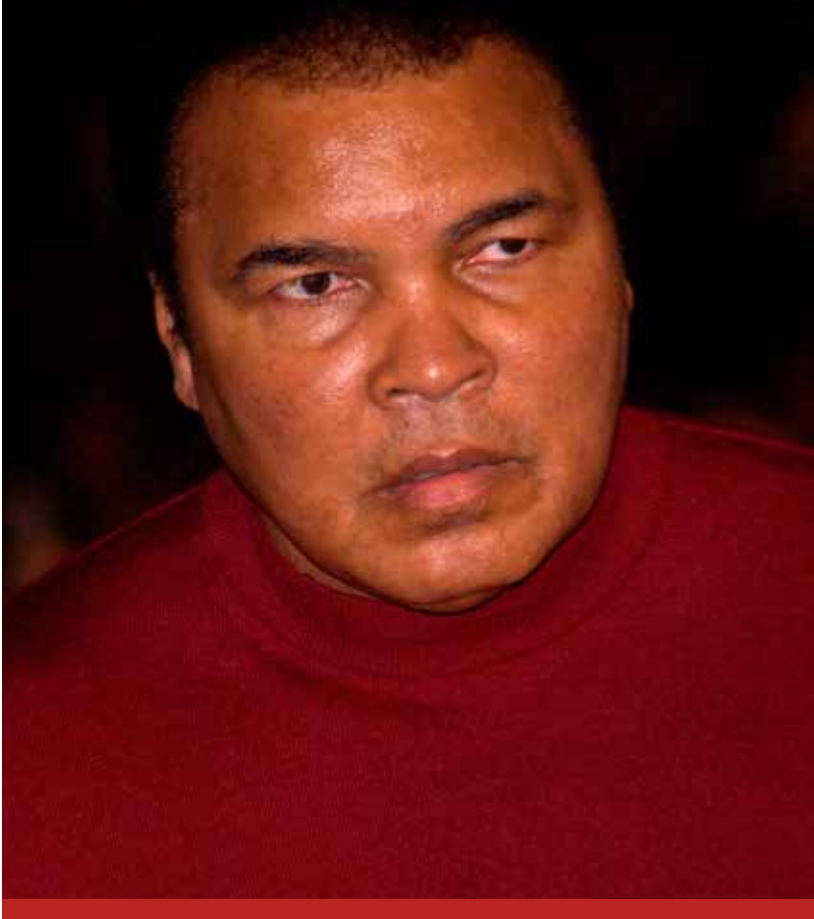
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MUHAMMAD ALI

Requiem and Reflection 1942-2016



Ali's good looks hid one of the physical secrets of his virtual unbeatability; this was the fact that his phenomenal hand and foot speed were augmented by one of the longest reaches in heavyweight boxing history with stamina to burn.

By Francis A Kornegay

What follows is a very personal reflection on Muhammad Ali as a uniquely black experience from someone whose formative growing up in the 1960s America was, in many ways, influenced by Ali's audacious rise and by his trials and tribulations interlinked with black revolution and anti-Vietnam war resistance throughout a decade of turbulence. (This author actually learned how to box as an undergraduate in the University of Michigan's boxing club and turned down an opportunity to join the amateurs.) Seen from the vantage-point of the second decade of the 21st century, in different ways, Ali then and Barack Obama now are veritable symbols of perfection in how their personification of black America at its best has been a tribute to our cultural nation while impacting and transcending the broader American landscape.

Of course, as mortal human beings, neither was/is perfect as no one can be (about which more will be later said regarding Ali). Yet, there are times when unique individuals emerge on the scene as iconic expressions of a people's yearning for the kind of ego massage that uplifts the spirit and generates energising momentum for tackling challenges constantly confronting us. This applies especially to the predicament of Black America. In this vein, the emergence of Ali, first as an incredible boxing talent in a sport striking at the very heart of masculine identity and later as a cultural and political actor in his own right within and transcending the confines of the American racial battleground, deserves dissecting.

The boxing dimension comes first since, unless one understands how boxing relates to the macho basis of American identity, invested as it is in the projection of power, and the disempowering history of American black male emasculation, one cannot fully appreciate the meaning of Ali for African-Americans within the historical context of black boxing excellence, let alone Ali's broader meaning in the world at large.

The passing of Muhammad Ali, who bolted onto the boxing scene as the brash young Cassius Marcellus Clay in 1960 – The Louisville Lip –

effectively marks the end of almost a century of remarkable black boxing history, a veritable golden age over several decades ushered in by Ali lifting the heavyweight crown from the malevolent Charles 'Sonny' Liston in February 1964. Not since the first two decades of the 20th century has there been such an extraordinary concentration of black ringmen, including notable African standouts like Dick 'Tiger' Ihetu of Nigeria and Azuma Nelson of Ghana as well as John 'The Beast' Mugabi from Uganda (and don't forget the South African likes of Tap Tap Makatini hailing from KZN). This 'golden age' applies especially to the heavyweight division and the broader cultural, social and political significance that holding the heavyweight crown held in America's racially laden society.

One could, in fact, almost book-end that history. It would start with the first black heavyweight boxing champion, the 'Great Black Avenger' of Galveston, Texas, Jack Johnson (1908-1915) who inspired the aspirational 'Great White Hope' era. This was when he trapped Tommy Burns in Sydney, Australia and lifted his crown on Boxing Day in 1908, setting up two years later his July 4th humbling of the great undefeated (that is, until he met Johnson!) James J Jefferies in the first 'Fight of the Century' in Reno, Nevada. It would end with the beginning of the reign of Cassius Clay turned Muhammad Ali in 1964, running through to Mike Tyson, Evander Holyfield and Britisher Lennox Lewis.

Ali, beginning with his charismatic pre-championship rise as Clay, symbolised the rise of a 'young, gifted and black' generation of black consciousness that blossomed out of the civil rights and black power movements of the 1960s. The 'Brown Bomber,' Joe Louis, who in many ways was something of a successor of 'redemption' to Johnson's racially defiant exploits, would constitute the mid-way point in this saga. Louis symbolised, after all, a carefully black management groomed 'Good Negro' who kept his mouth shut and let his fist speak for him without upsetting the white American ego of his time. Louis was the anti-Johnson with Ali, via the '60s rise of African-American

cultural nationalism, ultimately signalling nationalism's 'thermidor' in his transition from the Nation of Islam, as a separatist sect, into the integrated domain of mainstream Islam.

On reflection, the Johnson-Louis-Ali trinity symbolises the intersection between America's racial history and its intimate intertwining with the history of boxing in America and the world over. Why this is so has to do with interlinked racism and the machismo of hyper-masculinity historically invested in the heavyweight boxing title. The heavyweight title was the metaphorical symbol of American power, manhood and supremacy interacting with the emasculation of that mythically threatening, over-sexed black male underpinning the subordination of an entire people. White supremacy has always been, at its heart, in its essence, about male supremacy while elevating the white woman onto a pedestal as the white man had his way with any woman of his desire anywhere and of whatever race or colour.

Metaphorically, America was a 'white man' and a 'white man' was America! American Power was White Power and vice versa. America and 'White America' were one and the same. The boxing ring was the crucible in which supremacy would be publically displayed in the starkest of terms, one on one, mano-a-mano which is why one South African boxing sage enthused once that 'boxing is the only real sport, everything else is a game'! (I second the motion!) As such, boxing would become the first battleground in the demythologising deconstruction of whiteness in all its masculine supremacy with Johnson (Lil'Arthur), Louis and Ali in the vanguard. Johnson overthrew this cultural regime in its darkest hour at the onset of the 20th century, triggering a riotously bloody backlash throughout the country with blacks being kept out of the heavyweight title competition until Louis' emergence.

The heavyweight boxing title had represented the penultimate in American masculinity as a white man's preserve until the insufferably arrogant Johnson came, laughing along to emerge as the greatest defensive boxer ever produced (the product of schooling

by an unsung legendary Polish fighter, Joe Choynski who KO's Johnson early in his career). In what was the nadir of race relations following the overthrow of post-civil war reconstruction ushering in what would become a century of post-slavery repression of African-Americans, Johnson humiliated his white opponents in the ring and whites generally out of the ring. He flaunted his mastery by invading the white man's female domain in pursuit of his women, rebelliously turned the table on white male impunity with black women.

Johnson ultimately paid dearly, convicted on a trumped up charge of 'white slavery' under the Mann Act and forced into several years of exile and imprisonment once he lost the title to Jess Willard in Havana, Cuba. Because of the trauma Johnson visited on white America amid the rise of the Ku-Klux-Klan, eviscerating the myth of white masculine superiority in and out of the ring, it would be several decades before another black heavyweight was allowed to ascend the throne. This came in the meteoric rise of Joe Louis Barrow whose family had migrated to Detroit from Alabama as part of that ongoing exodus from southern fried Jim Crow oppression. Louis became champion in 1937.

Joe projected the direct opposite of Johnson's assertiveness with a quiet humility befitting one of an untutored background who indulged the comfort zone of whites by talking with his fist rather than a mouth that could barely utter an intelligible word until much later in life (as when he was colour commentary in Ali's first title-winning fight with Sonny Liston). That is, until the Louisville Lip opened the garrulous mouth of the Cassius Clay; the Clay who became the Nation of Islam's Muhammed Ali and whose 'all-time' ring greatness was punctuated by an anti-Vietnam war black nationalism challenging the established decorum in rattling mainstream society during the turbulent 1960s and '70s. This was at the height of African-American racial assertion. But let us not get ahead of the story. For Louis, humble as he was, was an avenger like no other at a time and place marking the political crossroads of global power with pronounced racial overtones in that world war decade of

the thirties.

Ali's early race nationalism and anti-war martyrdom turned on its head the legend of Louis' muscles acknowledged by President Franklin Delanor Roosevelt. FDR is supposed to have told Joe Louis (on the lawn of the White House, not in it!) that the Brown Bomber had to deploy his muscles in the ring for democracy. This was as Joe was embarking on his squared circle 'race war' with German Max Schmeling in defending his title while avenging his traumatic upset loss to Schmeling in 1936 during Nazi ascendancy. Thus laden is the Johnson-Louis-Ali trinity with the racial and political dynamics of the times of their ringmanship. For Louis, who would win out? Muscles for democracy or for fascism?

Learning from his complacency and chinks discovered in his armour by Schmeling two years earlier, Louis went on to dismantle the German; it only took two minutes and four seconds, in the process breaking bones in his back and side in ten places, resulting in Schmeling's hospitalisation for ten weeks! Unlike the race riots following Johnson's humbling of Jeffries, Louis' victory produced celebrations throughout the country. But the race-related political symbolism in the Louis-Schmeling return match unfolded against a much broader social backdrop.

Boxing, throughout the 20th Century, was the premier sport reflection of just about every ethnic group's march up the American ladder of democracy and assimilation into mainstreaming acceptance. It is a history that has produced memorable ring wars across racial and ethnic divides and within them. Among African-Americans, it is a history that has constituted the three boxing 'golden ages' among blacks revolving around Johnson, Louis and Ali, extending into other weight divisions as among the welter and middleweights where reigned the unparalleled greatness of Sugar Ray Robinson (aka Walker Smith), Robinson still considered the greatest boxer, pound for pound, of all times and, along with Johnson, Ali's inspiration in shaping his boxing character in style and ring generalship. This then brings us to how Ali should be remembered within the squared

circle of the 'sweet science' apart from his charismatic social and political significance as a symbol of his times.

In many respects, Ali was a genuine freak of nature as a human specimen. If one had wanted to invent a cartoon character of a handsomely heroic avenger, they wouldn't have outdone Cassius Clay turned Muhammad Ali. Indeed, in this respect, the imagined American comic book hero, blond, blue-eyed 'Joe Palooka' readily comes to mind except that he never materialised in real life. Instead, it was his racial alter ego in the finely etched ebony of a heavyweight with the speed of a lightweight. In the words of Ali's legendary trainer, Angelo Dundee, the physical Ali represented the proportional perfection of the ideal heavyweight.

“Louis symbolised, after all, a carefully black management groomed ‘Good Negro’ who kept his mouth shut and let his fist speak for him without upsetting the white American ego of his time.”

Moreover, apart from the general assumption that 'pretty boys' lack toughness and are push-overs who fold under the first signs of pressure in the ring, Ali's good looks hid one of the physical secrets of his virtual unbeatability; this was the fact that his phenomenal hand and foot speed were augmented by one of the longest reaches in heavyweight boxing history with stamina to burn.

This unbeatable combination was totally lost in the hype over heavyweight champion Sonny Liston having, at 84 inches, the longest reach in heavyweight history in the build-up to their title fight in 1964. As such, as a devastating puncher, Liston was suppose to, as in the words of one sports writer, "squash Clay like an ant," not realising that this 'ant' had a wing span just two or

three inches shy of Liston's with faster than Ray Robinson and Floyd Patterson hand speed to match. Because of this singularly unique physical combination, it was almost impossible for anyone to lay a hand on Ali until three and a half years of forced exile from the ring robbed him of his dance-all-night foot speed and endurance. He was forced into having to come down off his toes and engage in exchanges that he easily avoided before being forced out of action.

Ali's forced exile from the ring came just short of his reaching his prime so that no-one will ever know just how great he might have become. Even then, upon his return to the ring, he still had enough left to retain much of his extraordinary capabilities as a fighter plus one who had a strong chin and could take punishment and keep on ticking! Ali goes down as one of the toughest heavyweight champions in the history of the division. The mistake Ali made in his comeback was going into his first clash with Joe Frazier without having enough warm-up fights under his belt. Indeed, had it not been for the 11th and 15th rounds of that memorable confrontation of exceptional undefeated black champions, Ali might well have narrowly won it on points or it could have easily ended in a draw or split decision.

That 'dream match,' in this assessment, goes down as one of Ali's best performances, losing though it was. On witness in this first of three wars were flashes of the blinding speed greatness he had become famous for. The head whipping he meted out to Frazier in the early rounds of that fight was an extraordinary display of sustained combination punching as he matched Joe flat-footed in ring-centre and along the ropes. Then came the 9th round of a come from behind shellacking he had been getting from Frazier that had Joe reeling in trouble from a doubling up on the left hook near the end of that round, arguably one of the most exciting rounds in the Ali-Frazier trilogy.

But there is a darker side to the Ali-Frazier rivalry that exposed a serious flaw in Muhammed's politicised public persona detracting from his otherwise iconic status. He subjected Frazier

to a brutalising 'blacker than thou' racial humour and political baiting in betrayal of the support Frazier had rendered him during his forced exile from the ring. No doubt, some of his haranguing of Frazier was intended to promote their ring encounters but went far over the line in projecting himself as the politically correct defender of black struggle and Frazier as an Uncle Tom. The bitterness of their ring wars was fuelled by this metaphorical intra-racial animosity that Ali injected into what, otherwise, should have been a rivalry free from such overtones of division among black people. More broadly, this bitterness, flowing as it did into the ring, was a sign of the times of tensions that had emerged among African-Americans to a level not seen during the times of Johnson and Louis.

Apart from this 'dark side' (or maybe because of it) the Ali-Frazier trilogy goes down as the rivalry to end all rivalries in heavyweight ring history, even eclipsing the legendary Ray Robinson-Jake 'Raging Bull' Lamotta wars. So then, how does Ali fare in the heavyweight title firmament of legendary greats including the likes of Johnson, Louis, Jack Dempsey and Rocky Marciano? Ali's combination of advantages in size, reach and speed of hand and foot would have likely overwhelmed these and other legendary greats, except perhaps for Johnson, whose defensive counterpunching brilliance might have nullified Ali's natural capabilities. The Galveston Giant was a good mover as well.

As punchers, Louis, Dempsey and Marciano had problems with speedy, shifty stick-and-move boxers who tended to be smaller than them or equal in size. Against Ali, they would have all been out-matched: effectively cruiserweights, ranging in weights from 190-200lbs, to a heavyweight whose weight gravitated between 210lbs (when he lifted the title from Liston) to 224lbs (against Frazier in the 'Thrilla in Manila'). Louis, while a good boxer and devastating combination puncher, was a plodder whose vulnerability to right hands would have rendered him a 'sitting duck' to a knock-out as early as the first round against the master of the right-hand lead.

Marciano had one of the best chins in the sport. Yet, prone to cut, he was

the smallest of this greatness generation and somewhat comparable to Joe Frazier but devoid of Frazier's size and non-stop speed of attacking pressure that made the post-exile Ali literally fight for his life. The 'Rock' never would have touched Muhammad and would have been stopped inside five to ten rounds. Both at their primes, the only heavyweight champion who could have fought Ali to a standstill would have been the one who sent him into long-overdue retirement, his former sparring partner, Larry Holmes. Holmes and Ali were almost size and stylistic carbon copies of one another with a slight edge Ali might have had in speed and mobility.

Because of the non-boxing and more politically related resonance of Ali, it is generally unappreciated how his comparative superiority over several generations of great heavyweights, combined with his charisma as a public figure forced into an activist leadership role by being exiled from the ring contributed to the celebrated icon he became. It turned out that Ali was the wrong black man to tamper with at a time when the federal government, under the Richard Nixon administration, was doing all in its considerable power to kill as many birds with one stone in dismantling black movement and anti-war activism. Already an icon amongst blacks and many whites, Ali's innate combativeness within the context of his outlier status as a member of the controversial Nation of Islam, was almost tailor-made for transforming him, during his three and a half years of forced exile from the ring, into a mobilising figure of martyrdom.

After all, this was at a time when black militancy had become ascendant in the black struggle repertoire of activism against racism, coming off the civil rights movement's transformation into a more nationalistic black power phase. This trend played into the agenda of the 'black Muslims' as the Nation tended to be popularly referred to and to their legendary disciplining role in black inner city communities through the kick-ass regimented deployment of the Fruits of Islam (FOI). Ali was a proud member of the FOI. Otherwise, the Nation, as a religio-nationalist sect,

shunned politics beyond the confines of the black community. Unlike his mentor, Malcolm X (whom Ali would later regret having abandoned), whose leadership role within the Nation propelled him beyond and into fatal opposition to its quietist isolationism from black activism, Ali as the Nation's new public face, did not go looking for the role he ultimately assumed. Ali was not the black intellectual political activist that became emblematic of Malcolm's tragically short-lived post-Nation identity – but he was naturally outspoken and in tune with the black militancy of the times.

Ali simply unwittingly and innocently ran afoul of the establishment when he uttered what many an African-American thought: 'I ain't got noth'in against them Viet-Cong, they never called me nigger!' For that, the establishment came down on him like a 'ton of bricks' and before long, the leadership likes of Martin Luther King, Jr who had also run afoul of the establishment for becoming vocal against America's Vietnam intervention, was publicly in his corner. Ali was propelled onto the university circuit fuelling the anti-war, anti-draft momentum.

Herein lay the roots of the 'Americanisation' of Ali: from black nationalist into his mainstream as a hero transcending race, eventually propelling him into a world ready to welcome an alternative expression of Americanness emanating out of the black experience. In the process, he became the first genuinely *world* champion through his legendary Kinshasa 'Rumble in the Jungle' with George Forman in Congo turned Zaire (an African first) and his brutal 'close to death' rubber match with smok'in Joe Frazier in Manila's Quezon stadium in the Philippines. These were but two of the most prominent venues where Ali plied his trade. As a white establishment-persecuted figure in and out of the ring before and after his ring exile, Ali's charismatic reign, not only as world heavyweight boxing champion, but as one of the greatest in the history of the sport, etched into international consciousness, the heroic identity he came to reflect and that would inspire the magnificent outpouring of tributes he received from all the world upon his passing. ■

RETHINKING AFRICA IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

A Response to Aziz Pahad and Thabo Mbeki



This readiness to recognise error and to change course – the saving grace of American democracy – is important because it calls into question the idea that there is a singular direction, or fundamental tendency, toward militarisation of U.S. policy, with even sinister motives of creating chaos and instability in other parts of the world.

By Princeton N. Lyman

In Volume 67 of *The Thinker*, Aziz Pahad and President Thabo Mbeki wrote about the current global situation as it affected Africa [Aziz Pahad, “Current Global Dynamics”; Thabo Mbeki “Order and Disorder? Exploring the Implications for Africa”].

The articles provided a provocative, indeed a harsh critique of the role and policies of the U.S. over the past twenty years. They welcomed the emergence of a more multipolar world where U.S. influence will have receded.

It is a challenge to respond to these

articles. Aziz Pahad and Thabo Mbeki are extraordinarily important and knowledgeable leaders, for whom I have the greatest respect. Second, it is difficult to do so in face of such a long and often accurate list in these articles of some of the worst actions

my country has undertaken in recent years. It is all the more difficult in the midst of the American election season, when politicians are prone to excessive boasting and bombast, and shameless calls to chauvinism. It seems Americans cannot get enough of being reassured that we are great, indeed the “greatest nation on earth.”

But I feel it is necessary to respond because while many of the descriptions in those articles of actions taken by my country may be accurate, the motives attributed to the U.S. and assumptions as to future direction of American policy may not be. Nor is the picture of what has transpired in the period of “unipolarity” complete. Most of all I am concerned that the conclusions that might be drawn from those articles could be wrong for Africa.

This is not an effort to whitewash America’s failings and wrong actions. There are many and I will address several of them below. But the United States is more than its failures. Further, the totality of the world’s development during the “unipolar” era contains some remarkable achievements in which the U.S. played a significant and positive role. As we move into a more multipolar world, the worst option for Africa would be to promote a new Cold War on the continent, even an ideological one, pitting BRICS against the U.S. or something similar. The United States has much in common with Africa’s progressive agenda. Africa would do well to take advantage of that.

Assessing the “Unipolar Period”

Let me first disaggregate a little. It is not useful to lump together, as Aziz Pahad does, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, and Ukraine – their problems described in all cases as “extremism and terror” – and see these all as the consequences of U.S. policies. They are quite distinct situations. I will discuss Iraq below. But for the others, Afghanistan has been wracked by civil war for decades, with the Soviet Union, Pakistan, Iran, and others having had a significant hand in the chaos. The situation in Yemen derives at least as much if not more from actions and interests of competing powers in the Middle East as by the current U.S.

involvement. Ukraine’s crisis derives in part from sharply different perspectives within the Ukraine population over the direction – east or west – that its foreign policy and economic connections should take. Russia and the U.S. have taken sides in this contest, but it was the people in Kiev that rose up against one direction and those in the east who have supported the other. To attribute the actions in Kiev solely to U.S. manipulation is no more accurate than to assert that those who prefer a close relationship with Russia are purely being manipulated by Russia. Give the people of Ukraine more credit. The Syrian civil war may have roots in the destabilisation of the region after the U.S. invasion of Iraq but it has other roots as well and has invited in several other international

“This is thus not a time for Africa to turn away from the U.S. or to promote a kind of confrontation, or negative forms of competition within Africa. Africa does not need a new Cold War.”

participants that have aggravated the crisis. The “Arab Spring,” finally, has been a significant driver of change and instability in the Middle East. It was not a product of U.S. policy but a largely spontaneous uprising of people against decades of autocracy, however badly it has turned out in several instances.

The invasion of Iraq, and the destabilisation that proceeded from it, is something different. Let me stipulate at the outset that the U.S. invasion of Iraq was a colossal wrong, with terrible consequences for the region and its people. It unleashed the rise of terrorist organisations in Iraq and later Syria, intensified regional rivalries, and contributed to instability throughout the region that has cost many lives. But what the articles did not reflect is that this is now recognised as such by

nearly all elements in U.S. politics. That of course does not right the wrong, but it does say something to underlying motive and future direction. President Obama was elected in 2008 largely on his repudiation of the Iraq invasion. It is even more striking that the current Republican candidate for president not only has denounced the invasion, but called his own party’s president at the time a “liar.” Polls show that between 65 and 75 per cent of Americans now believe the invasion was a mistake. A majority are now against deployment of American ground troops to any conflict in the Middle East. This readiness to recognise error and to change course – the saving grace of American democracy – is important because it calls into question the idea that there is a singular direction, or fundamental tendency, toward militarisation of U.S. policy, with even sinister motives of creating chaos and instability in other parts of the world. Power may create hubris, and encourage its overuse, but understanding basic motives requires greater analysis. Chaos and instability are not in America’s interest.

I am reminded of Sigmund Freud’s reaction when people were overusing his theories of sexual influences on behavior. “Sometimes,” he commented, “A cigar is just a cigar.” Sometimes the U.S. has made colossal errors and taken advantage of its power to pursue its interests aggressively. But that does not translate into an overall policy framework that always operates in that way or that has no other redeeming values. And to attribute recent changes in U.S. policies – indeed a vigorous debate over just how much the U.S. should be involved at all in international affairs – to the rise of other powers, as the articles suggest, is to sell short the ability of the U.S. to acknowledge error and shift direction. How far the U.S. should go in a new direction of withdrawal I will return to later, with its implications for Africa. But once we get away from a more sinister assessment of the U.S.’s role in the world, we can look at broader considerations of U.S. policy that are important for Africa as for the rest of the world.

One of these other ways we can look at the U.S. role is what transpired

on the economic front during the so-called period of “unipolarity,” that “ogre” Mbeki rues is not yet dead. In Thabo Mbeki’s article, the “Washington Consensus” is seen as fostering rigid ideological policies with mostly negative consequences. But this period, roughly from 1990 onward, witnessed the greatest decline in poverty in history. The number of people in extreme poverty was cut in half, from 1.3 billion to 600 million. The child mortality rate was similarly cut in half. The average number of years of schooling doubled from that in 1970. If the “Washington Consensus” was the driving force in this period, the results were not so bad. Of course, the achievements were not simply the result of that “consensus,” but nor was that policy as rigid as described in Mbeki’s article nor devoid of valuable lessons.

Without question, China’s move toward a more market-oriented economy, with trade liberalisation and greater foreign investment, as well as India’s similar moves, were major contributing factors to the reduction in poverty. The U.S. role was moreover significant in advancing China’s progress. The U.S. championed the entry of both Russia and China (with all China’s continuing state role in its economy) into the WTO. As one analysis noted, “The dominant view on the economic impact of China’s accession to the WTO emphasizes the rise of China’s standing as the world leader on trade, and a preferred destination of foreign direct investments.” Another analyst concluded, “China’s membership yielded China capital, technology, energized reform and competition, and created an opening for new sectors, and importantly helped to depoliticize trade disputes”.

During this period the U.S. maintained an exceptionally open market, running enormous trade deficits which stimulated the export opportunities for not only China but other developing countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam. (Those trade deficits are now under bitter attack in the current U.S. electoral campaign for allegedly harming large segments of American workers). In sum, America’s concept of an international order of

freer trade and open markets, however imperfectly implemented, served not only America’s interests but that of much of the developing world’s population.

What About Africa?

Africa has nevertheless not benefited as much from this era of great poverty reduction. Considerable progress was made in this period in a number of African countries in meeting the Millennial Challenge Goals in health and education. But African economies, while benefitting from the commodity boom of that period, were not sufficiently transformed to survive the subsequent downslide of commodity prices in order to sustain high growth rates. That lack of transformation was documented in the 2014 *African Transformation Report*

“On peace and security, the U.S. is currently championing in the UN Security Council a new framework for UN-AU partnership which has been initiated by the AU.”

published by the African Center for Economic Transformation based in Accra and headed by K.Y. Amoako. The problems were not rooted in the “Washington Consensus.”

Growth so far has come from macroeconomic reforms, better business environments, and higher commodity prices. But economic transformation requires much more. Countries have to diversify their production and exports. They have to become more competitive in international markets. They have to increase productivity of all resource inputs, especially labor. And they have to upgrade technologies they use in production. Only by doing so can they ensure that growth improves human well-being by providing more productive jobs and

higher incomes and thus everyone have share in the new prosperity.

The report lays out roles both for the state as well as private enterprises and markets.

The state, private firms, workers, the media, and civil society all have mutually reinforcing roles in promoting economic transformation. Private firms – foreign and local, formal and informal – lead in producing and distributing goods and services, in upgrading technologies and production processes, and in expanding opportunities for productive employment. But they can be helped by a state that has strong capabilities in setting an overall economic vision and strategy, efficiently providing supportive infrastructure and services, maintaining a regulatory environment conducive to entrepreneurial activity, and facilitating the acquisition of new technologies and the capabilities to produce new goods and services and to access foreign markets.

None of these recommendations are contrary to the “neoliberal” view cited by Mbeki. And the U.S. has provided support to all aspects of such transformation.

For example, Thabo Mbeki’s article notes the problems encountered with the EU’s trade policies in Africa – “from now on it’s a reciprocal relationship.” By contrast, the U.S. maintains a largely non-reciprocal (save agricultural products) free trade regime throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Successive Administrations of both parties have resisted Congressional pressure to eliminate this benefit for more advanced African economies, in particular South Africa which has been the main beneficiary but also Kenya. Administrations have argued, so far successfully, that to do so would undermine the growth and effectiveness of Africa’s regional economic communities, such as SADC and the East African Community, stepping stones to the AU’s goal of a Continental Free Trade Zone. By contrast, the EU’s proposed Economic Partnership Agreements would have exactly that negative effect.

This leads to a discussion of U.S. military versus economic policy in Africa. Mbeki points to the growth of U.S. military presence on the African continent in recent years. That is no doubt true. But it does not come from some sinister objective by the U.S., or militarising of U.S. policy in Africa, rather in response to African requests. Much of that growth is in combating terrorism, particularly in Somalia and in the Sahel, with which African countries are wrestling. I recently attended a meeting of African leaders and scholars, where a former African president argued that terrorism was now the number one threat in Africa. In Somalia, it is an African force, AMISOM, which carries on that fight with international support. It is hard to believe that those African forces fighting, and dying, in that conflict are doing it not because they see their vital interests at stake rather than just to serve America's interest. The situation in the Sahel was surely aggravated by the collapse of the Qaddafi regime in Libya, with the subsequent outflow of arms and insurgents. But the growth of terrorism in that region has other, deeper roots. The Boko Haram movement in Nigeria – which is the most deadly terrorist movement in the world – arose totally unrelated to the Libyan situation. There is, more subtly, the significant influx of foreign financed religious practitioners from the Middle East and South Asia, preaching a radical theology, into quite a few African countries to the unease of governments and traditional religious leaders, as documented recently by Dawit Wolde-Giorgis of the African Institute for Strategic and Security Studies in Namibia and by Abisaid M. Ali at the African Center for Strategic Studies in Washington. The security issues are real.

But even this growth of U.S. military presence has to be put in perspective. U.S. economic aid to Africa dwarfs military or other security-related aid. U.S. economic and humanitarian assistance to Africa exceeded \$7 billion in 2015, not counting disbursements from the large five year grants from the Millennium Challenge Account, e.g., the nearly half-billion dollar grant to Ghana in 2014 for power and related

investments. Health and humanitarian assistance are large components of this aid, but significant amounts go to education, economic development, and governance. Power Africa, a recent Obama initiative, is developing public-private partnerships to enhance the critical need for power throughout the continent to help transform African economies.

Africa in a Multi-Polar World

None of the above is designed to paint the U.S. as either without self-interested motives, or free of pursuing its interest often with too much force and not enough diplomacy. The point however is to avoid Africa seeing one side of the international power structure on its side, and the other against it. The U.S. is neither holy nor the devil incarnate. That goes for others as well.

“ Obama and President Xi have declared repeatedly that whereas the two countries might face serious differences in various parts of the world, this was not true in Africa.”

The U.S. is not alone in misuse of force, nor alone in acting in defiance of international norms and institutions. BRICS members are no exception. Regardless of its historic claims, Russia annexed Crimea largely by force, violating Ukraine's internationally recognised borders, a clear violation of the UN Charter. Russia made no effort to seek UN approval. China has refused to accept the results of an international arbitration panel ruling against its claims in the South China Sea. India refused to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty and instead opted to obtain nuclear weapons. Big powers often do that and sometimes smaller ones as well when they feel their vital interests take precedence over their support of international norms and institutions, or when frankly they think

they can get away with it. In Africa, Ethiopia has not abided by the ruling of the arbitration panel of its border with Eritrea, though having previously promised to do so. Eritrea has refused to allow the UN intermediation force to be stationed on its side of the border despite its UNSC-approved mandate to do so. Far too many government or government-backed forces have fired upon and killed UN peacekeepers. Though it is a war crime, no country has been held accountable. There is much blame to go around.

Given this more complex global reality, Africa would do well to manage its relations with the various world powers in terms of their support for Africa's interests. When it comes to Africa's progressive agenda, Africa can find much resonance and support from the U.S., which it would do no good to rebuff. Indeed Thabo Mbeki comes almost to that same conclusion in his article when he proposes mobilisation of civil society in western countries to support such an agenda “as they have in the past.” But it is not only civil society in the west but the current reality of US policies and programmes that offer such support.

Democratic government and good governance, fundamental principles of NEPAD, will find ready support from the U.S. Protection of human rights, surely a basic principle of progressivism, is also a tenet of US foreign policy. Even if the U.S. has been uneven in support of democracy and human rights, even at times seemingly hypocritical in weighing those principles against other interests, no other big power takes those issues more seriously and is more ready to support them when countries themselves make them a priority. U.S. policy, as pointed out above, supports regional economic integration in Africa, and non-discriminatory trade preferences across the continent, stepping stones toward Pan-Africanism. The U.S. has supported reforms of international economic institutions that Africa's progressivism has sought. The U.S. ratified changes in the IMF to give greater weight to emerging economies. It supports similar reform in the World Bank while some other major powers do not.

On peace and security, the U.S.

is currently championing in the UN Security Council a new framework for UN-AU partnership which has been initiated by the AU. The new partnership would provide for more reliable and predictable financing of African peace operations by having, for the first time, UN Security Council assessed contributions cover 75% of those costs with Africa assuring it would shoulder the balance. The AU approved the new framework unanimously at the summit in Kigali. The U.S. is looking to welcome this initiative during the UN sessions this fall. This has been a long time goal of South Africa's foreign policy.

From Competition to Partnership

But pragmatically drawing support from each of the powers is not enough. Africa can serve both its own interests and that of world peace by promoting cooperation across the multipolar world when it comes to African development. This opportunity already exists with regard to the U.S. and China. President Obama and President Xi have declared repeatedly that whereas the two countries might face serious differences in various parts of the world, this was not true in Africa. Africa was a venue for cooperation. The U.S. and China might be economic competitors in some sectors in Africa and will compete for African votes in the UN and other international institutions, but these are not vital security issues at stake. Put another way the two countries are thus not "strategic competitors" in Africa. Rather their mutual interests are much more importantly served by Africa's economic growth, peace, and stability. Thus the two presidents pledged to cooperate in Africa in pursuit of those goals. Much cooperation had been taking place in support of peace efforts between Sudan and South Sudan, and regarding South Sudan's current civil war, but the agenda has recently widened. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the People's Republic of China Ministry of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2015 to create a framework to facilitate expanded U.S.-China collaboration, communication and cooperation on development issues.

“In the Sahel, cooperation was proposed in providing humanitarian aid for the millions displaced by Boko Haram, redevelopment of the Lake Chad Basin, and support for UN and African security forces in the region.”

To further such cooperation, the Carter Center has created the Africa-China-U.S. Consultation for Peace. I am honored to be the U.S. co-chair, together with Ambassador Mohamed Chambas, the UN Special Representative for West Africa, and Ambassador Zhong Jinhua, formerly China's Special Envoy for Africa. In July of this year, hosted by the Government of Togo, the Consultation held its meeting in Lome to examine areas for potential cooperation on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, and for peace and development in the Sahel. Several areas were identified for cooperation on maritime security, in advance of the AU Summit on maritime security to be held in Togo in October. In the Sahel, cooperation was proposed in providing humanitarian aid for the millions displaced by Boko Haram, redevelopment of the Lake Chad Basin, and support for UN and African security forces in the region. In Togo itself, opportunities were discussed

“It is timely for Africa's progressive movement to indeed take hold but act not as a beacon for competition but for international cooperation. The U.S. can be a very supportive partner for such an agenda.”

for cooperation between China's investments in port capacity and related infrastructure and the planned U.S. Millennium Challenge grant in sectors to be determined by the Government of Togo. The U.S. and China's ambassadors, along with Togolese officials, attended the meetings and pledged to follow up.

This is thus not a time for Africa to turn away from the U.S. or to promote a kind of confrontation, or negative forms of competition within Africa. Africa does not need a new Cold War. The timing is also important. In the U.S., in this electoral season, Americans are not only turning away from so many military involvements abroad, but also against trade agreements and to a degree against the international system of freer trade and open economic borders that served to reduce world poverty so greatly during the previous "unipolar" period. How far this trend will go is hard to see. Some correctives will undoubtedly be made. Tensions with Russia and China are also getting greater attention. But so far, the spotlight is not on Africa, not on limiting AGOA or other support for greater economic integration and for increasing trade opportunities for the African continent. So far, there have not been calls for cutting back support for African peace efforts, especially in South Sudan and other troubled countries.

It may be valuable, as Aziz Pahad, suggests, that the U.S. take its role as the "indispensable leader" less seriously. But surely the world will be the loser if the U.S. with the largest economy in the world, and the largest capacity to support international peace and security programmes, withdraws too much from its international responsibilities. It is important for that very reason for Africa to use this moment to build its ties and common agendas with the U.S. more firmly. It is opportune for Africa to demonstrate that it is a continent that is an ideal venue for international cooperation. It is timely for Africa's progressive movement to indeed take hold but act not as a beacon for competition but for international cooperation. The U.S. can be a very supportive partner for such an agenda. ■



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After Brexit



Europeans hear their national leaders say that they will resolve the refugee crisis, stop terrorism, provide more jobs, control the banks, increase economic growth... And then they don't. As a consequence they turn to parties or social movements disguised as parties which at least hold out the promise of action.

By Michael Prior

The referendum vote in the U.K. to leave the European Union (EU) forms a coda to the rather pessimistic piece in the last issue of *The Thinker*. It was the worst possible result; close but decisive revealing deep underlying fissures in British society along several axes. Young against old; richer against poorer; London versus the North; educated against less-educated. In each category, the first voted much more heavily to Remain than the 48% in the overall vote. In the north of England, Manchester, a multi-cultural

city with huge universities, voted to Remain whilst the surrounding battered once-cotton towns of Lancashire voted heavily to Leave. Scotland and London were the bastions of Remain, pretty much all the rest voted to Leave.

What happened? Perhaps the best explanation can be found by going back to the last referendum Britain had on the EU in 1975 when it was still called the European Community (EC). Labour, the party in power, was deeply split over the issue as was the right wing of the Conservative Party. Even so, the

country gave a 67% majority to stay in the EC. In his diary, Ken Tynan, a drama critic, noted:

6 June: Roy Jenkins [then Home Secretary] interviewed on TV after the result was announced, made an unguarded remark that summed up the tacit elitism of the pro-Marketters. Asked to explain why the public had voted as it had... [he] smugly replied "They took the advice of the people they were used to following."

Last June, a majority of English (and Welsh) people stubbornly refused

to accept the advice of just the same people who had expected to be followed as usual. In a perceptive article in the *London Review of Books*,¹ John Lanchester explores this refusal and, essentially, concludes that Britain is a country in which one large section, the white working class, feels that it has been abandoned. As he writes:

To be born in many places in Britain is to suffer an irreversible lifelong defeat – a truncation of opportunity, of education, of access to power, of life expectancy.

This group was once politically represented by the Labour Party, an alliance of liberal, metropolitan intellectuals and the working class – it now feels abandoned by it. Lanchester goes on:

For now, what has happened amounts to a collapse of our political system... The deeper problem is that the referendum has exposed splits in our society which aren't mapped by the political parties as they are currently constituted... Political parties are the mechanism through which divisions in society are argued over and competing interests are asserted.

The trouble with where we are now is that the configuration of the parties doesn't match the issues which need to be resolved.

So what now with regard to EU exit, something which is now the focus of the political problems outlined by Lanchester? There are essentially three options.

First, the UK Parliament could simply immediately repeal the 1972 European Communities Act and its later amendments, the founding and, in most respects, the only legal basis for British membership at least so far as the British are concerned. Once this is done, then European law, apart from that which has been transposed into British legislation, would no longer be valid and the country would no longer be bound, legally if not morally, by any treaty obligations with the EU. It could then apply whatever border controls it saw fit and cease to provide funds to any institution of the EU. These are things which it can do unilaterally without any discussion with the EU. Trade could proceed on the basis of

normal World Trade Organisation rules whilst discussions about tariffs and other trade issues proceeded.²

This is not going to happen. Such immediate and unilateral action would fit the hopes of some extreme 'exiters' but would arouse great resentment amongst other EU members and institutions and, possibly, provoke retaliatory action. They demand exit based on the formula of the Treaty of Lisbon, Article 50, which requires:

1. *Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements.*

2. *A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council of its intention. In the light of the guidelines provided by the European Council, the*

“ With an Italian referendum on constitutional reforms due in the autumn, the latest vogue word in Euro-politics, replacing Brexit, is Quitaly, the possibility that Italy will ultimately vote to leave the EU. ”

Union shall negotiate and conclude an agreement with that State, setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal, taking account of the framework for its future relationship with the Union. That agreement shall be negotiated in accordance with Article 218(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It shall be concluded on behalf of the Union by the Council, acting by a qualified majority, after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament.

3. *The Treaties shall cease to apply to the State in question from the date of entry into force of the withdrawal agreement or, failing that, two years after the notification referred to in paragraph 2, unless*

the European Council, in agreement with the Member State concerned, unanimously decides to extend this period.

Broadly, this seems to mean that a member-state tells the EU that it wants to go, then, after a great deal of talking, it does whatever is necessary under its own constitutional framework to leave. It also may conclude an agreement with the European Council as to its future relationship though Article 50 remains unclear as to what happens if no agreement is reached after two years of talking if a country has not withdrawn 'in accordance with its own constitutional requirements' but has also not concluded an agreement. (Health warning: do not try to read Article 218 of the Treaty in the hope of enlightenment. It might cause serious mental harm). Presumably membership somehow just lapses like a member of a club who fails to pay their subscription. One would then have the rather odd situation that, under its own law, a country could still be a member of the EU but not in the eyes of the other members. The fact is that no one is very clear just how a state leaves the EU as the possibility has never been seriously considered before.

The exit-option most often put about is that the UK should remain a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) which is essentially the EU-lite with free trade and some financial contribution but no involvement in environment, agriculture or fisheries policies. The problem with this is that one of the pillars of the EEA is the same free movement of labour as exists within the EU, whilst one of the key reasons for the exit majority was resentment over the volume of EU nationals immigrating into the UK. It would also have to continue to pay money into the EU with no corresponding control.

The third option is that the UK Government will start talking with various bits of the EU setup, after it notifies them of its intentions under Article 50, and that these talks will drag on for so long that everyone will become tired of the issue and it can be quietly dropped on the pretext that popular opinion has now swung round to the 'sensible' side rather than the ill-informed and rather stupid rabble that, in the view of the

metropolitan elite, voted to leave. Or a blatantly unacceptable deal will be 'agreed', put to another referendum, rejected and this will be taken as a symbol that opinion has shifted against exit. Presumably Article 50 would then be 'un-notified' in some unspecified way otherwise Britain would end up in the odd both in-and-out scenario mentioned above.

The Government is publicly inclined to the second option and it has put some hard-line 'exiters' in the front rank of the future negotiations. However, a sign that the third option is still up for grabs is that the new Prime Minister, Theresa May, will not trigger the Article 50 process by 'notifying' the EU until well into next year. Indeed such is the confusion over just what withdrawal means that no one seems very clear as to just what 'notify' actually involves. Perhaps a hand-written letter in green ink signed by the Queen or, on the other hand, a formal vote in Parliament. Legal action is already being taken by devoted opponents to require such a specific vote in Parliament – a forum where there is, in principle, a majority against exit and it seems likely that this case will be argued all the way to the Supreme Court. Article 50 refers to a country's 'own constitutional requirements' and as the UK has no formal constitution it's make-hay time for any lawyer who can claim constitutional law expertise. It is also a great time to have any claim to be an expert on trade deals as the two new government departments set up to negotiate withdrawal are looking for perhaps an extra 500 staff on expensive temporary contracts to do whatever trade negotiators do. Currently, bookmakers are offering odds as low as 8/6 that Article 50 will not be triggered until after 2018 or even not at all. It might be worth a flutter even at these odds.³

The confusion over the whole process mirrors the shambles of the current British political scene. The Conservative Party has managed, temporarily, to patch over its differences as parties in power tend to do by appointing prominent 'exiters' to negotiate the perhaps impossible task of leaving. Just how long the main 'exit' and probable leadership contender, Boris Johnson, will continue to accept

the role of a Foreign Minister, largely excluded from negotiating the exit of which he was such a strong proponent, remains to be seen. However, there is no real ideological difference here apart from the EU, and the party will certainly remain united if rancorous.

The same cannot be said, however, of the centre-left party, Labour. It is reducing itself to complete mockery in a leadership contest in which a clearly incompetent incumbent, Corbyn, who gained the support of only 20% of his MPs in a no-confidence vote, will probably defeat an unknown challenger of dubious background, having gained almost god-like status amongst a band of new arrivals to Labour, mostly southern and, often, rather well-off. Genuine long-term, potential leaders of Labour are

“The impact on Africa has some interesting aspects, not least that the UK would, perforce, no longer be a party to the controversial Economic Partnership Agreement signed with 16 West African states in 2014 along with similar ones signed with other African countries.”

standing aside, presumably hoping to become leader after the Corbyn-led electoral defeat which all assume will happen after his re-election as leader which all also assume will happen. (Bookmakers odds are currently 8/1 on Corbyn winning the leadership contest and 4/11 on the Conservatives winning the next election).

However some doubt must exist as to whether Labour will survive at all as a major party after this debacle. The central problem for it is that there are serious ideological splits which have only been exacerbated by the half-hearted performance of Corbyn during

the referendum campaign. There now essentially exist three broad groups inside Labour; the old-socialists like Corbyn whose political position is little changed from the 1970s including a knee-jerk rejection of the EU; the equally old-fashioned social-democrats as reworked by Tony Blair and a new and somewhat incoherent grouping who want to transform the Labour Party into a social movement rather than a conventional political party and who see Corbyn as the leader of this change. This group sees Podemos in Spain, the Five Star Movement in Italy and Syriza Greece as their models. They are likely to be disappointed in this ambition as Corbyn and his advisers are actually rather conventional politicians, albeit ones from a previous generation. Just what will happen when they are disillusioned is difficult to predict.

The most predictable outcome of the British exit is that there will be renewed pressure in Scotland for independence. 62% of Scottish voters wanted to remain in the EU and there are undoubted economic benefits for Scotland in remaining if only in the amount of EU funding which the country receives. The independence referendum in 2014 resulted in 55.3% voting to stay, again a clear but narrow result which could easily swing the other way. The leaders of the Scottish National Party are not advocating any rerun of the previous vote, at least not yet. Having destroyed Scottish Labour in the 2015 national elections, they are content to let events in England run their way. (Current odds are roughly evens on a second vote).

The impact on Africa has some interesting aspects, not least that the UK would, perforce, no longer be a party to the controversial Economic Partnership Agreement signed with 16 West African states in 2014 along with similar ones signed with other African countries. This has been widely criticised by, amongst others, Germany's African Commissioner, Günter Nooke,⁴ as likely to harm these economies following, as it does, the usual neoliberal trade ideas of open markets and no state support for developing industries. UK withdrawal could allow a more generous agreement, though the ideology of the current government could act against this. South Africa has had a trade agreement with

the EU (the Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement) which came into force in 2004 and this too would need renegotiation.

Another impact could be on development aid. The UK currently contributes around €1.2 billion annually to the EU aid budget which would be withdrawn upon exit. In principle, the UK would remain committed to continuing an aid level of 0.7% of GNP and, as its indirect EU contribution is counted in this, it should simply redirect an equivalent sum to British bilateral finance. However, as is the way of such things, this may not happen in quite such an amount. The Development Secretary appointed by the new Prime Minister, Theresa May, is known to be ideologically hostile to the concept of development aid and may favour shifting British funds to business-orientated deals with China and India. In any event, the countries to which the UK devotes finance in Africa are, with the exception of Ethiopia, mostly ex-British colonies such as Nigeria, a rather different proportion than the EU pattern. There could, therefore, be a significant shift in both the volume and the balance of development aid in Africa.

In many respects, the British political train-wreck brings it in line with the political scene throughout Europe. The previous article noted that the pattern of a centre-right/centre-left party structure is collapsing as people lose faith in the old parties. In eastern Europe, which has very little tradition of this kind, there is a disturbing rise of the neo-fascist parties which have, so far, achieved only marginal purchase in western Europe. However, in France, Marine Le Pen, leader of the far-right National Front, is dancing with glee at the British vote as she believes it will encourage her supporters to push their own dislike of the EU. She will probably not become French President in elections next year, just like Donald Trump surely cannot become US President. Surely not. (To continue the bookmaker theme, Le Pen is currently 7/2, much the same odds as Trump).

But the French President, Hollande, is currently committing suicide by forcing through measures deeply unpopular with his own Socialist party,

using extra-parliamentary powers in the name of the neoliberal austerity programme imposed by Brussels and the German government. Big fascist gains in the French Assembly seem inevitable. In the Netherlands, Dutch anti-immigration leader Geert Wilders, leader of the Party for Freedom, is currently heading opinion polls on the basis of calling for a referendum on leaving the EU if he is elected in elections in March, 2017. Italy and Greece are dying under EU-imposed austerity policies whilst Spain seems unable to even form a government. With an Italian referendum on constitutional reforms due in the autumn, the latest vogue word in Euro-politics, replacing Brexit, is Quitaly, the possibility that Italy will ultimately vote to leave the EU. This might happen if the Five Star Movement, led by TV comedian Beppe Grillo, defeats the autumn referendum following its recent victories in 19 out of the 20 cities in which it stood mayoral candidates, including Rome and Turin. Revealingly, the 5SM claims not to be a party but a social movement. Perhaps most startlingly, in Iceland, the Pirate Party may be on the brink of becoming the governing party. (Please don't ask).

Just why have we reached this parlous state? Zygmunt Bauman, the venerable political scientist has the following answer:

*We could describe what is going on at the moment as a crisis of democracy, the collapse of trust: the belief that our leaders are not just corrupt or stupid, but inept. Action requires power, to be able to do things, and we need politics, which is the ability to decide what needs to be done. But that marriage between power and politics in the hands of the nation state has ended. Power has been globalized, but politics is as local as before. Politics has had its hands cut off. People no longer believe in the democratic system because it doesn't keep its promises. We see this, for example, with the migration crisis: it's a global phenomenon, but we still act parochially. Our democratic institutions were not designed for dealing with situations of interdependence. The current crisis of democracy is a crisis of democratic institutions.*⁵

Thus Europeans hear their national leaders say that they will resolve the

refugee crisis, stop terrorism, provide more jobs, control the banks, increase economic growth... And then they don't. As a consequence they turn to parties or social movements disguised as parties which at least hold out the promise of action even though, as with Syriza in Greece, they prove unable to do this. In America, Trump bases his campaign on exactly this self-proclaimed ability to get things done.

In the coming two or three years of wearisome negotiations between Britain and the EU, it is possible that they will become irrelevant as the whole EU structure falls apart. Another Euro crisis, perhaps triggered by the collapse of Italian banks, a blanket refusal by some states to implement even a half-baked refugee resettlement programme, a continuing use of Article 7 of the Lisbon Treaty against neo-fascist regimes⁶, another anti-EU referendum in the Netherlands, Italy or France; any of these could make British exit a sideshow in the general chaos.

The overall result of the referendum in Britain, whatever happens in the rest of the EU, may well be some variant of option 3. As Lanchester puts it, "the likeliest outcome, ... is a betrayal of the white working class. They should be used to it by now." Used to it or not, such a betrayal may spark some far-reaching political consequences.

Yes, this continues to be a pessimistic assessment. We need more than brave Tess Asplund to offer opposition. To continue with news of my local choir, this month we are singing for the return of Joe Hill, the early-twentieth century Swedish-American trade unionist and songwriter framed on a murder charge and executed in 1915.⁷ Even that may not be enough. ■

References:

- ¹ <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v38/n15/john-lanchester/brexit-blues>
- ² The time taken for the UK to regain membership of the WTO has been made much of inside the UK by Remain campaigners. However, there is nothing to prevent a country trading under WTO rules whilst applying for membership.
- ³ For those inclined to a flutter, all the odds quoted here are all taken from <http://www.oddschecker.com/politics>, a compilation of online bookmakers.
- ⁴ <https://www.euractiv.com/section/development-policy/news/eu-africa-free-trade-agreement-destroys-development-policy-says-merkel-advisor/>
- ⁵ http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/01/19/inenglish/1453208692_424660.html?id_externo_rsoc=FB_CC
- ⁶ See *The Thinker* issue 69 for its preliminary use against Poland.
- ⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5J-V_axAQAE



The World Economy Sets Sail from the G20 Hangzhou Summit

The Hangzhou Summit, for the first time, gave priority to development in the global macro-policy framework and devised the first G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

By Tian Xuejun

On September 4 and 5, the 11th Group 20 (G20) Summit was successfully held in Hangzhou, China. Under the theme of “Towards an Innovative, Invigorated, Interconnected and Inclusive World Economy”, Chinese President Xi Jinping, together with leaders of the G20 member states, eight guest countries and seven international organisations built strong consensus and developed ambitious

blueprints during the Summit. The G20 Hangzhou Summit attracted wide attention from the global society and has been unanimously praised for its fruitful results.

A highlight in the history of the G20

The Hangzhou Summit enjoyed the participation of the largest number of developing countries in the G20’s history. Besides the ten emerging economies within the group, China

also invited Thailand, currently the President of the Group of 77, Laos, which holds the ASEAN Chairmanship, Chad, whose President is Chair of the African Union, Senegal, whose President chairs the NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development) Heads of State and Governments Orientation Committee; and two other major developing countries, Kazakhstan and Egypt, to attend the Hangzhou Summit. It sent a clear

message to the world that the G20 does not only belong to these 20 countries, but also belongs to the whole world, especially to the developing world.

The Hangzhou Summit has achieved the largest number of outcomes in the G20 history. The G20 Leaders' Communiqué from the Hangzhou Summit and 28 specific outcome documents were issued during the Summit. These outcomes are mainly related to strengthening policy coordination, innovating growth models, global economic and financial governance, international trade and investment and inclusive and interconnected development. The Summit reached a Hangzhou Consensus of vision, integration, openness, and inclusiveness. It also enabled the G20 to transform from a crisis response mechanism focusing on short-term policies to one of long-term governance shaping medium- to long-term policies, and helped consolidate its role as the premier forum for international economic governance.

The Hangzhou Summit, for the first time, gave priority to development in the global macro-policy framework and devised the first G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is also groundbreaking for the Summit to put forward action plans and documents on innovative growth, global trade growth strategies and structural reform. The G20 Guiding Principles for Global Investment Policy-making has laid out the first global framework of multilateral rules governing international investment, filling the previous void. The Summit released the first G20 Presidency Statement on Climate Change and for the first time clearly proposed to leverage a host of effective policy tools, fiscal, monetary and structural, so as to promote global economic growth. And many more pioneering policies and breakthroughs were achieved during the Summit.

A solution to the sluggish world economic recovery

Eight years ago, at the height of the financial crisis, the G20 members, acting in a spirit of unity and partnership, stopped the world economy from free

fall and pushed it onto the track of stability and recovery. Eight years on, today, the world economy continues to move along a twisted path to recovery. It is standing at a crucial juncture where new growth drivers are taking the place of old ones. The dynamism provided by the last round of the scientific and industrial revolution is waning while new impetus for growth is still in the making. Currently, population aging and lower growth rates are challenging all major economies. Economic globalisation is suffering setbacks; protectionism is rising; the risks of excessive leverage and bubbles are building up. Complex geopolitical factors and regional hot-spot issues as well as global challenges such as political and security conflicts and turmoil, refugee crises, climate change

“For the first time, the G20 decided to take collective actions to support industrialisation in Africa and the least developed countries.”

and terrorism have all affected the world economy with consequences that cannot be overlooked.

By making an accurate assessment of the health of the world economy, China together with all participants of the Summit has found certain prescriptions that should address both the symptoms and root causes and propel the world economy onto a path of recovery.

First, the Summit charted the course for the world economy. The G20 members will further strengthen macro-policy communication and coordination, work in the spirit of partnership to promote mutual help and win-win cooperation, address both the symptoms and root causes, and leverage a host of effective policy tools to promote global growth.

Second, the G20 is resolved to break a new path for growth and inject new impetus into the world economy.



Chinese Ambassador to South Africa,
Tian Xuejun

Members will implement the G20 Blueprint on Innovative Growth as well as action plans on innovation, new industrialisation and the digital economy so as to fundamentally advance sustainable and sound economic development world-wide.

Third, the G20 is resolved to improve global economic and financial governance to enhance the resilience of the world economy. Members agreed to advance the quota and governance reform of international financial institutions. They also formulated an action plan on energy access, renewable energy and energy efficiency, and reached consensus on further deepening anti-corruption cooperation.

Fourth, the G20 is resolved to revitalise international trade and investment as two key engines of growth and build an open world economy. Members will carry out the G20 Strategy for Global Trade Growth and the G20 Guiding Principles for Global Investment Policy-making and continue to support the multilateral trade system and reiterate their commitment to rejecting protectionism.

Fifth, the G20 is resolved to promote inclusive and interconnected development so that G20 cooperation will deliver benefits to the whole world. Members agreed to encourage the early entry into force of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development so as to

bring real benefits to the people of developing countries.

China's global responsibility

China made unremitting efforts to ensure the success of the Hangzhou Summit. Since taking the G20 presidency last November, China has held over 70 support activities including four Sherpa Meetings, three meetings of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, a meeting of Labour and Employment Ministers, an Energy Ministerial Meeting, and many working group meetings. China also held the Business 20, the Labour 20, the Think 20, the Youth 20, the Women 20 and the Civil 20 and listened to the voices of various social sectors. Furthermore, China has carried out comprehensive G20 Outreach Dialogues with the United Nations, the African Union, the least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island countries, which have received wide support and recognition from the international community.

China has contributed its own wisdom to the success of the Hangzhou Summit. The theme and agenda items, which were both present-oriented and future-oriented, focused on the deep-seated problems restricting the growth of the world economy. Under the guidance of further advancing domestic supply-side structural reform, China has promoted the adoption of relevant documents on structural reform at the Hangzhou Summit, fully demonstrating China's guiding and leading role at the Summit. China issued the Position Paper on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and aligned the implementation of the development agenda with the "13th Five-Year" plan, which plays a positive role in leading all countries to jointly formulate action plans under the G20 framework.

President Xi stressed that the G20 should be an action team instead of a talk shop. Under China's efforts, the Hangzhou Summit has placed the implementation of the agreed outcomes as a top priority and formulated action plans for many areas such as sustainable development, green finance, energy and combating corruption. Members

will endeavour to ensure each and every plan is implemented. China has also honoured commitments and shouldered responsibilities by taking the lead to ratify the Paris Agreement and handed over the instruments of joining the Paris Agreement to the UN Secretary-General together with the United States in Hangzhou.

China's global responsibility also lies in its domestic economic reform and diplomatic strategies. Starting from 2016, China will cut down production capacity of crude steel by another 100 million to 150 million tons in the next five years, close more coal mines with production capacity of around 500 million tons and cut production capacity of around 500 million tons through coal mine restructuring in three to five years. President Xi pointed out that China's new mechanisms and initiatives are not a one-man show.

“The Hangzhou Summit will make G20 a new starting point and will steer the giant ship of the world economy on a new voyage.”

Rather, they are an invitation open to all. It is not a pursuit to establish China's own sphere of influence, but to support the common development of all countries. It is not meant to build China's own backyard, but a garden shared by all countries.

Injecting new impetus into China-Africa cooperation

Last December, on the occasion of Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to South Africa and the co-chairing of the Johannesburg Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), Chinese and African leaders together mapped out a new blue print for win-win cooperation and common development, ushering China-Africa relations into a new era. Today, both sides have been making remarkable progress in implementing China-Africa ten cooperation plans.

When commenting on the G20 Hangzhou Summit outcomes in the area of development, President Xi mentioned "for the first time" three times in his remarks. For the first time, the G20 gave priority to development in the global macro-policy framework. For the first time, the G20 devised a groundbreaking Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For the first time, the G20 decided to take collective actions to support industrialisation in Africa and the least developed countries.

At present, China-Africa relations are stronger than ever and our cooperation continues to enjoy enormous potential. In my opinion, the future prospects of China-Africa cooperation could be summarised as four expressions related to the Summit theme, namely: innovative economies providing an inexhaustible momentum for growth; invigorated institutions offering the strongest capacity for results delivery; interconnected growth making our respective national development closer; and inclusive development representing the shared pursuit of China-Africa cooperation.

We already have the blueprint on China-Africa cooperation, and it is time for us to translate it into actions. China will strive to implement the outcomes of the FOCAC Johannesburg Summit, the Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the G20 Initiative on Supporting Industrialisation in Africa and the least developed countries, and further deepen the cooperation with Africa in various fields, in particular sustainable development and industrialisation so as to open up new horizons for China-Africa cooperation and bring more benefits to our peoples especially the African people.

As a saying goes, "Facing the vast ocean that embraces thousands of streams, let us set sail now that the wind is fair". The Hangzhou Summit will make G20 a new starting point and will steer the giant ship of the world economy on a new voyage from the shoal of the Qiantang River to the destination of strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth. ■

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The African Renaissance and the Prophetic Genius of Mazisi Kunene



Mazisi Kunene's art may thus be redeeming in its reaffirmation of the centrality of African forms of expression as the instrument required to transcend and to rise above the subjugation of that universe and its peoples.

By Ademola Araoye

The imposing genius of Mazisi Kunene is in forcing an acknowledgement of the solidity of our own greatness in spite of ourselves. The transcendental, transformatory and emancipatory character of the corpus of his works assures this. These works, most exemplified by the epics "Emperor Shaka the Great" and the "Anthem of the Decade", the primary references in this appreciation, are best situated as a redeeming defiance of entrenched

epistemological foundations of a hostile social universe – this in an age and era when the validated fad was the instigated self-repudiation of the very quintessence of our black humanity.

Central to and included in these inspired self-repudiated essences were the cosmology and understandings of the self in all its expressive forms, and in this particular instance, the language and art forms of the subjugated. Repudiating the grundnorms of this hostile clime and

era and sacrificing the immediate and immense dividends of capitulation to hegemonic forces and their preferred forms of expressions, Mazisi Kunene's work languished in the obscurity that befell all other expressions outside the hegemonic genre that by their mere presence sought to validate their own authenticity on their own terms. This included narratives of African peoples rendered in their original languages.

These narratives, flowing from the experiential groundings of their

existence as a people, validated their cultural consciousness and forms as authentic representations of themselves. In these circumstances, surviving the onslaught of hegemonic forces in itself becomes a victory of sorts. For now, that is the major forte of the works of Mazisi Kunene in winning the argument over relevance through the sheer depth of these works and the logic of his posture vis-à-vis his contemporaries. In a paradoxical manner, the African renaissance begins the process of redeeming his legacy, even as his legacy validates the renaissance as the next logical step in moving away from the entrenched false truisms of an imposed consciousness and the associated trauma of the recent past.

Accordingly, the argument over the most authentic medium for the expression of the African experience has been an enduring duel. It engaged Mazisi Kunene and was central to the axiomatic foundation of his artistic expression. Mazisi Kunene was clear that the pivotal conceptual structures to convey the African experience had to be anchored in African cosmological systems. In essence, the borrowing of foreign conceptual equivalences to convey ideas grounded in understandings of the universe by a people can only distort the fundamental canons of their understandings of that universe. This would significantly detract from the wholesomeness of the experience being transmitted to those outside of that world.

Sustaining the integrity of the experience being transmitted was an imperative. This was more relevant to the African narrative in the aftermath of the violence done to the African understandings of his universe by the deep intrusion of hegemonic forces in the totality of the African space. In the post-apartheid era and the attendant opening of the space for the flowering of the authentic consciousness of the hitherto suppressed black self, the need to reaffirm the validity of the expressive forms that had been subjugated in the curse of the violent intrusion into that universe became inevitable. This was a categorical element in the liberalisation of the new space and the emancipation of the self.

The context must be well understood. When European history colonised and occupied African history it ruptured too many things: emotional, metaphysical, cultural and so on.¹ For Mazisi Kunene, it was critical that the reaffirmation of the validity of African forms of expression be central to the artistic endeavours of African writers.

At the end of the first decade of the twenty-first millennium, this is still a bold assertion to make and a daunting objective to seek to attain. Yet, this argument has been enduring within his immediate environment in the South Africa of the 1930s and almost a generation later within African literary spheres. As Ntongela Masilela, the foremost interpreter of the African intellectual ferment of that era, notes:

Perhaps the most intractable fault line in South African literary history in the twentieth century was between

“For Mazisi Kunene, it was critical that the reaffirmation of the validity of African forms of expression be central to the artistic endeavours of African writers.”

those African writers who wrote in the African languages (in isiXhosa, isiZulu, in Sesoto, and so on) and those who wrote in the European languages (invariably in English). This historical divide emerged as a major intellectual debate in my country in the 1930s between.....

It seems to me that Mazisi Kunene's unsurpassable poetic act was a desperate and dramatic attempt to resurrect African cosmology in the modern world. This was absolutely daring. But is such a monumental effort achievable given that Western modernity has torn Africa asunder in every conceivable way. While he appears to us as a great poet of African spiritual crisis, he may appear to posterity as the last great diviner of African cosmology.²

Mazisi Kunene's art may thus be redeeming in its reaffirmation of the centrality of African forms of expression as the instrument required to transcend and to rise above the subjugation of that universe and its peoples. For Kunene, drawing from the well of communal wisdom, the poem song in the African narrative is essentially a homage from the many voices that in their excellence must feed the dream and of the future times.

The teller of tales sits on the mountainside,

Listening and humming his song in homage;

From many hills, the poems of excellence are sung

The nights feed the dream and those of future times.³

Mazisi Kunene intones that the poet must lead the way to illuminate and transcend the present.

We sing a great new song

From the power of life, each generation gives birth

Until by the thickness of their numbers their dust darkens the sun

Some one is pregnant

The child shall rejoice in what is to come

A son of our nation follows the dark path to the forest.

He shall open the way for the children

Because of him the sun shall wait, Linger in the east until he has arrived

To accompany him it opens its giant center,

Exposing the path into the end of the earth.⁴

Notwithstanding these prophecies, Kunene, tapping into and exploring the original voice of the community notes the tragic contemporaneous circumstances.

Such were the songs of the oracle

But no one was listening

Except one young boy whose body he entered,

Generating in it a great power

Binding his lips until the Forefathers had spoken.⁵

In these challenging circumstances, the very survival of the works of Mazisi Kunene stands them out in their tenacious validation of the authenticity of African contribution in its most

original voices and medium to world philosophy and literature. This is not a mean achievement as the narrative rendered in the original voices of a people becomes the instrument for the articulation of the very essences that the hegemonic forces seek to annihilate. The voice of a narrative is a critical element in validating its content. It locates the content in a proper context. The socio-cultural context is essentially the canvass on which a narrative presents itself. The voice of the context is thus a significant factor in validating a narrative. This may be understood as a reformulation of the Mazisi Kunene's thesis that a people's literature, as captured in his epics, should reaffirm the centrality of its cosmos and its understandings of its own locus in that cosmology. These narratives in their own original voices to the other worlds should project these understandings as legitimate contributions to the canons of world knowledge and codified human experience. And these should be validated by the mere fact of their own being and not by some externally imposed prejudices.

The struggle against captives of the other worlds in African societies of his time and the universal validation of the false truisms embedded in the acclaim acquired by African stories in hegemonic voices was essentially the burden of Mazisi Kunene. It was thus of determinant import that his narrative be served in the most original and authentic form; in Zulu, in what constitutes the very grounding of the historical epics of his narratives, as depicted in Emperor Shaka the great and the Anthem of the Decades and his many unpublished works.

The power of the Mazisi Kunene's epics were not in any way diminished by the prejudices of the seemingly unending eternal moments of pain and deprivation that still subsist, thriving even in the first decade of the new millennium, to challenge his robust thesis that the African narrative must not only be convened and conveyed in its most authentic voices to the world, but also must be placed at par on the highest pedestal accorded other global voices. These stout affirmations pre-date the more recent discourse on the true attributes of African literary

voice expressed in the post-colonial discourse regarding the appropriate medium for the transmission of the African narrative. His epics, Emperor Shaka the Great and the Anthem of the Decades are two works that mine the rich cultural heritage of the Zulu and exploit vast swathes of epistemological currents of its society to ascend the very zenith of literary accomplishment. It is no coincidence that the contemporaneous recognition of the transcendental nature of these works which directly force us to confront the complexities and sophistication of the repertoires of our own particularistic universe as a part of the heritage of humanity, should coincide with the post-apartheid era. For apartheid was in its self the brutal expression of an instigated repudiation of the very essence of this

“Its Africanist (Bantucentric) worldview contrasts sharply with established negative understandings and facile interpretations of the African cosmology”

strand of humanity and every virtue associated with its understandings of the cosmos, worldviews and the experiential foundations of its manner of living-culture and in all its expressive ramifications.

The fate of the works of Masizi Kunene epitomised the tragic obscurity of the virtues of the black soul and spirit that the African renaissance attempts to rejuvenate. The fate of his works is one dimension, albeit a critical one, of the very fate of a whole people, and by extension a whole race. Yet, this fate was doomed to its tragic redemption in his prophetic vision. For in the triumphant proclamations of Nqoboka:

I am possessed of the voices of the Zulus.

The great congregations of peoples

are singing and talking;

Their voices penetrate through to the Ancestral Spirits.

I feel their presence; I feel the presence of the ancient heroes.

Even those who wish us ill dare not speak! ⁶

This salvo resonates with the entrenched defiance of the process of the African Renaissance, understood as a black-centered counterpoise to the dominant structure of ideas and the norms and institutions that govern relations in the system, as a radical philosophy. Its Africanist (Bantucentric) worldview contrasts sharply with established negative understandings and facile interpretations of the African cosmology that merely reflected an extension of power relations between Africa, descendants of Africans on the one hand and the hegemonic races who instituted the hegemonic structures of knowledge that were imposed on all subjugated in its path. The renaissance therefore seeks to repudiate the principal euro-centric and residual, even if still potent, Arab-Islamic ideational structures that constitute the foundations of the dominant order that have always defined the peripheral locus and irrelevance of the black world in the universe.

The African Renaissance is also a process of and a constructivist paradigm for action. Its philosophical roots can be traced to the heterogeneous traditions of the structure of African belief systems and values and its multiple expressions. As a codified system of ideas and values, it synthesises the positive elements of these traditions with pan-Africanist ideals that have remained elusive into a coherent system of ideas that would guide common approaches to the multifarious challenges before Africans. In the formulation of epistemological institutions dedicated to the reversal of extra-African structures of knowledge, the renaissance seeks first and foremost to deconstruct the divisive definitions of the identities of African peoples and thereby reconstruct the common interests of all Bantu peoples. The African Renaissance revolves around three pivotal elements of transcendentalism, transformation and emancipation. These, together, distill the historical and experiential

impulses of African societies at the end of the twentieth century. They express a changing cognitive complexity in the interpretation of historical forces that have moulded developments in Black Africa and responses adopted as a result. This is a multi-dimensional enterprise. Mazisi Kunene's works represent one critical element of this multi-dimensional challenge.

Nothing in the literary firmament of Africa since the written word has done more to sustain the validity of the African medium as an authentic vehicle of the African narrative and promote the emancipatory, transcendentalism and transformatory virtues of African culture, including its numerous voices and stories, than the works of Mazisi Kunene. For both conservative and radical strains of the African renaissance, the end goal is the reaffirmation of the authenticity of the ideational structures and fundamental values that constituted the African space before its defilement. The goal is the transformation, at the spiritual, emotional, psychical and material levels, of the existential realities of the people. That captures the distilled quintessence of Mazisi Kunene in a way no other literary figure in the African firmament can lay claim to. Mazisi Kunene then emerges as the fierce ancient literary bastion of the inevitability of a coming restoration of the disdained world of the African and its humiliated human universe. Mazisi Kunene slides open the window to this denied ancient vista. Through his works, he provides an indelible stamp of legitimation to the cultural wellsprings and fountains that finally break as well as extend the boundaries of the horizon of the world. Kunene's burdens thus paradoxically constituted a restoration of the world through the infusion of vital voices long muffled by the articulators of hegemonic cacophony. Kunene's authentic voice must then restore our faith as we cross the flooded river in a purification of our world in the restoration of ourselves:

We are a proud nation; we beg from no one

He spoke this way to restore his own faith,

To beg to give him the fruits of her envied power

He knew she alone was the voice to whom all paid tribute

Her visions were like the long tails of lightning.

From her mind's branches the traveler crossed the flooded rivers.⁷

Mazisi Kunene represented one sharp end of an ideological and historical polarity. The dialectical struggle at the level of ideas is given concrete expressions to in the conflicts that are implicit in the unending struggle to define what constitutes the authentic voice of a people, a race. The voice couches the narratives of a people with its natural accent. A narrative is imbued with legitimacy when all can relate and pay tribute to it as a communal voice, expressive of the nuanced sophistry as only the people as a community can claim its authorship.

“Through his works, he provides an indelible stamp of legitimation to the cultural wellsprings and fountains that finally break as well as extend the boundaries of the horizon of the world.”

The poet becomes a possessed vessel of the assertion of communal narrative and the legitimation of this voice as the epistemological foundations of the society. This process of legitimation has been integral to the historical struggle for emancipation.

Indeed, Kunene was essentially a struggle and his works an arsenal in a titanic clash that pits a seemingly overpowering force in all its pretences against an entrenched cultural universe that would not succumb to the literal firepower of the alien narrow understandings of the world. The dimensions of the struggle that Mazisi Kunene championed remain now as the turbulent undercurrent in the open navigation of progressive forces to translate the gains of the end of the twentieth century beyond the

mere material acquisition that is often equated with modernity.

The end of the twentieth century itself coincided with the dissipation of historical conjunctures that had been central to the social construction of the world of black Africa. These historical conjunctures were constituted by the confluence of four major developments.

These developments include the end of the cold war that made bankrupt traditional calculus of super power strategic concerns. The fluidity of the end of the Cold War initially put on hold the need of hegemonic forces to manipulate the African space and contradictions as pawns in grand global strategies across ideological lines of the cold war. The second is the de-legitimation of the concept of spheres of influence maintained by neo-colonial forces and a third was the final defeat of apartheid in South Africa. Finally, the paradoxes of a globalisation process set in motion by the end of the Cold War has called into question the relevance of colonially inspired political institutions that have remained dysfunctional to the transformation, emancipation and developmental aspiration of all Bantu peoples. The twentieth century, as a historical era, was underpinned by dominant Euro-centric and entrenched, even if residual, Arab-Islamic structures of knowledge and values which defined the numerous identities of black peoples, imposed contra-pulling interests and reinforced the hegemony of the extra-Africa structures of ideas within the African world.

Mazisi Kunene was the early precursor of a struggle. In its repudiation of the dominant extra-African structures of knowledge and values as the pivots of the organisation of society and the locus of the Bantu within the global spectrum, the African Renaissance challenges the structural foundations on which the superstructure of the international realm and the domineering voices of global narratives are built. This international realm is founded on colonially inspired alien structures of knowledge that transformed the historical geography of Africa in a

few years. The penetration of these alien forces into Africa truncated the trajectory of developments in societies. It put in its stead incongruous ideas and institutions that confused identities of the peoples and instituted an arbitrary divisive redefinition of the allegiances of the continent. These, in turn, have spun pervasive illegitimacies and multidimensional crises in post-colonial institutions that have remained the challenge of black Africa in the second half of the ending century. These extra-African structures of knowledge, which have dominated the African space since, created new contentions among black Africans as a result of the alienating impact of the structures of ideas, values and institutions which were the bases of the social construction of the black world. Africa's relations with the universe, the dominant values and worldviews, the rules and norms that governed intra-African relations and the place of black Africa in the universal scheme of affairs were thus externally derived.

From one stanza to another, Mazisi Kunene rises to transcendental heights in his prophetic sermons on the curse of the invading force that must seek to disembowel the universe of the Zulu, implied the universe of black humanity.

He said: My great sister, this beer pot from which I drink

Is one which was given to me by my father, Jama

He said to me, "Drink from this beer pot, my son,

And never be afraid of the stampede of feet.

Often people rush and whip up dust in all directions,

Invoking others to join them in their haste but to no avail

They are blinded by their own enthusiasms.

You, wiser than them, must pace behind, watching their footsteps

Indeed, however fast you may race you will not earn their love

However much you may give of your treasure and powers

None of this may satisfy their appetites

They shall enter through the small gate into your royal enclosure,

Breaking taboos, letting themselves roam at will,

Until finally they shall demand the secret of your bowels!"

I can still hear the vibrations of my father's voice

It is only the Ancestors who know how to guide us

It is to them only that I shall humble myself.⁸

The African Renaissance confronts this disemboweled construction of the African world as a philosophy and a paradigm of action. The implication of the Mandelan accentuation of the African-ness of the Bantu is to challenge the legitimacy of post-colonial and conservative identities and interests constructed by the alien imposed regime. Mazisi Kunene's strife and, consequently, these transcendental products of the struggle are integral to the defiance of the larger destructive

“A narrative is imbued with legitimacy when all can relate and pay tribute to it as a communal voice, expressive of the nuanced sophistry as only the people as a community can claim its authorship.”

foment of this epoch. His works thus threatened the foundations of the alien instigated self-repudiation of the African and helped to legitimise, at the spiritual level, the deadly resistance in the struggles that were adumbrated in that hostile space, and temporal environment.

Mazisi, accordingly, transports us to a very critical juncture as the clash between now dominant systems of ideas alien to Africa on the one hand and the confrontation between strands of the alien forces and African values and systems, including and especially religious beliefs systems, on the other hand, begin to destabilise African communities. In the first confrontations Africans unhinged from their cultural moorings have been instrumentalised

as vanguard and shock troops of alien systems seeking to consolidate their hegemonies in the black universe.

Consistent with Mazisi Kunene's exploration of the Zulu understandings of the cosmos and the relations between the gods and man in that understanding, in the Anthem of the Decades, the debate between Sodume and the princess demonstrates the importance of the social responsibility of the gods in the realigning of the social construction of the world, including punishing the negligence of living. This is a critical nexus in directing social action. Yet, the basic assumption of the Zulu is that all entities in the universe and ultimately the cosmos are physical, even if everything cannot be judged on the basis of their physical attributes. In the rich metaphors of the Anthem of the Decades, Sodume confronts all with the futility of yielding to the allures of temptation as her messenger witnesses to the sight of a brooding Somazwi:

... I found Sodume at his home

Tearing at dusk with streaks of lightning.

As I came closer I saw large processions

Walking triumphantly as though from distant worlds

Perhaps they were messengers who fertilize the earth.

I, too, faltered and got carried away by their triumphs

I heard them narrating tales of great earth-harvests

I checked my envy as I realized

How such happiness is shot through with uncertainty.

This I discovered when I planted my words in the wind⁹

As the emptiness of the instigated allures becomes manifest, it is inevitable that the African universe realigns itself by revalidating its own values and its existential structures through narratives rendered in its own voices. ■

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Underestimating the impact of poverty – the Conundrum of post-colonial governance



By Oscar van Heerden

The 2016 local government election in South Africa in August was as much a lesson in modern day politics as it was a reality check for the governing party, the ANC. A post mortem, I argue, will point to a number of challenges and shortcomings that have led to this disastrous outcome, which amounts to a comprehensive message from the electorate. As always one must look back to history in order

to clearly understand the present and indeed how to respond for the future, so let me begin.

Exiles versus those who remained in the country during Apartheid

With the return of the exiled Comrades of the liberation organisations, in particular the ANC, the inxiles of the Mass Democratic Movement in general and the UDF

in particular were asked to dismantle their power bases and agree to be incorporated into the structures of the ANC. This in the main was agreed upon by many Comrades but there remained a few that saw this as problematic.

Ever since the ANC leadership from exile re-entered the country with the collapse of the Apartheid regime they have been at the forefront of the leadership contest. Over the last 30 years they have made sure they remain in the driving seat of power. In December 1989 the Conference for a Democratic Future was convened and the leadership of the ANC insisted that only political formations would be allowed to participate. Hence COSATU as an organisation could not participate, even though their membership at the time was in excess of two million and the ANC at the time was not as yet a mass based organisation. The United Democratic Front also abdicated their power and soon the entire Mass Democratic Movement followed suit.

One could argue that every breakaway since 1994 from the ANC was indeed led by internal Comrades away from the Exile leadership types in the main. Be it the UDM, COPE or the EFF parties.

I argue that this is Reason 1 for the premature demise of the ANC.

Better few but Better

The debate almost immediately after the return of Comrades was whether the ANC should be a mass movement with branches all over the country or whether it should remain a small dedicated elite group whose purpose was to provide the requisite leadership to the masses of the people. This debate also found expression in the South African Communist Party at the time with Hani and Slovo arguing for the massification option as opposed to Thabo Mbeki and others who argued for the Lenin approach of better few but better option – but it was ultimately decided that both organisations would appeal to the general public and encourage mass memberships across the length and breadth of the country. This caused much consternation amongst some Comrades.

Firstly, in the ANC the branch is the most powerful unit of the

organisation and as such they have become the most contested spaces within the organisation. Membership and hence votes are being bought in order to ensure that a certain crop of leadership is elected who in turn can influence which Comrades get into the leadership in the Regional platforms and furthermore into the Provincial leadership. Every level of the organisation has access to public funds, whether at Ward level or Metro level.

This constitutes Reason 2 for the premature demise of the ANC.

The ANC as the Governing Party

As soon as the ANC took power from the Apartheid regime, the organisation was plagued by infighting and factional politics. The sheer scale and size of the public purse was unfathomable and the knowledge that the ANC now ruled over the economy of the country carried the risk of corrupting those in power.

It did not take long before the infighting became so bad in the ANC that certain decisions had to be revisited, such as the appointment of Premiers. The story line went like this: whoever was nominated for the position of Provincial Chairperson automatically in most cases became the candidate for the Premier position in that province. Similarly, the regional Chairpersons were most likely to become the candidates for the Mayoral positions in the local government level. This meant simply that whoever became the chairperson governed over the public purse in that province, acquiring enormous power over others.

As a result factionalism and destabilisation tactics crept in from all quarters of the organisation. So when former President Motlanthe states that there is no leadership in the ANC and that the entire organisation at all levels is compromised, including the Alliance partners, this is what he is referring to.

This constitutes Reason 3 for the premature demise of the ANC.

Current Voting System in the ANC

The internal processes of the ANC as an organisation also contribute to the challenges faced today. For starters, the disastrous state of the membership system of the organisation remains

a serious bone of contention. Some argue that it suits the incumbents because they can continuously manipulate membership numbers with the run up to conferences including the elective conferences of the ANC. The voting system employed in the ANC has proven to be divisive, factionalised and slates based.

Perhaps what is required is some 'out of the box' thinking with regards to this matter. For example, the top six officials of the ANC could be elected by the entire membership of the ANC throughout the country before an elective conference; that way the focus of conference would not be on leadership elections but on substantive policy, where members could concentrate on discussing the serious social and economic matters plaguing the country.

Another possibility could be that

“For example, the top six officials of the ANC could be elected by the entire membership of the ANC throughout the country before an elective conference”

the ANC have a reduced National Executive Committee, returning to the 40 members directly elected and perhaps they too can be elected by the entire ANC membership. This would go a long way towards ensuring efficiency and cogent discussions at the various conferences. Also, there must be a quota on how many of the NEC members can be in the Executive branch of government because currently, when you want to express a serious point which could be contrary to that of the President of the organisation, you could be reluctant to express it in full without fear or favour because he or she may also be your boss in government. And as much as comrades say that this will not negatively impact on you as an NEC member it does demand maturity

and strength of personality in the incumbent.

This constitutes Reason 4 for the premature demise of the ANC.

It is for the elder men to rule and for the younger to submit

These were the famous words of Plato with regards to the gerontocracy in Greece during his time. You see the elite in Ancient Greece were among the first to believe in this practice. They were of the opinion that power accumulates over time to those in power and that therefore the elders are the rightful leaders and can most appropriately exercise/wield such power.

It seems we here in South Africa suffer from the same belief.

Over the last 30 years the ANC leadership has been largely composed of returned exiles and former political prisoners. Although many internal leaders were absorbed into the ANC it is apparent now in hindsight that the former exiles dominated. When Mandela wanted to rectify this by suggesting a younger cadre should perhaps be his deputy, since at the time the person was the Secretary General of the ANC, this was met with fierce opposition.

I mention all this because today we hear that a certain candidate is being considered who if successful will be 71 years old when taking high office and 76 after one term in office. If serving both Presidential terms the candidate will be retiring at the age of 81. Consider that the President of the United States of America is currently 54 and in fact was 49 when taking office; similarly, the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom was 49 years old and was younger when first taking office.

Why then are South Africans so fond of gerontocracy?

There are currently 3 generations in the ANC that will have to slug it out for leadership positions and power in 2017. These are:

- The Kgalema generation /Tokyo/Jeff Radebe / Lindiwe Sisulu /Gordhan / Hanekom amongst others
- The Rapu generation / Makhura/ Cassel Mathale / Magashula / Sihle / Supra amongst others

- The generation of the 80s / Mbalula / Bhengu / Gigaba / Febe Potgieter / Mthetwa / Fiona Tregena / Solly Mapai amongst others.

This fight which in many ways is already playing itself out will only get uglier and it is all because the older leaders simply do not want to move aside and give the necessary space for the younger generations.

Very few names come to mind with regards the nineties, for example David Maimela and Lebogang Maile, but it is precisely because of this that the current youth is being captured and organised by the likes of the EFF.

How long must this phenomenon continue? All the necessary elements must be placed on the table of introspection, with nothing off limits. These should include:

- reviewing ANC processes about candidates to conferences;
- the constitution of the List Committee;
- if there must be 4500 delegates at Congress, why not an equal representation from all regions to make it inclusive? (in other words, if there are 250 ANC regions in SA then 3 delegates per region can attend all conferences);
- must the NEC have 85 members?
- the massification of the ANC membership (1.5 million);
- should we have a closer look at and compare to systems where the President is directly elected (like the USA)?
- how can we effectively use a Council of Elders?

Perhaps the party should constitute a Council of Elders, tried and tested Cadres of the movement, who have no material interest nor do they seek leadership positions. These cadres must then go around meeting with branches, RECs, PECs, establish the real concerns of the membership, compile a report and ‘speak truth to power’. I suspect the outcome of such an exercise would simply indicate that the entire organisation will have to be reconstituted from the branch level upwards. It’s like running a Windows computer system – you attempted to upgrade your software system but it did not work and the computer is now not functioning optimally. You must decide

to hit the reset button at some point and, yes, you face the inevitable danger of losing some data in the process but you must take the risk otherwise you will simply lose everything. The ANC is still in the analogue era with the DOS system running, whilst other parties are installing the latest Windows version.

I suspect one of the solutions to this is the fact that perhaps the ANC should not take the stance that succession politics and its discussions are taboo. Perhaps what is required is an open and frank and dare I say a deliberate conversation about the future of the ANC and its leadership.

It is precisely because of this extended stay, (when you have overstayed your welcome) by the older generation that our younger folk will have to contend with increasing discontent and dissent amongst our

“Perhaps the party should constitute a Council of Elders, tried and tested Cadres of the movement, who have no material interest nor do they seek leadership positions.”

voters.

I say this because I feel that since the real threat to the ANC’s parliamentary majority will come with the 2024 general election, the Gigaba and Mbalula generation must prepare themselves to occupy the opposition benches so as to further cement and consolidate our democracy going forward.

This constitutes Reason 5 for the premature demise of the ANC.

Common Ground – In search of Argument

I am reminded of a book I read many years ago by Ronald Dworkin, a Jurisprudence Professor from New York University, called “Is democracy possible here?”, in which he states, referring to the United States that:

Our politics is in an appalling

state, it seems we disagree fiercely on almost everything. We disagree about terror and security, social justice, religion in politics, who is fit to be a judge, and what democracy is. These are not civil disagreements; each side has no respect for the other. We are no longer partners in self-government; our politics are rather a form of War.

I contend that this is the state of affairs in the governing party currently in South Africa. I have to respectfully disagree with former President Motlanthe, when he states that the country is on auto pilot: in fact Mr President, the pilots are fighting in the cockpit.

As the search for reasoned action continues it is met with arrogance from those who currently wield power in the ANC. Many actions and events illustrate this, including:

- The Firing of former Finance Minister Nene from treasury, who was replaced by relatively unknown Des van Rooyen from parliament. Regardless of the Pension Fund and the economy respectively losing billions in revenue, we are reassured about the qualifications of van Rooyen (clearly indicating no remorse on the part of the President).
- The Constitutional Court found that President Jacob Zuma failed to uphold, defend and respect the very Constitution he swore to uphold as the supreme law of the land. Again, the South African people were met with arrogance including ANC members who disagreed with the half-hearted apology from the President.
- The biggest disgrace for the ANC under the Zuma administration was the “Marikana massacre”, where because of there being no discussion within the ANC on how to deal effectively with relations between Labour and Capital, we get this kind of outcome in a simple industrial action as we celebrate 22 years of our democracy. The Farlam Commission outcomes were nothing short of a slap in the face for the affected people of that part of South Africa. The arrogance displayed by the ANC leadership

from Deputy President downwards left a bitter taste in the mouths of many progressive Comrades.

- Then there is also the matter referred to as ‘State Capture’ which in effect is actually plainly and simply, Corruption. Any and all that are involved in unsavoury procurement practices in Government and are shown to have unduly benefitted through the tender system must be investigated and arrested. The electorate is not stupid and can see criminality from afar. It would be wise for the ANC to respect that and respond effectively to corrupt practices, and not do so selectively either.
- The violation of the constitution of the ANC is yet another serious matter that requires corrective action from the Leadership. “The practice of elected NEC members serving as Provincial Chairs is in violation of the ANC Constitution and should not be tolerated.” Clear violation of the Constitution with regards to how ordinary branches are constituted and who is a member or not, as we saw in the Free State province with the run up to Mangaung again.
- Political killings are becoming a regular feature on our political landscape; in particular but not exclusively in KZN and Mpumalanga provinces.

We have clearly underestimated how poverty levels in our country can negatively influence governance imperatives. As former President Mbeki stated in his annual Mandela Lecture:

Thus, everyday, and during every hour of our time beyond sleep, the demons embedded in our society, that stalk us at every minute, seem always to beckon each one of us towards a realisable dream and nightmare. With every passing second, they advise, with rhythmic and hypnotic regularity – get rich! get rich! get rich!

And thus has it come about that many of us accept that our common natural instinct to escape from poverty is but the other side of the same coin on whose reverse side is written the words – at all costs, get rich!

In these circumstances, personal wealth, and the public communication of the message that we are people of wealth, becomes, at the same time, the means by which we communicate the message that we are worthy citizens of our community, the very exemplars of what defines the product of a liberated South Africa.

This peculiar striving produces the particular result that manifestations of wealth, defined in specific ways, determine the individuality of each one of us who seeks to achieve happiness and self-fulfilment, given the liberty that the revolution of 1994 brought to all of us.

In these circumstances, the meaning of freedom has come to be defined not by the seemingly ethereal and therefore intangible gift of liberty, but by the designer labels on the clothes we wear, the cars we drive, the spaciousness of our houses and our yards, their geographic location, the company we keep, and what we do as part of that company!

Under the current leadership of the ANC, the line of Patronage and Dependency is absolute. One simply has to look at the SAA debacle, SABC, heads of MKVA and of course some Ministers and Deputy Ministers. They all know that when all is said and done, if there should be a change of leadership in the ANC tomorrow, they will not be able to defend why they occupy these esteemed positions in our society.

This is why the battle for power in the ANC is still going to become fierce and downright brutal as the governing party makes its way to its elective conference in 2017.

There seems to be no common ground in this current ANC.

This constitutes Reason 6 for the premature demise of the ANC.

Is democracy possible here?

In addition to the above, there are three cardinal challenges facing the movement at this juncture in our struggle and failure to deal with these effectively will spell disaster for us all, in my opinion.

These are: the politics of disillusion;

the politics of retribution; and the politics of ideology. Let me explain these further, below:

The politics of disillusionment

This challenge takes on two forms; the first is the fact that as the ANC we have succeeded in consistently spreading the message that change takes time. Over the past 15 years the ANC has delivered on most fronts, these being housing, water, electricity, health care, education, telecommunications, infrastructure etc. All of these are demands of the Freedom Charter as outlined by the people of our country. It has been slow progress in some areas but the fact remains that we communicated with our people that delivery takes time, and as such they were patient. People in one village or town knew that since delivery took place further afield, that it would get to them in due course and so they were prepared to wait.

However, something changed in the last 6 years. The message coming from Luthuli House seems to have changed. A more populist message perhaps crept into our language: a message that somehow gave our people the idea that we will deliver faster and within unrealistic timeframes. A populism that gave rise to unrealistic expectations from our people. One cannot blame them – after all, this seems to be the new communiqué from the ANC.

And so when after the elections we seem not to be able to live up to these expectations, we witness sporadic community protests throughout the country: our people chanting for ‘Delivery Now! – or else!’ They have become disillusioned with the ANC because the message has changed. The ANC needs to correct this.

The second form of disillusionment is from within the party. Whereas we have always had our differences within the ANC as a family, we seldom allowed this to dampen our commitment to what had to be done. Differences were not a pretext for the transformation agenda grinding to a halt, but something has changed. Today, I witness committed comrades becoming cynical at what is happening within the party. Whether it be the VIP protection over-reacting in a gross way to ‘the finger’ or whether

members of the party simply express ideas that run contrary to existing ANC policy in public, without any regard for reprimand or consequences. Some of them simply say they will take a 'wait and see' approach, others simply say they are done (whatever that might mean). Done with the Party, done with the struggle, what? I soon realised that the answer is irrelevant because comrades are simply disillusioned at the state of play in their organisation. And they are too scared to raise these issues for fear of retribution, which brings me to my next cardinal challenge.

The Politics of Retribution

As I left the Polokwane conference, I was sad about what had gone on there. Not about the outcome of the conference, no, but by the manner in which the outcome was reached. I had been at almost all the ANC national conferences since its unbanning and I can tell you that this was the first one in which I observed such behaviour by my fellow comrades. But this is not the purpose of this article.

What followed was a Tsunami of retribution on those perceived to have been in the Mbeki camp: a retribution that continues to this day in the ANC. This cancer which persists in the actions of many within the ANC is causing a lot of unintended consequences for us all. We are losing very good comrades in government, in branches, in ANC positions in all spheres either because they were asked to leave or they were simply pushed out. If you are too critical of some or other issue or situation, you are branded and labelled, the purpose of which is to deal with you, to deny you access, making sure that you are moved to the periphery. *We are no longer partners in self-government, rather, our politics is a form of war.* And this is not the opposition I'm talking about, this is inside the ANC house.

It is most unfortunate and perhaps also emotionally immature that some in our ranks deemed it necessary to form new political parties in the form of COPE and the EFF. But what really irritates me lately, is the ease with which some in the ANC label or brand others to be COPE or EFF members. Or more still "counter-revolutionaries",

"agents of white monopoly capital" and "agents of imperialism". It seems that when you disagree with certain forces you are pushed towards these parties. This retribution must cease amongst our ranks. This cancer like most incurable diseases will lead to our untimely demise, unless the rot is stopped at once.

Yes, there were losers at Polokwane and Mangaung, but lest we forget, comrades, it was a display of pure democracy within the organisation and as such any member had the democratic right to vote for the other candidate. As per the traditions of the organisation, especially the one that I know, once the leadership is elected, we ALL unite behind that leadership without fear or favour. Why today, can this principle not be understood by some in the organisation? Why does it seem that some simply want an unfettered existence in the organisation? Their positions and/or ideas must not be challenged; anyone who dares to do so will be met with the retribution baton.

And finally, it seems that this retribution strategy is now also directed at the alliance partners, which brings me to my final cardinal challenge.

The Politics of Ideology

Most of us know about the agreement reached in Morogoro 1969 between the ANC and the SACP. It was a good decision at the time; no-one will contest this I'm sure. The decision was that the National Democratic Revolution should be approached in two stages.

Stage 1: National liberation for all the peoples of South Africa, giving them universal suffrage and working towards a non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous country. This, they agreed, was the principal task of the ANC.

Stage 2: A socialist dispensation, once all the necessary tenants are in place following stage 1, then a programme will be put in place that would ensure that South Africa move towards a socialist epoch. This they agreed was the principal task of the SACP.

We have come a long way since 1969 and though there was always the intention on the part of both parties to stick to the agreement, it is apparent

that one of the parties has reneged on the agreement. Thus the question that must be asked is what does the SACP do about this? I am putting it as bluntly as this simply because quite frankly it is causing severe problems within the alliance which in turn cause challenges for not only the ANC but also for government since the ANC is the governing party.

The sooner we resolve this matter the better for all of us. The ANC will be healthier and will also be able to concentrate on more important matters such as delivery to the poor of our country. It does not take rocket science to figure out what the next steps ought to be but in case this proves difficult for some in the SACP and COSATU, let me assist you.

EITHER stop encroaching on those in the ANC and decide to break from the alliance and begin stage 2 in earnest;

OR accept that the ANC is the leader of this alliance and that you will have to be patient, since as far as the ANC is concerned the stage 1 requirements have not yet been sufficiently satisfied for stage 2 to kick in.

A fragmented COSATU, following splits and breakaways such as AMCU and NUMSA just adds to the frustrations of wanting to make the Alliance work optimally. These are minor considerations if one also weighs up matters around labour legislation, which for all intents and purposes seems to be biased towards labour. And, certain unions do not cooperate with ANC policies. For example, SADTU continues to make a mockery of our education system, refusing to have an Inspectorate system to keep their members in check, monitoring whether they are in class, on time and teaching. And they refuse to be classified as an 'essential service'. Not to mention, the complete absence of the 'so called' progressive workers in the Western Cape, in ensuring that the ANC gets an overwhelming majority in that province.

As for the SACP, I remember a Party that we could always rely on to navigate us progressive forces through an impasse. Historically, the Party as it was affectionately called, was always ready to give us a scientific analysis

of the motive forces, the application of the tools of analysis came naturally for the qualitative members in the SACP. Whenever the ANC was at a loss, we could be assured that the Party would give direction, whether it was through ‘path to power’, the adoption of the concept of the NDR (National Democratic Revolution) to correct and contextualise our struggles in South Africa; or the sunset clauses during the negotiations with the Apartheid regime when an impasse was yet again facing us. It was a time when the *African Communist* Journal meant something to many of us. Today, sadly the SACP is a mere shadow of its former self.

After all, following on from a paper that Michael Sachs wrote a few years ago, in which he contends that it is not as if the SACP has a different policy trajectory to that of the ANC. It seems, and I agree with him, that socialism has left the SACP.

This constitutes Reason 7 for the premature demise of the ANC.

Conclusion

These are the 7 reasons for the premature demise of the ANC and until they themselves take serious heed of these, 2019 and certainly 2024 will be effectively the death of the oldest liberation movement on the African continent.

And this current leadership of the ANC under President Zuma will forever be known as the group that ensured the untimely demise of the ANC.

This commodity called power must be exercised wisely and judiciously when it is circumscribed. It was Abraham Lincoln who said that, “Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power”.

John Acton was a bit more blunt, “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely”. As we contend with the challenges of our times, let us collectively remember that Mahatma Gandhi did warn us about the roots of violence:

The Roots of Violence: Wealth without work, Pleasure without conscience, Knowledge without character, Commerce without morality, Science without humanity,

Worship without sacrifice, Politics without principle.

Which all brings us to leadership. The art and craft of leadership is both deeply personal and inherently collective. Leadership is about vision and courage, commitment and service. It seems under Mandela, Mbeki and Motlanthe, they chose to lead the country towards a common vision of the ANC; Zuma however, does not see *Leading* as the victory but *Survival* is the victory for him.

What it also implies is that the ANC needs to recognise that revelling in self-adulation due to its rich history does not mean much; unless it can lift the necessary lessons to respond to the challenges of the moment.

Such an ANC will not see itself as having the monopoly of wisdom in society, but will seek to continue engaging all social forces, from all

“THINK! Zizack exhorts us: Apply yourselves, until you can indeed provide a workable alternative to Capitalism; then left progressive forces can be in business again!”

walks of life, in pursuit of its strategic objectives.

It will bank on its ability to continue mobilising the widest cross-section of society, so that it taps into the best talent that society has to offer in order to contribute to the betterment of all our people.

Most importantly, the meaning of these 100 years of struggle must provide the ANC with the opportunity to stand back and look at itself from the vantage point of hindsight, as stated by President Motlanthe in 2008.

Zizack reminds us that now is the time to THINK!! As the left progressive forces, we must take time and Think. He and I share a simple hypothesis: left forces throughout the world only criticise the effects of Capital, finding fault with the Capitalist system, which

of course is an exploitative and cruel system of class accumulation but he says that left forces have not provided any credible alternative since the collapse of the soviet bloc. Socialism as we know it has not worked anywhere and so, THINK! Zizack exhorts us: Apply yourselves, until you can indeed provide a workable alternative to Capitalism; then left progressive forces can be in business again!

By opening up its mind and engaging in a strategic analysis the ANC will also afford itself an opportunity to know how others in turn view its progress and prospects towards the future. Former President Motlanthe also states that,

No organisation is guaranteed eternal life based only on its historic achievements alone or merely because it fashioned the course to freedom.

Organisations are sustained through long-term visions resulting from conscious actions taken today in the interest of present and future generations.

The ANC is no different and must take care to remain true to its defining character as a movement committed to its role as a leader in society by continuing to inspire confidence.

The continuous arrogance received from the ANC is tantamount to the famous poem by Bertolt Brecht when he wrote after the 1953 Uprising in East Germany.

*After the uprising of the 17th June
The Secretary of the Writers’
Union*

*Had leaflets distributed in the
Stalinallee*

Stating that the people

*Had forfeited the confidence of
the Government*

And could win it back only

*By redoubled efforts. Would it
not be easier*

In that case for the government

To dissolve the people

And elect another?

Take heed of these cardinal challenges, these seven reasons above, for the people’s organisation’s very life depends on it. ■

Dr Oscar van Heerden writes in his personal capacity.



Is The ANC likely to lose power in the foreseeable future?

The 2016 Local Government results read like an encyclopaedia of areas where there were endless community protests whose issues were never addressed.

By Kgolane Alfred Rudolph Phala

The ANC is a people's movement in a true sense of the word. It led the people of South Africa for a solid 104 years. It led the struggle against settler-colonialism, fought the herenvolkism of the apartheid system, heroically led a gargantuan revolutionary struggle against the racist South African regime and recently it has been at the forefront of building a non-racial, non-sexist, united, democratic and prosperous South Africa. It has been an unchallenged electoral mammoth since 1994. Recent developments however begin to challenge this mass support.

South Africa had a local government election on 03 August 2016. It was a very historic election from many angles. These elections saw the biggest losses for the National Liberation Movement Ruling Party, the ANC, in 22 years.

Those losses are very glaring in some of the urban centres of our country, including the citadel of power. The ANC received less than 50% of the votes in Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Bay, Mogale City, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg. The ANC still remains a ruling local government party in most of the rural areas of the country, and, of course, in the National Parliament.

The critical question raised by the ANC's performance is whether it is a sign of things to come. Is this the beginning of the end? More specifically is the ANC likely to lose power, nationally and in more provinces in the foreseeable future? What would be the impact of such a loss? What lessons could be learned from other national liberation movement ruling parties? What can be done to forestall the collapse of the ANC as a ruling party? Is

the ANC destined to be a party of the rural areas like ZANU-PF? Is the ANC beyond salvageable?

This article will try to deal with some of these issues. This is a contribution to a broader debate inside and outside the ANC about its future prospects.

The recent electoral performance of the ANC

The ANC fought the 1994 election as a national liberation movement to become the country's ruling party. Indeed the voters gave it a resounding 62,65% in those elections. In the then Northern Transvaal it won with a phenomenal 92%. In the 1999 National and Provincial elections it got 66.35% nationally. It was repeat performance of 1994. The biggest win ever of the ANC happened in the 2004 National and Provincial elections in which the

ANC got 69.69% The ANC was at the zenith of its electoral performance. The ANC performed so well in 2004 that it looked unchallenged in the seat of power. Booysen has this to say about that, "Ten years into ANC rule, election 2004 brought further confirmation of ANC dominance and consolidation of its power. The ANC reached its 69.69 per cent electoral peak. For the third election in a row it proved that it was unequalled in party politics in South Africa."

Since 2004 the ANC has faced dwindling electoral fortunes. Short of a few exceptions in Kwazulu-Natal, for example, it has been on a downward spiral since 2004. In 2009 it received 65.9% nationally. In the 2014 National and Provincial election it got 62%. In relation to local government performance the ANC received 59.4% in 2000; 65.7% in 2006; 62.9% in 2011; and 53.9% in 2016.

ANC alliance partners COSATU and SACP have made their views clear on its recent electoral performance. The SACP PB raised critical issues that need urgent attention saying,

The core lesson that the ANC in particular and its alliance partners in general need to take to heart is that our core constituencies, our historical support base have sent a powerful message. The message is quite clear: 'Don't take us for granted.' 'Don't assume that your struggle credentials will forever act as an excuse for arrogance and predatory behaviour in the present.' 'Don't marginalise us while being preoccupied with your own internal factional battles, your list processes, your personality and money driven rivalries.' 'Don't impose unpopular and discredited candidates on us, based on factional calculations about next year's ANC elective conference.' This is the key message that needs to be taken to heart. (SACP, 2016.)

COSATU also added its voice to the debate in a statement saying,

The meeting concluded that without exaggeration, judging by the local government election results, the ANC's decline and degeneration will lead to a calamitous implosion if things remain the same. Unless the movement

itself takes responsibility to resolve its internal problems that have weakened it from within; and also unless each component of the movement self corrects going-forward, the decline will result in a shattering collapse. (COSATU, 2016)

The collapse of other national liberation movement ruling parties

The continent of Africa is awash with national liberation movement ruling parties that got weakened, degenerated, decayed and finally lost power. Some disappeared altogether, except to be read in history books as historical records by school kids and researchers. The critical question of the day is whether in the foreseeable future the ANC is also facing a similar fate. Cronin makes this point succinctly,

At our National General Council in July, the Secretary General's report, and the input of the President raised many critical and honest questions about the state of our movement. Problems of careerism, factionalism, and of a growing social distance between leadership and our social base were among the problems noted. These inputs were welcomed by the NGC delegates and, in the course of commissions, practical measures were discussed to overcome the problems. Many of the intra-organisational challenges that we face are clearly related to the fact that the ANC is now in power. It is important to realise that we are not unique in confronting these kinds of challenges. Progressive political formations often battle to sustain their revolutionary trajectory once they are in power. From India, through Mexico and Central America, to Algeria, Guinea Bissau and southern Africa it is possible to think of once heroic national liberation movements losing their way after independence... The ANC is, in short, not the first progressive political formation to have to confront the challenges, temptations and dangers of being in power.

Movements such as the PAIGC of Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau, KANU of Kenya, UNIP of Zambia, CPP of Ghana, FNL of Algeria and others have almost disappeared from history.

Some lost political power never to return. The ZANU-PF and ANC short of decisive action seem almost likely to follow that route. Phala also made this point in *The Thinker* (2011), "the demon of factionalism must be fought and defeated in the ANC and the entire liberation movement... If the ANC does not act timeously, decisively and swiftly against factionalism, it may reach a stage of no return whereby the damage is irreparable and irretrievable."

The ANC for its part has identified some of the challenges of being a ruling party. In its resolution at the ANC Polokwane conference in 2007 it stated,

our accumulated weaknesses include inability to effectively deal with new tendencies arising from being a ruling party, such as social distance, patronage, careerism, corruption and abuse of power; ineffective management of the interface between the movement and the state; a flawed approach to membership recruitment; a decline in ideological depth amongst cadres; and a lack of institutional resources to give practical effect to the movement's leadership role.

Some national liberation movement ruling parties have a tendency to imagine themselves to be ordained by God. ANC leaders have been telling voters it would rule until Jesus Christ comes back. In Kenya, President Daniel arap Moi promised KANU would rule for a hundred years. "When it became clear which way the vote was going, residents had rounded up all the local cockerel and slaughtered the 'jogoo', hated symbol of the once-proud KANU, which Moi had promised would rule the country for a hundred years." (Wrong)

Others even tried the route of electoral fraud to try to continue to rule even though their popular support had dwindled. Michela Wrong in her seminal work, *It is Our Turn to Eat* makes this point clearly about KANU. "When, after the 1997 elections, the donors found that KANU victories in eight constituencies did not stand up to scrutiny, a finding which cancelled out the ruling party's parliamentary majority, they agreed not to mention this awkward fact in their final report on the polls."

The key question that must be answered is: IS THE ANC ALSO FACING SUCH A FUTURE? IS THE FUTURE OF ANC DOOM AND GLOOM? WILL THE ANC SOON HEREAFTER LOSE ALL POWER AT NATIONAL LEVEL AND IN A NUMBER OF PROVINCES?

The answer is yes and no! It depends much on what the ANC does. If it acts swiftly and decisively to correct the situation it will definitely survive. If it chooses the business as usual approach it will be punished by history and over time lose the political power it has wielded since 1994. It will either be destined for the dustbin of history once and for all, or survive to continue as a major political party like the CCM of Tanzania. The ball is really in its court. Southall puts this in a historical context in his book, *Liberation movements in power, party and state in Southern Africa*, explaining that “we are reaching the end of an era in Southern Africa. The NLMs which acceded to state power in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa embodied the hopes of new democracies.”

The ANC 2012 Mangaung National Conference tried to articulate how the ANC has survived thus far from the decay, the degeneration and loss of power that has bedevilled other national liberation movement ruling parties. It reasoned,

Conference agreed that we must continue to learn from the renewed experiences of the past 100 years of selfless struggle, as well as the experience of other progressive movements. The ANC has survived due to, among others:

- *Its deep roots and connection with the people;*
- *Vibrant internal democracy and collective leadership;*
- *Readiness and willingness of its members to make sacrifices in pursuit of the cause of the people as a whole;*
- *Readiness to acknowledge its weaknesses and decisively address them in order to escalate and accelerate the people’s struggle;*
- *Ability to adapt to changing conditions and rise to the occasion at critical moments;*
- *Ability to uphold and build unity*

a cross section (sic) of South Africans and progressive forces in the world in pursuit of the cause of humanity.

In this regard, the movement’s strengths and weaknesses and priorities for organisational renewal were identified in order to reposition the ANC as we commence the revolutionary journey towards the second centenary.

The most important question however is: what led to the downward spiral of the ANC in the recent period? An answer to this question would herald an adequate response to the potential collapse of the ANC.

Why has the ANC lost support, particularly since 2004?

The elements that led to the downward spiral of the ANC in electoral performance particularly since 2004 include:

“The ANC received less than 50% of the votes in Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Bay, Mogale City, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg.”

- incumbency;
- complacency;
- not acting swiftly and decisively against negative tendencies;
- disunity;
- rampant factionalism;
- corruption of ANC processes;
- corruption in the state;
- poor service delivery;
- blunders by the state;
- ostentatious display of wealth and possessions by some ANC leaders;
- disregarding the will of the people in relation to candidates;
- internal disagreements not being addressed; and
- negative election campaigning.

The reality of being a ruling party in power tends to produce delusions of invincibility. That false belief of being more powerful than you actually are and false thinking that you are in power forever is the real enemy of

any liberation movement in power. Arrogance sets in and leads to all the other undesirable tendencies. You can actually falsely imagine yourself so God-ordained that you would be in power until Jesus Christ returns! These insanities in the long run can prove to be an undoing of a liberation movement.

Directly related to incumbency is complacency. Being in power for a long time with a huge majority encourages parties to take many things for granted; including on occasion the genuine concerns of the people.

A situation where leadership organs do not take decisive and timely action on the negative tendencies the ANC accumulated since 1994 such as careerism, opportunism, elitism, selfishness, individualism, arrogance, labelling, intolerance, divisions, statism, crass materialism, greed, get-rich get-rich mentality, dishonesty, disrespect, corruption, patronage, factionalism, ostentatiousness, obscurantism and other ills have cumulatively weakened and destroyed many a national liberation movement ruling party.

Acting too late to correct a wrong situation is the proverbial too little too late. We have seen this on the Public Protector’s remedial action on Nkandla security upgrades, on Tshwane ANC REC’s disunity on mayoral candidate, Nelson Mandela mayoral deployment of Danny Jordaan, in Gauteng province in bringing the big guns of veterans into the campaign two to three weeks prior to election day, the state response to the “fees must fall campaign”, the response to the Vuwani demarcation dispute, etc.

The people will not confidently vote for you when they see that you are fighting amongst yourselves. Disunity within the national liberation movement ruling party is a central cause of all its woes.

Factionalism, particularly in run-up to elective conferences, causes irreparable damage to the ruling party. It damages its image and reputation irretrievably. The damage done in the run-up to, at and post the Polokwane conference is unsalvageable. Voters will either stay at home or vote for another party when they are disappointed by rampant factionalism where capable

leaders are dealt with only because they belong to a losing slate. Elements involved in rampant factionalism imagine that the ANC will rule forever no matter what. They think that once they factionally defeat their adversaries inside the ANC they will be ensconced in government positions, tenders and appointments. By destroying the capacity of the ANC internally as a movement of the people, they have ensured that time for those is up. The ANC may ultimately have no role in government, become a former ruling party, weakened and fatally wounded.

This offence relates to the corruption of the ANC membership system to decide who qualifies to sit in a BGM to elect leadership and/or to nominate candidates. This crime against the people includes fraudulently interfering with the membership filing and recording system for factional, corrupt and dishonest intentions. Various levels of secretaries and executive committees who allow or turn a blind eye to this corruption of the ANC membership system are guilty in common purpose.

Reports of corruption in state tenders, in departments, entities and municipalities surface from time to time. Many turn a blind eye to such exposures by the Auditor General, the Public Protector, forensic audits and investigations of all kinds. Most of the corruption has been in the supply chain area of departments, entities and municipalities. Most people involved in these shenanigans imagine that they will get rich quick and for life, they conveniently forget that once the opposition puts its hands on the levers of power there will be investigations and audits of all kinds as happened in the Western Cape and Cape Town. Such investigations end up with someone paying back the money they got irregularly. The key is to invest in the survival of the ANC as a ruling party that is strong and viable, and able to fight corruption in the state. Suzan Booysen writes accurately on state corruption that, "political and public sector employment also brings opportunities for legal-and-fine, legal-but-inappropriate and illegal or underhand personal enrichments. Such opportunities are accessed by virtue of

office-holding and family or business interests close to those in office. The existence of in- and out-groups in ANC ranks is closely associated with leveraging opportunities. This has made positions in public institutions, political office and the bureaucracy, launch pads for increased affluence." Elements involved in these think that they can weaken and destroy the ANC but still milk it in government tenders and positions.

After detailing a plethora of recent corruption cases in South Africa, Kanyane elaborates, "The cases show that corruption cannot be condoned and tolerated any longer. Overall, corruption in both the apartheid and post-apartheid era, has caused a grievous mess, which could not be tolerated any longer. The appalling conditions made the system ungovernable and it impossible to resuscitate it unless tough action was taken against the perpetrators duped in corruption. On this basis, the state aborted its goals and easily generated corruption in its blood streams. Obscurantism, racketeering, collusion and lack of enforcement of disciplinary measures or commitment to public service and unethical behaviour were inexcusable pathologies which gave birth to corruption."

Citizens do not forget or forgive instances of bad service delivery. Power outages and disruption of water services particularly in the urban centres of the country have not served the ANC well. Urban residents are totally dependent and for generations have been used to uninterrupted delivery of water and electricity.

Incumbency also serves as a double-edged sword because you can commit policy and tactical blunders in the state. For the ANC those may include the e-tolls in Gauteng province generally resented by the middle-class in the province, the Marikana tragedy that led to loss of lives, the handling of the necessary Nkandla security upgrades, the inaction around the SABC debacles, the Waterkloof airport landings, and so on. Such blunders remain embedded in the mind of the electorate and they take opportunity to punish the government during elections.

The national liberation movement

ruling party must timeously and without fail deal with any discomfort, concerns and issues raised by citizens in their local areas. People must never be undermined by whoever is in power. For instance, in the Limpopo province, the Vuwani demarcation debacle should have been handled better in the interest of the will of the overwhelming majority of the population. The 2016 Local Government results read like an encyclopaedia of areas where there were endless community protests whose issues were never addressed.

Ostentatiousness is defined by the ANC as, "the negative display of wealth and possessions intended to impress people or make them envious, like flashy cars, expensive houses, labelled clothes, hot furniture, dated alcohol or shiny jewellery." (ANC, 2012) There is nothing wrong with possessing or buying these items, in fact cadres who are able to because of their deployment are encouraged to acquire them. The problem is to display them in a disgustingly negative manner to others who cannot get them. This is itself a threat to the national democratic revolution. "The emergence of social distance between ANC cadres in positions of power from the motive forces which the ANC represent, with the potential to render elements in the movement "progressively lethargic to the conditions of the poor." (ANC, 2007)

The ANC has regularly disregarded the expressed will of the people. This happens when an unpopular candidate is forced down the throat of a community. In many cases the community's clear views on who must be a candidate councillor have been disregarded by ANC upper structures. People will not vote for someone they don't want. That localised anger affects voter turnout and ANC electoral support.

Internal disagreements within the party must be dealt with decisively, swiftly and correctly in the interest of the movement. No short-cuts, unpopular or populist decisions should be allowed. Such disagreements if allowed to fester will weaken and ultimately destroy the movement. The removal of a Premier on the eve of elections, festering local disagreements with the SACP, lack of clarity on the

suspension or otherwise of an ANC provincial chairperson, are cases in point.

Low voter turn-out is a function of low morale and negative mood amongst the populace. Negative campaigning is one of the main culprits in this regard. The national liberation movement ruling party must always campaign positively and not be goaded into mudslinging and insults by other forces.

How can the ANC survive as a national liberation movement ruling party?

All of the bulleted points listed above have to be addressed to win back the trust of the electorate.

ACTION, ACTION, ACTION!

Concerns of the populace, wrong things and weak deployees should not be left undealt with until the last minute. The movement must take timely and decisive action otherwise citizens get tired and lose confidence in its ability to govern and take care of their lives. Nothing replaces decisive leadership at all times. The ANC NEC resolved sternly on this question in November 2009, that, "The ANC constitutional structures should be resolute and decisive in stamping out ill-discipline and should do so without fear or favour as such behaviour damages the image of the ANC."

UNITY, UNITY, UNITY!

Unity of the movement must be guarded pricelessly. Not false unity that exist only in words and in speeches. It must be a unity in action and a unity of purpose. It must be a unity that brings together a solid clue between and amongst the motive forces of the national democratic revolution.

Exemplary leadership and practices!

Leaders shouldn't say things they don't mean, because the people are not stupid. Always do what you say others must do. Walk the talk. All-round ethical leadership is called for. All leaders must be exemplary in their conduct.

ANC leaders, structures and members at all levels of the organisation must be involved in a process of analysing what went wrong. This process should be allowed to take time. No holy cows should be spared in the process. It must be used to unite

and strengthen the ANC instead of dividing and weakening it even further. Finger-pointing and scapegoating will take it nowhere and must be avoided at all times.

Branches are the backbone of the ANC. They represent the basic unit of activity for all ANC members. Once they are weakened they become centres of factional fights for use in elective conferences. Branches must be run effectively to implement ANC programme of action, train BEC members to lead properly and the office-bearers to handle their portfolios qualitatively. Each branch must enhance its interface with government through the ward councillor. It must be capacitated to handle issues of discipline, political education,

“Power outages and disruption of water services particularly in the urban centres of the country have not served the ANC well. Urban residents are totally dependent and for generations have been used to uninterrupted delivery of water and electricity.”

governance, sectoral and community outreach and society's mobilisation.

In the event the ANC does not develop skills of dealing with modern challenges of intrusive social media, premature leaking of sensitive information and thorough investigative journalism, it will die over time. Such realities are being well handled by other political parties in our country and throughout the world. The ANC must renew itself and join the modern world or die as a dinosaur. Dinosaurs didn't survive to live in a world of a different climate.

Those deployed to government must be decisive at all material times. The organisation itself must act

firmly on ill-discipline, corruption, underperformance by deployees, etc. For instance, it is totally unacceptable that an ANC PEC in Limpopo can spend eight months without meeting (from January to August 2016) in the midst of all the challenges facing the movement in service delivery marches all over, crises in Vuwani, Mogalakwena, Malamulele, Thabazimbi, lacklustre election campaign, hung municipalities, 8% loss in the elections, lowest voter turn-out in the country and huge losses to ANC in local councils and the ANC NEC is neither concerned nor acting. Leadership decisiveness is in huge demand.

The state machinery at national, provincial and local spheres must be perfected to do what is within their competence in the interests of the people. The three spheres must be dovetailed in a skilful combination. Swift action must be taken against those provinces and municipalities that collapse because of corruption, fraud, looting, tender-rigging, etc.

In areas where there is little performance in service delivery, people lose confidence and see no reason to go and vote again and again without any changes to their lives.

The importance of democracy and voting, particularly for the youth and the born-frees must be emphasised. Democracy education should be part of the job of the IEC, which work it can do effectively in between elections. Democracy education should also be part of the school curriculum.

As happens in many countries of the world, history must be introduced as a compulsory subject in all schools. This will raise the patriotic consciousness of the population in the long run.

ANC and government leadership must strive to create a positive mood amongst the electorate. Negativity, lies, anger and fights pushes voters away.

Government and party leaders must inspire confidence

Confidence of the people in their elected government should never be taken for granted. When after elections you put the most unqualified, immature and ill-equipped individual to be a mayor, a speaker, an MMC, an MEC, a Premier or a minister, people will

see through that. They can see when he/she is unable to read a prepared speech or stumbles from one crisis to another in his/her deployment. When he/she has no clue about what he/she is doing even people who grew-up or went to school with him/her will begin to tell how dull he/she was. The ANC must always without fail deploy its best cadres to positions of authority and responsibility. Such capable cadres enhance the confidence of the people in their government and in turn in the ruling party.

Patronage and factionalism damage the movement irreparably also because, "positions in government also mean the possibility to appoint individuals in all kinds of capacities. As such, some members make promises to friends, that once elected and ensconced in government, they would return the favour. Cliques and factions then emerge within the movement, around personal loyalties driven by corrupt intentions. Members become voting fodder to serve individuals' self-interest." (Umrabulo, 2001)

The ANC must act directly and decisively against elements using its access to the state to amass ill-gotten wealth. It must confront the 'it is our turn to eat' syndrome. The maturity of the NDR and control of levers of the state must by definition create a black bourgeoisie class. Such super-rich black people are a by-product of the success of the liberation struggle. ANC must discourage the phenomenon of instant millionaires who steal from the poor. Of course once the ANC loses power in that municipality, province or nationally the new rulers will take them to task, their ill-gotten wealth repossessed and some go to jail. When they contribute to the ANC losing power they seem to conveniently forget this.

ANC Secretary General Kgalema Motlanthe spoke very eloquently on the matter in an interview, "This rot is across the board. It is not confined to any level or any area of the country. Almost every project is conceived because it offers opportunities for certain people to make money. A great deal of the ANC's problems are occasioned by this. There are people who want to take it over so they can arrange for appointment of those who

will allow them possibilities for future accumulation." (Financial Mail, 2007.)

Sections of the ANC have been captured by elements of a lumpen-bourgeoisie that has become parasitic. Such a parasite bourgeoisie is dependent on the state at local, provincial, entity and departmental levels for its existence and survival by hook or crook. The ANC NWC strongly warned against this phenomenon in its 2001 discussion document titled, 'through the eye of the needle'.

"Government positions also go hand-in-hand with the possibility to issue contracts to commercial companies. Some of these companies identify ANC members that they can promote in ANC structures and into government, so that they can get contracts by hook or crook. This is done through media networks to discredit other leaders, or even by buying membership cards to set up branches that are ANC only in name." (Umrabulo, 2001)

The parasitic-bourgeoisie invest in funding ANC factions, once they have won it knows its future and continued looting the state is assured. The ANC must deal with this problem decisively or face liquidation.

Money is really the cause of many of ANC's woes. The ANC's 2010 midterm review confirmed this point adequately. "The influence of money in our processes is having the biggest potential to change the character of the movement from being people centred and people driven in all the processes, to one where power is wielded by a narrow circle of those who own and/or control resources. This is at the centre of the resurgence of factionalism in the movement where contestation is neither political nor ideological but driven by narrow interests."

The downward spiral in ANC electoral successes that it has seen particularly since 2004 must be arrested and turned around decisively. Otherwise the ANC will soon be a former ruling party of the country like many other former national liberation movement ruling parties awash in the African continent. A strategic analysis is key in this regard to look at the objective and objective factors that led to this situation. This will help to

discover the facts and factors, the faces and the forces that led to the unimpressive performance in the recent elections. The reality is that with the 44% overall performance in Gauteng province, the ANC will not retain power there in the 2019 national and provincial elections if it does not take very serious corrective measures to regain the confidence and trust of the people. These local government elections were therefore a forewarning in that regard.

The ANC NGC of 2005 elaborated on this eventuality by saying, "The ANC came into existence before any of us. It will outlive all of us. Our historic task is to carry this precious torch through a brief time we are given on earth, and pass it undiminished to the generation that will follow. That torch, whose flames keep aloft the hopes of our people, burns on the fuel of our own selfless contributions, which rest upon our acceptance of the values and conduct of our fore-bearers: courage, generosity, honesty, self-sacrifice, humility, truthfulness, integrity and temperance. These are the values that must reside in the membership of the ANC, which is the foundation upon which the life of our movement rests." The ANC can survive as a national liberation movement ruling party if it wants to. The ball is in its court to act decisively – and to act now. ■

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Re-inventing African Cities



It is time to fundamentally reinvent African cities, to put the problems on the table, to develop ambitious solutions and apply them with determination by dedicating all necessary human and financial resources to urban development.

By Daniel Biau

An impressive urban transition The world's urban population has risen sharply since the mid-twentieth century, from 750 million in 1950 (30% of the total population) to 4 billion today. It is expected to reach 5 billion in 2030 (60% of the total population).¹ Demographers predict a stabilisation of the world population at about 10 billion people in 2070

with a vast majority living in large and small cities, and a substantial majority in the developing world. Although the urban transition is largely complete in Europe and the Americas, it is still fully underway in Africa and Asia.

Cities, whatever their size, offer citizens the opportunity to share public spaces, to exercise their rights and to find

jobs. They also allow for the adoption of common social values and democratic modes of governance. But cities do not provide equivalent conditions and opportunities to all social groups. The majority of the urban population is subject to multiple economic, social, cultural and environmental hardships. In many cities, the social and spatial divide between the rich and the poor

is an obvious factor of instability. It generates economic and social costs, not just for disadvantaged people, but for the whole society.

Africa, in turn, is a continent in transition which is undergoing a demographic explosion. The continent had 228 million inhabitants in 1950 and 808 million in 2000. It counts now 1.2 billion people and is expected to reach 2.4 billion in 2050. Africa is also experiencing an economic transition with a reduction of the share of agriculture in the GDP, a monetisation of the economy and an expansion of services.

This transition is equally taking place on the social front with an increasing gap between the rich and the poor (measured by Gini coefficients above 0.5), a growth of the middle classes, and an urbanisation of lifestyles. Finally the continent is witnessing a rapid urban transition. The urban population of Africa, which now amounts to 480 million people (41% of the total), will reach one billion by 2040. Its growth rate is now 3.83% per year, by far the highest in the world, although this average hides significant regional variations (1.3% in South Africa, 5.3% in Uganda).

Urban growth is both the cause and the consequence of the continent's socio-economic growth. The cities represent over 75% of the continent's GDP and countries' development level is correlated with their rate of urbanisation. UN-Habitat studies have shown that the most urbanised countries are also the most economically and socially advanced.² This process of urbanisation is not just relevant for large cities. In fact more than half of urban Africans live in cities with less than 500,000 inhabitants. These medium-sized cities, with weak institutional and financial resources, are the most commonly forgotten by urban policies and projects. South Africa is more urbanised than most other African nations with 65% of its population living in urban agglomerations (36 million out of 55 million). This is a reflection of its higher level of economic development. Twelve South African cities count more than 300,000 inhabitants, including six above one million; and Johannesburg

will soon reach the megacity status (10 million+ people).

Challenges and opportunities

The effectiveness of cities can be measured in social, economic and environmental terms. In all these areas, African cities are underperforming. Sustainable urban development for the benefit of present and future generations remains a distant prospect. In fact it is time to fundamentally reinvent African cities, to put the problems on the table, to develop ambitious solutions and apply them with determination by dedicating all necessary human and financial resources to urban development. The rationale for this investment is clear: well-planned and well-managed cities are a powerful

“ Well-planned and well-managed cities are a powerful lever of economic growth, a factor of social harmony and environmental balance, and a condition for positive regional synergies.”

lever of economic growth, a factor of social harmony and environmental balance, and a condition for positive regional synergies. Return on urban investment is considerable and has been demonstrated in all regions of the world since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Asia has well understood this point in the last half-century.

Cities are very different from each other but they suffer, to varying degrees, from the same problems (spatial inequalities, transport congestion, air and water pollution, lack of safety, deficient public services, etc.). They should learn from each other, as governments learn from each other, particularly within the United Nations. This should happen in Quito, at the third UN Conference

on Human Settlements (Habitat III) in October 2016.

Particularly important challenges common to many African countries include territorial imbalances, the rigidity of land markets, the importance of informal settlements and slums, inadequate basic services (typically sanitation and electricity), lack of public transport, the consequences of climate change, urban violence, unorganised internal and external migration, insufficient generation of decent jobs, undersized education and health facilities, the marginalisation of vulnerable groups such as street children, the disabled and migrant workers, inadequate or outdated institutional and regulatory frameworks.

On the other hand, the positive dynamics at work in African cities must be appreciated. These include the inventiveness and adaptability of the informal sector, the growth of civil society organisations, family solidarity and the expanding role of women, the emergence of a young generation eager for education and new technologies, the hybridisation and diversity of popular cultures, the growth of the middle classes and involvement of elites towards more consensual and transparent leadership, and the lessening of ethnic tensions in the urban melting pot.

The challenges of sustainable development can and must be met, provided cities fully play their leading role. But urban investment must be organised, planned and coordinated. African states have to adopt genuine urban policies and strategies at both national and local levels. To this date, very few countries have implemented such policies. African urbanisation, largely chaotic and spontaneous, is essentially marked by corrective and remedial interventions. It seems that governments are constantly overwhelmed with housing, land, services, and infrastructure shortfalls and that they can only fill gaps or attend to urgent matters. But nothing is inevitable: all countries can develop coherent and ambitious urban policies and mobilise resources for their implementation.

National Urban Policies

According to the UN-Habitat

definition, a National Urban Policy (NUP) is a set of decisions derived from a consultative process led by the national government which includes a shared vision, principles, goals and programmes of action to promote sustainable urban development. A NUP is a national framework of institutional, regulatory and financial responses to the problems of urbanisation. It deals with territorial balance and city networks and offers implementation, monitoring and evaluation tools. It is divided into sectoral chapters covering, *inter alia*, infrastructure, services, land and housing. A NUP should also organise the relations between central and provincial governments and local authorities for upgrading urban areas, reducing inequalities between territories or tackling climate change.

In the NUP formulation process, the importance of objective analysis and consensus building cannot be overemphasised. It requires a legitimate leadership, organisational know-how, effective consultative mechanisms, an open mind and good negotiation skills. It can rely on the organisation of Urban Forums in which actors on the urban scene exchange ideas, discuss various proposals, different scenarios, and make recommendations to the government and local authorities. So far only a few African countries have established such consultative mechanisms.

Three pillars of Urban Governance

National Urban Policy implementation depends not only on public actions but more widely on the modes of urban governance at work in the country. Good governance must be participatory, accountable and transparent. It should be based on three main pillars: an institutional partnership framework, a facilitating regulatory framework and effective financial instruments. National governments have to build these pillars, in cooperation with all their partners.

An adequate institutional framework is essential to the implementation of any NUP. Public institutions involved in a NUP are very numerous. Responsibilities have to be well established and supervisory and coordinating bodies clearly defined.

In addition public authorities must involve private stakeholders, including landowners, investors, banks, developers, construction companies, private service providers, architects and consultants, planning agencies, surveyors, etc. They should provide consultative mechanisms with civil society organisations, residents and users associations, women and youth organisations, research centres, small businesses in the informal sector, traders, and others.

The institutional framework must take into account the evolution of most African nations towards greater decentralisation and the need to strengthen the powers and resources of local authorities. This universal evolution was the subject of International Guidelines on Decentralisation, adopted in 2007 by

“South Africa is a good case of legislative inflation, with overlapping instruments and often unclear allocation of responsibilities between spheres of government.”

the UN-Habitat Governing Council.³ But decentralisation does not mean that local authorities should be left alone to design autonomous local policies. The State machinery should be in the driving seat, starting with the national level.

A facilitating legislative and regulatory framework is the second pillar of good urban governance. Too often the absence of such a framework hinders the implementation of policies. There are many cases of overabundant, obsolete, unenforceable or simply ignored urban regulations. South Africa is a good case of legislative inflation, with overlapping instruments and often unclear allocation of responsibilities between spheres of government. The main regulations to be assessed and adjusted are about land use,

responsibilities of stakeholders, quality of buildings, respect for the environment, human rights and protection of the vulnerable. In all areas, simple rules should be adopted, rules that are easy to understand and applicable, being facilitating rather than punitive.

Land regulations constitute the absolute core of urban governance. Tenure rights, zoning, land transactions and registration, pre-emption and expropriation rules, regularisation of informal settlements, territorial planning standards, building permits, all such elements should be subject to national laws, regulations and codes capable of ensuring social equity, economic efficiency and quality of the urban space. This is a significant challenge that requires a strong political will. Land-use planning and management should be a top priority of local government which could be evaluated against its performance in this area.

The relationship between landowners and tenants as well as the contractual relations between local authorities and basic service providers (water, transport, etc.) should also be subject to regulations. The former should encourage the expansion of the rental housing sector and the latter should allow public-private partnerships benefiting both users and taxpayers.

Without adequate financial instruments it would be futile to expect anything from any urban policy. Fortunately two extraordinary factors make possible the development and adoption of such instruments. The first is economic: the price of urban land is much higher than the price of rural plots and, in market economies, it increases rapidly with urban growth and densification. The second is political: public authorities can decide on the allocation and use of urban land and derive considerable income from it. This is somehow the miracle of urbanisation, that it can feed itself by producing its own fuel and its own financing.

Important sources of land-based finance include:

- the annual tax on property, land and real estate occupations;

- the betterment tax on improved infrastructure beneficiaries; and
- taxes on capital gains in land transactions.

The addition of these multiple incomes may represent several hundred US dollars per capita and per year in Western countries, reaching hundreds of millions of US dollars for a city of one million inhabitants. Total land-based revenue represents more than 1% of GDP in OECD countries and South Africa is performing quite well in this area.

The terms of the equation are clear:

- cities automatically produce land wealth;
- public authorities should make every effort to capture significant portions of these immense benefits; and
- these should be allocated to urban development to cover investment and operating costs, completing a virtuous circle.

Among other financial instruments used by a majority of countries, inter-governmental transfers, on which many African municipalities rely, must be transparent and fair, as must business taxes and tariffs charged on marketable services (especially water and electricity).

Four coordinated sectoral strategies

From the perspective of urban planners, land is the flesh of the city and infrastructure its backbone, housing units are the most precious individual belongings and services are essential collective assets. These four areas constitute the main components of any urban policy, requiring clear and coordinated national strategies.

The first strategy relates to urban land. African cities extend rapidly and their peripheries invade agricultural lands. This unplanned expansion is characterised by low densities, pockets of poverty and gated communities. Usually infrastructure cannot follow the pace of urban growth. This is not inevitable. Land, as the urban development raw material, can and must be publically planned, regulated and managed to meet the needs of urban growth. Priorities must go to reducing urban sprawl and spatial

inequalities. Unfortunately very few countries have met this challenge, with negative consequences on urban finance.

The second strategy concerns infrastructure. Given the level of congestion of African cities, a clear priority should be given to transport networks, as part of an overall plan covering both primary and service roads. Promoting a variety of transport modes, with strong focus on public transport, should be the rule. Other priorities are related to water and electricity networks. In the last 15 years many African cities have made undeniable progress in water supply but urban mobility has deteriorated everywhere. The infrastructure strategy should encourage local governments to associate infrastructure planning to land-use planning and to link physical

“Land-use planning and management should be a top priority of local government which could be evaluated against its performance in this area.”

planning with financial and budgetary planning.

Infrastructure development requires significant public investment, close coordination between government spheres, careful phasing and continuity of interventions. African countries should draw inspiration from East Asian countries (China, Korea, and Japan) whose economic success of recent decades is closely linked to strategic investments in infrastructure (roads, railways, subways, ports, airports etc.).

The third strategy is about housing for all. All over the world housing expenses represent on average 25 to 30% of household incomes and the sector is a powerful mobiliser of domestic savings. Urban and housing policies must be articulated and connected through land policies.

African housing policies have long been limited to the public production of housing units for civil servants. Only South Africa has implemented a large programme of subsidised housing. But all governments still ignore the reality and potential of rental housing which can be a major option for the urban poor (as in Europe).

A housing strategy should particularly: (i) promote diversity in housing supply both in terms of standards and status; (ii) regularise and improve informal settlements and slums (which represent 50 % of urban housing in sub-Saharan Africa) and (iii) establish appropriate housing finance systems, attractive to household savings. This strategy has to rely on key players in the housing sector, namely real estate developers and construction companies, not to mention investors, financial institutions and credit agencies.

The fourth strategy should cover urban services. These are numerous and varied. They include the delivery of safe water, sanitation, waste management, transport and communications facilities, electricity, etc. Some services require significant investment in infrastructure while others involve more operating costs and staff resources. The service strategy must:

- take into account inter-sectoral and inter-jurisdictional linkages between the services to ensure an integrated and consistent supply;
- adopt quantitative and qualitative targets and standards for service delivery, particularly in sensitive areas such as water supply and sanitation, waste management, energy and transport;
- establish rules for the selection of service providers and a legal framework for delegation and/or privatisation; and
- promote pricing mechanisms for a proper cost recovery while making services affordable for everyone.

South Africa is doing relatively well in this area, providing free and sustainable services to millions of people.

This multi-services strategy does not prejudice the status of service providers. These operators can be public,

municipal, private or community-based, depending on their comparative advantages in each particular context.

NUP and local authorities

As a rule National Governments must lead the definition of the NUP while Local Governments should coordinate its implementation through planning and management procedures and processes. Based on the national policy, local governments should be supported to design specific territorial and environmental strategies and plans of action.

Implementation responsibilities need to be clear about the respective duties of different ministries, provincial governments and local authorities. Institutional capacities, legislative and regulatory framework and funding arrangements need to be improved and strengthened. Urban indicators as well as mechanisms for monitoring and adjustment of actions, involving public and private partners, professional associations and civil society, must be developed. The challenge is to implement in a participatory way an ambitious, flexible and coherent policy which meets citizens' needs and aspirations.

Municipal policies

Cities always have two faces. They are the engines of economic growth and prosperity but also places of inequality, poverty and exclusion. They are areas of culture, education and democracy but also of tension and insecurity. They are places where people find jobs but also discrimination and exploitation. They can be friendly public spaces or gated ghettos closed in on themselves. An urban policy must strengthen the positive dynamics while tackling urban ills, helping remove obstacles to sustainable development in large and small communities and mobilising municipal energies and civil society. It must irrigate and empower local governments.

Local and regional authorities play an increasingly important role in urban planning and management. This role has recently been highlighted in the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, approved in 2015 by the UN-Habitat Governing

Council.⁴ These guidelines provide a reference framework to guide the reform of urban policies and promote a variety of planning approaches tailored to different contexts and scales. They include universal principles and recommendations aimed in particular at governments and local authorities.

The guidelines invite local authorities to take key actions such as:

- approving and updating urban and territorial plans;
- associating urban planning to municipal management;
- cooperating at the inter-municipal level for the integrated management of urban infrastructure and services;
- ensuring that informal settlements and slums are renovated and integrated into the urban fabric

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with minimal displacements and relocations;

- developing safe and reliable public transport systems in order to promote energy efficiency and affordable urban mobility; and
- formulating plans that include measures for adaptation to climate change and for increasing resilience, particularly in vulnerable neighborhoods.

Municipal policies should try to associate representative democracy and participatory democracy, involving people in the planning and monitoring of municipal actions. This is the case in some Latin American countries such as Brazil but not yet in Africa.

It is important to distinguish

between urban policy and strategic planning on the one hand and urban management and operational planning on the other. Urban Policy and strategic planning define objectives and strategies but are not legally binding, unlike land-use plans which apply to all stakeholders. Operational urban planning refers to public, private or mixed concrete operations of development. While municipalities should associate the long and short term planning, they must above all manage the city every day. This means raising taxes, balancing the municipal budget, ensuring the financing of non-marketable services, upgrading informal settlements, supporting local economic development, approving construction permits, etc. Avoiding getting mired in day-to-day management, while adopting a longer term perspective despite political uncertainties, is a continuing challenge faced by African local governments.

South Africa as an inspiring practice

To this day no African country has developed and implemented a comprehensive and integrated national urban policy. South Africa has begun to consider that matter in recent years. The country urban population grew from 54% of the total population in 1994 to 65% today. The legacy of apartheid and segregation still marks the urban space. Cities are sprawling and experiencing pockets of high density in peripheral townships and informal settlements (which together represent 50% of the urban population). South African agglomerations are still considered as the most unequal and violent cities in Africa.

So far the government has focused on two priorities: decentralisation on the one hand, and services and housing delivery on the other. It has promulgated a Spatial Planning and Land-Use Management Act (SPULMA) in 2013 and an Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDP) in 2016. These normative instruments should encourage cities to formulate long-term strategies and plans. The IUDP has four main objectives:

- to ensure better access to services;
- to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth;

- to strengthen institutional capacity and participation; and
- to define new spatial forms.

This would imply actions on infrastructure and transport, land governance and urban restructuring, and the reform of urban planning. This is a good starting point for a national urban policy, but more work is needed to reconfigure the urban institutional set-up, overcome the 'silo approach' to planning, and to promote inclusive cities.⁵

Twenty-two years ago, on 27 October 1994, an historic Housing Accord was signed in Botshabelo, opening a new era in the country housing strategy. While the collective commitments of all South African partners on that day – to “establish viable, socially and economically integrated communities with convenient access to economic opportunities and social services” – remain to be fulfilled at scale, other African countries could certainly learn a lot from the South African experience.

Re-inventing African Cities

The New Urban Agenda to be adopted in Quito is particularly relevant to African countries. There is clearly a need to reinvent urbanism and urbanity, to give a new meaning to urban life and to 'living together'. This need not be an impossible mission if governments show enough willingness and if they understand that sustainable development, and primarily economic growth, is played out in cities and towns. The African continent, currently in a process of extensive demographic and urban mutation, should take the lead in this worldwide process of reinvention. It has everything to gain in the process.

Setting priorities for the whole continent is a challenge but basic principles are well known and agreed upon. They can be summarised in some keywords: democratic governance, progressive decentralisation, flexible planning, optimal densification, strengthened capacities, facilitative regulations, participation and partnerships, increased investments, disaster resilience, connectivity, mobility, inclusiveness, safety, accessibility, conviviality, diversity, identity...

Based on regional discussions on the

road to Habitat III, it appears that the African Urban Agenda could indeed be structured around some common lines of action:⁶

- The institutional arrangements governing cities will be reviewed to ensure the convergence of public policies, decentralisation and strengthening of responsibilities and resources to local authorities, inter-municipal management of cities and effective public-private-population partnerships (PPPP);
- The legislative framework of urbanisation will be reformed and simplified and focus on land regulations to boost land supply, contribute to the densification of the urban fabric, regularise informal settlements and allow an orderly urban growth;
- Financial instruments will be subject to a radical revitalisation, giving public authorities a chance to significantly increase municipal revenues and to ensure transparency and fairness of inter-government transfers;
- Land strategies will become more directive, seeking to ensure a good knowledge of land cadaster and transactions, to keep land prices within reasonable limits and to better meet needs by opening new peripheral areas to urbanisation;
- Transport infrastructure will be considered as a priority investment at national, regional and local levels, and will promote public transport and multi-modality;
- National housing strategies will focus on the resorption of inadequate housing and the upgrading of slums, without forgetting to support the development of the real estate and rental markets;
- Basic services will be programmed and managed through a multi-sectoral and coordinated approach and adequate contractual relationships between public authorities and service providers, taking fully into consideration their impact on the environment and public health;
- The national urban system will be revitalised by a socio-economic and environmental strategy aiming at a prioritisation of urban functions

based on the respective potential of each agglomeration;

- Measures for adaptation to climate change and for enhancing resilience to natural disasters, including protection against flooding, will involve agreements and joint actions between central government and local authorities;
- The methods of urban planning and management will be completely revised, capabilities enhanced, and the participation of private and community stakeholders put into practice in a systematic way.

The determined implementation of these commitments, that each government should adapt to its national context, would contribute to enhance the economic efficiency and competitiveness of the continent, and transform African cities into healthy, safe and inclusive places, whose inhabitants, with recognised rights and duties, would be proud to share and enjoy.

In their desire to transform our world, Heads of State and Government stated in September 2015: "we recognize that sustainable urban development and management are crucial to the quality of life of our people. We will work with local authorities and communities to renew and plan our cities and human settlements so as to foster community cohesion and personal security and to stimulate innovation and employment."⁷ It is the responsibility of African leaders to make every effort to turn this commitment into reality, if possible within the next 15 years, and to mobilise all national and international partners to found the new city planning and management approaches of the twenty-first century. ■

References:

- ¹ UN statistical data, the only internationally recognised ones, are updated every 2 years and available at esa.un.org/unpd/wup
- ² UN-Habitat, 'The State of the World's Cities 2010/2011'
- ³ UN-Habitat, 'International Guidelines on Decentralization and Strengthening of Local Authorities', Resolution 21/3 of 20 April 2007.
- ⁴ UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution 25/6 of 23 April 2015.
- ⁵ See the recent 'State of South African Cities Report, 2016', a very detailed and professional survey of the situation in the (9) largest SA cities.
- ⁶ These 10 lines of action are part of the Declaration adopted by the first African Ministerial Forum on Housing and Urban Development (AMFHU) held in Rabat, Morocco on 11-12 May 2016.
- ⁷ Resolution 70/1 of the UN General Assembly establishing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Why are South African Universities sites of struggle today?



At the forefront of this struggle are students, many of whom were born after the dismantlement of juridical apartheid but are experiencing cultural alienation, exclusion due to high fees, and exposure to ideas of dead white men as a form of education inside universities.

By Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni

A definitive entry of the colonised, racialised, inferiorised, and dehumanised people into the realm of thought is directly challenging the very foundations of Euro-North American-centric modernity and western civilisation. I am here talking about those who were once deemed to be non-humans, lacking souls, devoid of history, rationality, and knowledge and how they are vigorously claiming their place in the human family. They are loudly proclaiming that 'black lives matter' and all human beings are born into a valid knowledge system that has to be included in the academy. In the process, they are challenging the very idea of South Africa that has been determined by an indelible paradigm of difference and practices of impossibility of co-presence among races and ethnicities.

The university in South Africa in particular and in Africa in general, is a legitimate site of struggle as it is a power structure that underpins the Euro-North American-centric modern world system and its shifting global orders. By 2015, the students had reached a consensus that what Nelson Mandela and his generation negotiated at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) failed to break the indelible paradigm of difference – as exclusion of black people from the economy and knowledge continues. Inevitably, the students joined the insurgent citizens and demanded immediate decolonisation of the universities. Faculty and university leadership as well as the government were taken by surprise as what began as the Rhodes Must Fall Movement (RMF) targeting Cecil John Rhodes's statue at the University of Cape Town quickly expanded into broader demands for cognitive justice; change of curriculum; de-commissioning of offensive colonial/apartheid symbols; right to free, quality and relevant education; cultural freedom; and overall change of the very idea of the university from its western pedigree ('university in Africa') to 'African university.'

Here I provide a systematic theoretical and historical framing as

well as interpretation of the terrain within which deeper meaning of the current student movements could be found while challenging the liberal interpretations of this phenomenon.

Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane posed five arguments about the importance of theorisation, historicisation, and holistic analysis.¹ Firstly, he posited that 'Contemporary development, let it be said at the outset, is not a field of study for those who see no need for comprehensive theory of social change, for an understanding of the laws of motion that define the epoch and the social formation under examination.' Secondly, he argued that 'Fragmentary descriptions, however voluminous and detailed, provide no substitute whatsoever for sustained reasoned theoretical argument.' Thirdly, he criticised academics involved in Southern Africa studies for avoiding historical analysis. Fourthly, he reiterated that 'Once again, the detailed examination of trees eliminates the forest from sight.' Finally, he criticised liberal literature for contributing 'little or nothing to our understanding of the current era in Southern Africa. Indeed they do worse than merely fail. Together they manage to obfuscate the complexities of the social movement in Southern Africa and deny in their premises its historical originality.' What all this means is that to gain a deeper understanding of RMF movements it is important to situate it within global, continental, and South African contexts. Let us begin with historical and theoretical framing of the issues.

Theory and history

The current 'uprisings' rocking 'postcolonial' Africa in general have revealed some core inadequacies of existing social theories particularly Marxist and liberal analyses. For example, from both a Marxist and liberal understanding, the contemporary world is facing a 'middle class revolt.'² Francis Fukuyama has written about a global 'middle-class revolution.'³ The thinking is that a disgruntled professional class that is globalised is pushing for deeper democratisation. If it is not the middle-class that is identified as the drivers

of protests, then it is the 'precariat' class/new proletariat/multitudes of precarious working classes of unemployed, underemployed, and indebted experiencing the harsh effects of global capitalism.⁴ Class analysis must not be discarded but too much reliance on it amounts to concentration on trees within a forest.

This analysis is inadequate at many levels. It assumes universalist interpretation of complex politics of protest that emerge within specific and diverse historical contexts, including the global terrain, of course. It is still locked in narrow class analysis that obscures complexities and multi-faceted issues at play in the protest movements. It does not take into account varying historical contexts. For example, the condition of precariousness in urban

“ The native is the creation of the colonial state; colonised, the native is pinned down, localised, thrown out of civilisation as an outcast, confined to custom, and then defined as its product. ”

Africa is not a new phenomenon.⁵ It is traceable to the time of colonial encounters during which indigenous black people were conquered and then 're-invented' first as slaves and second as providers of cheap labour. Mahmood Mamdani explained the colonial process of 're-invention' of Africans in a revealing way: 'the native is the creation of the colonial state; colonized, the native is pinned down, localized, thrown out of civilization as an outcast, confined to custom, and then defined as its product.'⁶ This was implemented through a combination of outright forcible / physical capturing and selling of black people as commodities, dispossession, displacement, pauperisation, peasantisation, and proleterianisation.⁷

The key problem that is often overlooked in theorisation of the current social movements including student protests is that most of the liberal /neo-liberal conceptions of the world were and are inscribed within the modern body politic, constitutions, laws, institutions and even social organisation of people as citizens and workers, where they have to be observed and respected rather than opposed and subverted. In this sense, it is very easy to make a simplistic interpretation of all forms of violence from a 'Nuremberg template' as criminal instead of political and revolutionary.⁸

The RMF movements defy easy class analysis because they are an amalgam of many class and non-class issues of gender, culture, language, symbols and epistemology. The very category of 'middle-class' that is increasingly being used today, encompasses a bulk of property-less people who are highly indebted whereas the category 'working class' embraces millions of what can be correctly termed 'working poor' like security guards and cleaners, some of whom are paid as little as R2000 per month in South Africa.⁹ This is why Adam Branch and Zachariah Mampilly argued that 'A realistically defined middle class would comprise only a narrow sliver of Africa's population, set against a backdrop in which nearly half of all Africans live in extreme poverty, with numbers growing.'¹⁰

These issues complicate the situation beyond the remits of class and liberal analysis as the RMF movements in particular, and protests worldwide in general, include feminist, gays and lesbian rights and dispossessed indigenous peoples. Race rather than class is still an invisible but active organising principle informing unchanging patterns of inequality, poverty, Eurocentric curriculum, alienating university cultures, use of 'foreign'/colonial languages of instruction, and standing colonial/apartheid symbols. Like all other protests, RMF movements are riddled by tensions, contradictions, ambivalences, and violence; making them difficult to interpret from a singular perspective.

But it is not only Marxist and liberal

theories that are limited; existing social theories coming from Europe and North America in their market (materialist/class analysis), sociological (race theory), psychoanalytical, culturalist, post-structuralist, postmodernist, and postcolonial versions have reached an ‘epistemic break’/crisis/exhaustion.¹¹ Immanuel Wallerstein revealed that nineteenth century social science’s presumptions which were previously considered to possess a ‘liberating of the spirit, serve today as the central intellectual barrier to useful analysis of the social world.’¹² Before his death in 2013, Patrick Chabal echoed Wallerstein’s concerns about the limits of social sciences, noting that they have proven to be both historically and conceptually out of date to the extent of being ‘obstacles to the understanding of what is going on in our societies and what we can do about it.’¹³

Thus delving into the epistemological questions and crisis is important because the RMF movements are loudly calling for what Brenda Cooper and Robert Morrell terms ‘Africa-centred knowledges’ as a form of cognitive justice.¹⁴ The domain of knowledge is a site of struggle in the RMF movements and the anger is clearly over continued exposure to academic and intellectual works of dead white men like Karl Marx, Max Weber, Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault and many others most of whom never even set foot on the African continent. These are simply idols of Western modernity and its promotion of rationality. But the very last sentences in Chabal’s book capture the ‘epistemic break’: ‘The end of conceit is upon us. Western rationality must be rethought.’¹⁵

What is clear is that what is upon us is not simply a crisis of capitalism as an economic system. In the RMF movements particularly, there is a clear revolt against epistemological domination and cultural extroversion. If this analysis is correct, then we must speak of a crisis of civilisation and modernity. This civilisational crisis was predicted in 1955 by Aime Cesaire taking the form of incapability of a civilisation to solve ‘the problems it creates’ rendering it ‘decadent;’ turning its focus away from ‘its most crucial problems’ making it ‘sick;’

and playing ‘fast and loose with its principles’ opening itself to death.¹⁶

A crisis of a civilisation is also highlighted by Cornel West in his articulation of the limits of Marxist and liberal analysis in enlightening African-American oppression. He specifically wrote of ‘a pervasive and profound crisis of North Atlantic civilization’ because of his concern with the specific problems of black Americans.¹⁷ The core symptoms of this crisis include ‘the threat of nuclear annihilation, extensive class inequality, brutal state repression, subtle bureaucratic surveillance, widespread homophobia, technological abuse of nature and rampant racism and patriarchy.’ Slavoj Zizek understood the crisis as that of the global capitalist system that was approaching ‘an

“It is very easy to make a simplistic interpretation of all forms of violence from a ‘Nuremberg template’ as criminal instead of political and revolutionary.”

apocalyptic zero-point’ in the process producing ecological crises, inequalities and poverty, struggles over raw materials, food and water as well as ‘the explosive growth of social divisions and exclusions.’¹⁸ The multiplicity of contemporary problems inspires us to speak of a crisis of civilisation.

But the most stringent critique of the whole edifice of modernity and Western civilisation has been mounted by Latin American decolonial theorists. They have exposed what has come to be termed ‘coloniality’ as a global structure of power, which manifests itself in the domains of being, knowledge, and the rest of modern human life.¹⁹ They have reintroduced decolonisation/ ‘decoloniality’ as a ‘family of diverse positions,’ which identifies ‘coloniality as a fundamental problem in the modern (as well as postmodern and information) age.’²⁰ To the decolonial theorists, decoloniality is ‘a necessary task that remains unfinished.’ They

have defined coloniality as ‘an intricate matrix of power, knowledge, and being as modernity/coloniality’ resulting in ‘naturalisation of hierarchies of being that divide some humans from others, and subordination of people and nature to the demands of production and accumulation.’²¹ The importance of decolonial interventions from Latin America is that they bring together a strong historicisation, theorisation, and holistic view of modern problems and issues.

This broad framing enabled Ramon Grosfoguel to come up with a useful description of the contemporary world as ‘Euro-North American-centric/ Christian-centric/ modern/colonial/ imperial/racial/patriarchal/hetero-normative/capitalist’ discursive terrain – an important global context within which the spirit of protest is provoked and emerges.²² This broad discursive terrain was understood by Kwame Nkrumah as ‘neo-colonialism: the last stage of imperialism’ and Walter Rodney termed it a process of ‘how Europe underdeveloped Africa.’²³ Highlighting the epistemological damage imposed by colonialism/imperialism/coloniality, Ngugi wa Thiong’o understood the problem of ‘postcolonial’ Africa as that of colonisation of the mental universe of Africans and agitated for ‘decolonisation of the mind.’²⁴ While these broad framings are very important they cannot be adequate without a de-escalation of analysis to the particular historical context within which actually existing protests are taking place. It is, therefore, imperative to bring the African historical context in general into the picture and the South African case study in particular into the conceptual, theoretical, and historical framing of the issues involved in politics of protest.

Branch and Mampilly provide a good contextualisation of protests in recent African history.²⁵ They correctly emphasise ‘the need to look inward to Africa’s own past and its own history of protest before looking outward to events in the rest of the world in order to explain today’s continental protest wave.’ This approach is very important as it addresses the problem that Mahmood Mamdani described as writing ‘history by analogy.’²⁶

Mamdani specifically criticised the use of ‘received democratic theory’ as a prescription from a different context from that which gave rise to its problems.²⁷

Mamdani also emphasised the need for an analysis that is focused on actually existing protest politics in Africa. Branch and Mampilly categorised the actually existing protest politics into three broad waves while concentrating on the identification of the active motive forces/social bases of each of the protests. The first wave was that of anti-colonial protests that culminated in the ‘political independence’ of Africa. The second emerged in the 1980s and 1990s ranged against single-party, military dictatorships, and austerity measures imposed by Bretton Woods institutions. Today we are facing a ‘third wave’ of protests of which we are engaged in understanding ‘what political transformations it may foretell.’²⁸

Who have been critical agents of protests in each of the three waves of protests? The ‘detrified’²⁹ urban ‘underclass’ of Africans who constituted a ‘political society’³⁰ of those who had nothing to lose and everything to win in the dismantlement of colonialism played a prominent role in the anti-colonial protests of the 1950s and 1960s. These Africans had a very conflictual relationship with the colonial state – ‘a relation defined by an alternation between neglect and direct violence, between extra-legality and illegality.’³¹ This social category of Africans faced urban controls, night searches, forced removals, and overt violence from the state. The category ‘worker’ does not include these people’s identity within a colonial political economy and governmentality: they were dispossessed and unemployed. They were uprooted from rural areas, separated from their kinsmen and women; they lived in ‘the shanty town’ and constantly faced the full force of colonial power.

This ‘political identity’ made them to constitute, in Frantz Fanon’s analysis, ‘one of most spontaneous and the most radical revolutionary forces of a colonized people.’³² The important point that emerges from this analysis is that: ‘Different political identities, based on different relations to state

power, produce different forms of political action.’³³ Unlike many workers in a colonial environment who tend to protest for higher wages or improved working conditions while conscious of preserving their jobs; what Fanon termed the ‘lumpenproletariat’ do not fight for reforms; they are propelled ‘by a more radical need to transform the very conditions of life, which are enforced by an arbitrary and violent state power.’ It was this social base that provided the foot soldiers of the anti-colonial forces. But the anti-colonial struggles did not succeed in delivering a genuinely ‘postcolonial’ dispensation.³⁴

Inevitably the second wave of protests of the 1980s and 1990s were sparked by a combination of realisation

“The changes of the 1990s left the ‘precarious livelihoods of urban political society’ unresolved, hence today’s vehement ‘rejection of the neoliberal economy by Africa’s poor’.”

of the ‘myths of decolonisation’,³⁵ failure of the ‘postcolonial’ redistributive developmental state, dictatorship, austerity measures and repression that was encouraged by Bretton Woods institutions.³⁶ The activists included nascent civil society, students, workers and intellectuals. The struggles were multifaceted to the extent that the concept of ‘third wave of democratisation’ occludes the complexities, ambivalences, ambiguities, diversities and other alternative readings of protests and the concomitant diverse imagined horizons.³⁷

The ‘third wave of African protest’ is what we are seeing today of which RMF movements are part. At the forefront seems to be a category called ‘the youth’ tired of being put in a permanent state of what Alcinda Honwana termed ‘waithood.’³⁸

Branch and Mampilly have distilled broad causes of the current wave of protests. First: ‘The multiparty regimes and neoliberal economies that emerged from the upheavals of the late 1980s and early 1990s have proven unable to meet popular aspirations for fundamental change.’ In short the changes of the 1990s left the ‘precarious livelihoods of urban political society’ unresolved, hence today’s vehement ‘rejection of the neoliberal economy by Africa’s poor.’ The second condition precipitating current protests is the continuing lack of accountability, poor delivery of service and use of violence by the state even under multiparty democracy.

In all this, the Arab Spring/Arab Awakening that emerged in North Africa seems to fall within the second wave of democratic transition that took place in the rest of Africa in the late 1980s and 1990s.³⁹

Having framed the core issues of protest from the continental perspective, a turn to South Africa is in order. Julian Brown argued that ‘a consensus politics’ of 1994 and the post-apartheid dream of a rainbow nation has collapsed and in the cracks and fractures of South Africa’s political order has emerged an ‘insurgent citizen,’ new forms of activity, new leaders and new movements.⁴⁰ Brown posits that ‘our existing society has inequality at its core. The formal political order seems to separate from the social and political worlds of ordinary citizens, and the poor.’

The root of all political, economic, social, and epistemological problems haunting South Africa today and provoking current citizen uprisings are genealogically and historically traceable to the sin of the ‘paradigm of difference,’ which according to Mudimbe enacted ‘the colonizing structure responsible for producing marginal societies, cultures, and human beings.’⁴¹ The other name for the ‘paradigm of difference’ is the ‘colour line’ that was coined by William E B Du Bois in 1903.⁴² Lewis R. Gordon has elaborated on the broader meaning of the ‘colour line’ this way:

Born from the divide of black and white, it serves as a blueprint of the ongoing division of humankind.

*The colour line is also a metaphor that exceeds its own concrete formulation. It is the race line as well as the gender line, the class line, the sexual orientation line, the religious line – in short, the line between ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal’ identities.*⁴³

With specific reference to South Africa the ‘paradigm of difference’ became known as ‘apartheid’ – a form of institutionalised racism that underpinned the politics of ‘separate development’ (a colonial euphemism for legalised racial inequality and oppression).⁴⁴ The Nobel Peace Prize Winner and veteran of the anti-apartheid liberation struggle Chief Albert Luthuli in his autobiography entitled *Let My People Go* correctly characterised the institutionalisation of the ‘paradigm of difference’ in the form of apartheid as ‘a tragic failure of imagination’ in which ‘We Africans are depersonalised by whites, our humanity and dignity reduced in their imagination to a minimum.’ What was ‘tragic’ about the ‘paradigm of difference’ in the context of apartheid South Africa, was its inscription of what Boaventura de Sousa Santos termed ‘impossibility of co-presence’ through such legislation as the Native Land Act of 1913, Urban Areas Act of 1923, and the Extension of University Education Act of 1959 among many others. Such laws not only demarcated land but segregated people as well as students into white, black, Indian and coloured universities.⁴⁵

What was even more tragic was the apartheid government’s official attempts to ‘de-nationalise’ the majority black population through forced removals from urban areas and pushing all black people into ‘Bantustans’ as well as fragmenting black people into rigid tribal identities.⁴⁶ This created a misnomer that Neocosmos rendered as shift from ‘foreign natives’ to ‘native foreigners.’ Consequently, South Africa has been haunted by a struggle for inclusion and equality by those who have been excluded, peripheralised, and pauperised since the time of colonial encounters.

South Africa was informed by a ‘paradigm of difference,’ producing the ‘impossibility of co-presence’ and the ‘de-nationalisation’ of indigenous people. This inevitably unfolded and

fossilised as a highly contested and conflict-generating identity problem. One can confidently say that the core problem of South Africa is that of ‘a struggle to become South African.’⁴⁷ This problem can be rendered as an idea, a national question, and a liberation challenge. As an idea, it was well captured by Kader Asmal in these words:

Here was born an idea, a South African idea, of moulding a people from diverse origins, cultural practices, languages, into one, within a framework democratic in character, that can absorb, accommodate and mediate conflicts

“ What was even more tragic was the apartheid government’s official attempts to ‘de-nationalise’ the majority black population through forced removals from urban areas and pushing all black people into ‘Bantustans’ as well as fragmenting black people into rigid tribal identities.”

*and adversarial interests without oppression and injustice.*⁴⁸

At the centre of this idea are such national questions as ‘What is the post-apartheid nation? Who belongs or is excluded, and on what basis? How does a “national identity gain its salience and power to transcend the particularities of ethnicity and race?”⁴⁹ Inevitably, the contested idea of South Africa imposed itself on the liberatory discourse and agenda as a challenge of how to resolve the related questions of nationality and citizenship. This liberatory challenge was well-expressed by C R D Halisi:

*In a very fundamental sense, the struggle for liberation required black activists to confront nascent questions of citizenship and national identity – how the ‘people’ are to be defined, who belongs to the political community, and what are the criteria of inclusion and exclusion.*⁵⁰

In short, the still unresolved idea of South Africa has a long history beginning with Dutch settlement at the Cape and the politics of moving ‘frontier’ of genocide, enslavement, conquest, dispossession, displacement, colonisation and exploitation; to Anglicisation as an imperial phenomenon accompanied by conquest, ‘liberal racism,’ dispossession, exploitation and segregation; *Afrikanerisation* as a colonial process of the institutionalisation of racism and de-nationalisation; *Africanism* as a resistance movement that branched into black republicanism, cultural nationalism, pan-Africanism, black consciousness formations, social-class-based imaginations, liberal nationalism, and non-racialism.⁵¹

What emerged as a result of these contestations, struggles and resistance is what Brown termed the ‘social consensus’ of a ‘New South Africa’ founded on rainbowism (inclusive and democratic society).⁵² Alexander Johnston termed it an ‘improvised nation.’⁵³ But Brown depicted the stories of a successful transition, miracle and ‘new South Africa’ as ‘a dated story’ because ‘South Africa is once again in flux – caught in a moment in which the boundaries of politics and society are unstable.’⁵⁴ Halisi correctly predicted the current ructions and convulsions rocking post-apartheid South Africa when he wrote:

Rival populism, nourished by competing visions of liberation are bound to have an impact on the evolution of South African citizenship. In addition, popular democratic traditions, of which populism is one manifestation, are among the most durable sources of inspiration for democratic thinkers. After centuries of racial domination, it would be unrealistic to expect an ethos of non-racial citizenship to prevail unchallenged by the older political perceptions. [...]. For

*the immediate future, however, successive governments will have to cope with the implications of both non-racial and race-conscious political sensibilities.*⁵⁵

The rise of such political and social formations as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Black First Land First (BLF) and Rhodes Must Fall Movement (RMF) cannot be divorced from the long-standing contestations over the idea of South Africa. These movements are challenging what Johnston has described as an 'identity of convenience' as they continue to fight for a 'South African idea' based on the imaginations, knowledges, experiences and aspirations of the formerly enslaved, colonised, racialised, dispossessed, and dehumanised people.⁵⁶

The current struggles which have produced what Brown termed 'insurgent citizens' are deeply etched within the painful reality of living an illusion of an insider, a citizen, and a human rights bearing human being while the reality is that black people are still languishing and kept outside through economic and epistemological exclusion that produce a property-less people. At the forefront of this struggle are students, many of whom were born after the dismantlement of juridical apartheid but are experiencing cultural alienation, exclusion due to high fees, and exposure to ideas of dead white men as a form of education inside universities. In reaction, they have turned the university into a site of struggle.

The university as a site of struggle

What exists today are 'universities in Africa' rather than 'African universities.' This is mainly because the modern 'westernised' university emerged in Africa as a transplant from Europe.⁵⁷ The existing universities in Africa did not grow from the African seed and are not a product of deliberate and slow growth from the African socio-cultural and politico-economic developments.⁵⁸ This transplantation of universities into Africa provoked resistance from early African elites like Edward Wilmot Blyden and J E Casley Hayford. Blyden, for instance, agitated for the establishment of a 'West African university' in 1872 and he was specific

that such an institution must not be an imitation of European or American university.⁵⁹

In the first place, Blyden argued that those European textbooks that portrayed Africans as 'a heathen and worse than a heathen – a fool' had to be banished from the 'African university' if an African 'national intellect' was to be produced and shaped. Secondly, Blyden became the earliest advocate for transformation, decolonisation, and Africanisation of education in Africa. He advocated an African university that was free from 'despotic Europeanising influences which had warped and crushed the Negro mind.'⁶⁰

Blyden was deeply concerned about what he termed the 'race poison' embedded within European civilisation and advocated a form of education that

“The Eurocentric epistemology remained intact, only hiding under ‘Africanisation’ which in reality meant adding African experience and agency to the discipline of history.”

restored cultural self-respect among Africans – one that was informed by African literature, African languages, songs and oral tradition. Such an education was expected to produce a distinct 'African Personality.'⁶¹ Blyden was not successful in his struggles for an 'African university.' For example, Fourah Bay College, one of the earliest universities in Africa, emerged as an affiliate of the University of Durham in Britain.⁶²

The other important advocate for an 'African university' was J E Casley Hayford of Ghana. Between 1911 and 1920, Hayford campaigned for an 'indigenous university' where teaching was to be in vernacular languages, where books written in foreign languages would be translated into indigenous languages and where

the overarching objective of education was to 'preserve in the students, a sense of African Nationality.'⁶³ Just like Blyden, Hayford was ahead of his time but did not succeed in establishing an indigenous university. Achimota College located near Accra, another of the earliest universities in Africa, was an affiliate college of the University of London.⁶⁴

'Universities in Africa' multiplied after 1945. Examples include Makerere University in Uganda and Ibadan University in Nigeria. These were products of Cyril Asquith Report/Doctrine (1943-1945) that became a blueprint for the export of universities from Britain to the colonies as 'university colleges.' Robert R. July correctly noted that 'The first universities in black Africa were imports, their purpose the indoctrination of a foreign culture.'⁶⁵ The purpose of colonial education and its impact on Africa is well analysed by Ngugi wa Thiong'o beginning with the criminalisation of use of 'mother tongue' within the premises of colonial schools so as to produce alienated colonial subjects.⁶⁶

In other words, colonial education was delivered in the package of what Ngugi wa Thiong'o termed 'a cultural bomb' and the 'invasion of African mental universe.' Some of those who spearheaded the anti-colonial struggles were aware of the cultural bomb, the invasion of the African mental universe and the deep alienation that colonial education imposed on Africa. This is why decolonisation entailed the revival of indigenous cultures, reaffirmation of African identities, rise of nationalist historiography and other initiatives aimed at reversing alienation. This struggle produced such initiatives as the 'African personality,' 'Ethiopianism,' 'Negritude' and many others.⁶⁷ The challenge was that the African elites spearheading these initiatives were 'men of two worlds, true cultural hybrids' which created a lot of contradictions, ambivalences and ambiguities in the way they spearheaded decolonisation.⁶⁸ Those who were highly conscious like Kwame Nkrumah immediately they achieved political independence; they pushed for 'African universities' that reflected African traditions and cultures.⁶⁹

However, the decolonisation project of the 1960s did not succeed in producing genuinely 'African universities.' Africanisation took the form of the appointment of black Vice Chancellors, black professors and addition of African thinkers and novels into an existing Eurocentric epistemology. South Africa has to go beyond this shallow form of change in which the concern is about simple racial and demographic equity. This simplistic conception of change takes the form of the promotion of black South African academics and their superimposition on a system that has not yet been fully decolonised. Alienation hits them in the face. This is so because even the introduction of African Studies did not fundamentally transform the epistemological scaffolding of 'universities in Africa.' There were no ready social forces to stage a radical epistemological rebellion as most of the academics and professors were direct products of 'westernised' universities.

Even the celebrated Ibadan, Dakar and Dar es Salaam nationalist schools did not unleash an epistemological rebellion, rather they engaged in creating a 'counter-discourse' aimed at 'counter-factualising' the racist claims of imperial/colonial historiography.⁷⁰ The Eurocentric epistemology remained intact, only hiding under 'Africanisation' which in reality meant adding African experience and agency to the discipline of history. But as noted by Jacques Depelchin the very discipline of African history, as a form of knowledge and its methodology remained inherently colonised and this became apparent in the 'selection of themes, problems, periods' in the so-called African history.⁷¹

When we turn our analysis to South African universities in particular, it becomes clear how the paradigm of difference and practices of impossibility of co-presence not only produced also 'universities in Africa' but further informed racial categorisation of universities in accordance with race and ethnicity. In short, the universities in South Africa became detestable reflections of a society bifurcated by an indelible paradigm of difference and racial fundamentalist philosophy of impossibility of co-presence. Worse

still, these racially and ethnically bifurcated universities shared one common feature that Francis Nyamnjoh depicted as 'European greenhouses under African skies' making them 'a space of whiteness' even if inhabited by black people.⁷² Even the 'black ethnic universities' were not grounded on indigenous knowledge. Rather they deliberately taught a poor version of Western epistemology that Isaac Bongani Tabata described as 'education for barbarism.'⁷³ Tabata elaborated on the logic behind 'Bantu education':

The apostles of Apartheid have fathered a new monstrosity, called Bantu Education, by means of which they aim to arrest the development of the African people, who comprise more than nine million, or nearly three-quarters of the total population. It has its counter-part in 'Coloured Education' for the

“What is commonly ignored in existing analysis of student protests is how the spirit of Turfloop (the spirit of black consciousness and protest) spread to Soweto and resulted in the Soweto Uprising of 1976.”

Coloured people of South Africa, comprising, with Indians, about one and a half million. They want to re-create for the subject races a social order belonging to the pre-industrial age.

Bantu education was a colonial instrument used to produce a people whose very purpose was to 'minister the whites' through provision of cheap labour. It deliberately incapacitated 'the African student from reaching the required standard for entering a university.' Writing specifically about segregation in university education, Tabata concluded that:

This Apartheid in university

education is not simply a matter of separating the races at the universities. It is an end result, the logical completion of a systematic process not only of robbing Non-Whites of education but turning a whole population back to barbarism. To put it another way: if Bantu Education is the bricks of that immense edifice, the retribalisation of a whole people, the Apartheid university is its caping stone.

Tabata concluded his book with a chapter entitled 'Bantu Education Must Fail,' that is, it must 'fall.' What is important to note is that the bifurcation of universities along racial and ethnic lines impinged on the formation and fossilisation of student movements and student politics. While student formations began as Christian 'ecumenical' movements they also branched into the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) formed in 1924 that was dominated by English-speaking white students who pursued liberal politics of protest; the Afrikaans Studentebond formed in 1933 that were part of the broader Afrikanerisation nationalism project; and the South African Students Organisation (SASO) formed in 1968 that embraced black liberation thought in general and black consciousness politics that challenged the entire edifice of apartheid colonialism.⁷⁴

White liberal students actively protested against particular actions of the apartheid government such as the 1968 decision to block the appointment of Archie Mafeje at the University of Cape Town and against particular pieces of legislation. White liberal students did not mount any sustained critique of apartheid as a colonial system. This is why Richard Rathbone wrote that 'Poor NUSAS was detested by government for being radical and detested by blacks for being insufficiently radical: in short the liberal dilemma.'⁷⁵ Between 1968 and 1973, the 'black ethnic universities' became the real site of struggles particularly the University of the North (now University of Limpopo).

There were various reasons why these 'black ethnic universities' became sites of struggle. They were initially placed under the authoritarian Department of Native Affairs and were

run by entirely white Vice-Chancellors together with entirely white university senates that were not critical of apartheid but were eager to sustain it.⁷⁶ As noted by Julian Brown:

At black universities, administrators generally assumed responsibility for suppressing protest that took place on their campuses. Protesting students were either expelled or suspended for an indefinite period of time, and consequently were forced to leave the university grounds – and often to abandon their studies. When students did not willingly obey the university’s expulsion orders and chose to remain on the campuses, the administrators rarely hesitated before inviting the police onto their campuses to enforce their shaky authority.⁷⁷

The political consciousness of black students reflected the harshness of the world outside the university. But inside ‘black ethnic universities’, just like outside, black politics was criminalised. By 1970 the students at the University of the North had fully embraced black consciousness thought and were speaking of ‘liberation first before education’ and were directly locating their struggles within the broader context of the psychological liberation of black people.⁷⁸ The university administrators responded with mass expulsions of students in 1972. These expulsions spread the Turfloop spirit to other campuses and black solidarity was expressed through the Alice Declaration where the oppressive politics practiced in ‘Black Institutions of Higher Learning’ was condemned strongly and this was followed by student protests at the universities of Fort Hare, the Western Cape, Zululand and Durban-Westville.

But what is commonly ignored in existing analysis of student protests is how the spirit of Turfloop (the spirit of black consciousness and protest) spread to Soweto and resulted in the Soweto Uprising of 1976. Heffernan captures how the expelled students from Turfloop went to teach in schools in Soweto, spreading the spirit of protest and black consciousness; he focuses mainly on the role of Onkgopotse Abraham Tiro, a former university student leader

and firebrand who taught History and English at Morris Isaacson High School in Soweto. Black consciousness politics permeated the South African Students Movement (SASM) that was already active in Soweto. Tsietsi Mashinini passed through Tiro’s tutorship and he became the leader of Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC) that actively participated in the organisation of June 1976 Soweto Uprising.⁷⁹ This background is important because it links genealogically the Turfloop spirit, Soweto spirit, and the current RMF spirit as a continuum with ruptures and breaks in a living spirit of student protest.

The other important and noticeable feature is the current change in the

“By 1970 the students at the University of the North had fully embraced black consciousness thought and were speaking of ‘liberation first before education’ and were directly locating their struggles within the broader context of the psychological liberation of black people.”

site of struggles from the previously ‘black ethnic universities’ to the previously white-English and Afrikaans universities. Even though protests began at the predominantly black Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), they captured the nation’s imagination when they shifted to the University of Cape Town (UCT), Rhodes University, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), University of Stellenbosch, University of Pretoria (UP), University of North-West (UNW-Potchefstroom campus), University of KwaZulu-Natal, and University of Johannesburg (UJ) as well as the University of South Africa

(UNISA). This is where transformation, Africanisation, and decolonisation have been painstakingly slow. Of course, such universities as Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) have also been rocked by student politics. The key reason for the slow pace is that a decolonisation, which gets deep into epistemology, curriculum, pedagogy, institutional cultures, access, language, demographics, and symbolic representation, is yet to take place in all South African universities.

Transition and transformation of South Africa

The promises of a radical transition and transformation in the 1990s, following the unbanning of political organisations and release of political prisoners and the notions of forgiveness, reconciliation, and a horizon of ‘new South Africa’ were expected to resolve student grievances through the decolonisation of universities. South Africa, in the words of Gillian Hart, was expected to shift from ‘de-nationalisation to re-nationalisation.’⁸⁰

The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) was meant to enable black and white people to find each other across the long-standing ‘paradigm of difference’. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was meant to break the practices of impossibility of co-presence through truth-telling and what Hart termed ‘the liberal ecclesiastical discourse of forgiveness.’⁸¹ The adoption of a new South African Constitution in 1996 was meant to resolve the paradigm of difference and bury the curse of a ‘de-nationalised’ black majority.

In the education sector, a number of pieces of legislation and frameworks as well as commissions were rolled out in an endeavour to transform education. Examples include *National Commission on Higher Education* (1994) that emphasised access and alignment of qualifications; *A Policy Framework for Education and Training* (1995) that highlighted the right to basic education for all citizens; the *National Qualifications Framework* (1998) that emphasised adherence

with international standards and training of students as a potential workforce for a global economy; and the *National Plan for Higher Education* (2001) that indicated a shift from access and transformation to adaptation to a global knowledge-driven world.⁸² What is clear from a close analysis of these policy frameworks is that the intended transition and transformation became entangled and captured between and betwixt powerful forces of human rights versus market-driven neoliberalism; internationalisation/globalisation versus indigenisation; Africanisation versus decolonisation; as well as imperatives of rights versus imperative of justice.

Transformation became a major challenge. Three empirical examples demonstrate how difficult it is to transform, Africanise, and decolonise South African universities. The first example is the Mafeje Affair (1968-2007) which is a case of exclusion during and after apartheid.⁸³ During apartheid the state was blamed for having interfered with the appointment of Archie Mafeje to a Senior Lecturer in Anthropology position in 1968 at UCT, but what boggles the mind and is hard to explain is why Mafeje was blocked twice in the 1990s when he expressed an interest to join UCT. In 1990, Mafeje took the initiative and indicated his willingness to join UCT only to be given a one-year Visiting Senior Research Fellow, with a salary pegged at Senior Lecturer level (for someone who had been a professor for over 20 years outside South Africa). The one year offer was explained as due to 'the current financial circumstances' whatever that meant but the salary level at senior lecturer was never explained, perhaps it was also due 'the current financial circumstances.' In 1993 Mafeje applied for the AC Jordan Chair in African Studies at UCT, a technicality was used to exclude him: that Mafeje had not advised the appointments office of his change of address when he left Namibia for Egypt.

The second is the Makgoba Affair (1994-1995). This example speaks directly to challenges of transformation and Africanisation. Eddie Webster argued that 'The Makgoba affair provides a deep and tragic insight into the South African transition. As with the

rest of South Africa, black and white are struggling to find a common project.'⁸⁴ Malegapuru William Makgoba was appointed the first black Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1994 and he began to champion the discourse of Africanisation of the university claiming that Eurocentric education was still the mainstay of teaching. As noted by Webster, Makgoba had 'entered a racially polarised campus' deeply entrenched 'in the ways of the old South Africa' where 'institutional change will take a long time.' Between 1995 and 1996, Makgoba found himself engrossed in bitter struggle in which his academic credentials were investigated and questioned, where he was accused of having embellished his CV, of being administratively incompetent, and of tarnishing the image of the university.⁸⁵ James M Statman and Amy E Ansel

“What is emerging clearly with specific reference to South Africa is a country that is back at the cross-roads in which the ‘rainbow nation’ is unravelling.”

deployed the concepts of discursive ecology and hidden scripts to reveal that:

*The Makgoba affair was profoundly unsettling in that it revealed and perhaps heightened the terrible racial, political and class-fault-lines suddenly found lying so close beneath the dominant discursive patina of reconciliatory rainbowism.*⁸⁶

The then Vice-Chancellor of the university R W Charlton indicated that the Makgoba Affair 'acted as lighting conductor for some of the tensions of society in transition' and somehow admitting that it was basically about transforming the university rather than the other accusations.⁸⁷ Whatever is the real truth behind the Makgoba Affair, its entanglement in the politics of transformation is important and

indicates the difficulties, tensions, contradictions and oppositions inherent in trying to actively advance Africanisation in this case from the top. Makgoba eventually lost his position due to this affair.

The third example is known as the Mamdani Affair (1996-1998). It is specifically about the challenges of curriculum change, particularly how 'Africa' is to be taught in a post-apartheid society and how to give content to a Centre for African Studies.⁸⁸ The crisis began soon after Mahmood Mamdani was appointed to the AC Jordan Chair in African Studies at UCT, particularly with regards to the introduction of a core foundation semester course on Africa which he crafted as 'Problematising Africa.' Mamdani's proposed course was worlds-apart from what he depicted as 'versions of Bantu education, Bantu Studies called African Studies' that was taught at UCT.⁸⁹ The course was subject to contestation by a Working Group that hastily designed another course which was said to be primarily about equipping students with learning skills necessary for students entering higher education rather than about Africa as subject matter. Mamdani staged a one-man protest against this example of the politics of curriculum making.⁹⁰ Taken together, these three examples demonstrate empirically three challenges in transformation: employment of black faculty, Africanisation, and curriculum change. The RMF is a continuation of these struggles that have remained unfinished.

Rhodes Must Fall/Fees Must Fall Movements

The liberal readings and interpretations of RMF movements are contained in *Focus: The Journal of the Helen Suzman Foundation*, issue 76, September 2015.⁹¹ There is silence on 'decolonising' but everything is articulated from the perspective of 'transformation' with students categorised as 'advocates for transformation.'⁹² Inclusivity and diversity frame the liberal discourse. At least six core issues are identified as constitutive of transformation from a liberal reading. The first two are the need for a diverse and cosmopolitan student cohort; as

well as enhanced access for talented students from poor and marginalised communities. A dramatic increase in African and Coloured representation in the university and evolution of the institutional culture where black staff and students feel comfortable within the university is identified as a solution. The curriculum has to be reorganised to incorporate African theorists and contextual challenges. The ending of the exploitation of workers through the in-sourcing of all outsourced services is accepted. Finally, naming has to reflect the diversity of society and students. There is also a pointed critique aimed at the RMF movements as pursuing protest informed by ‘a racial and ethnic essentialism’ based on misreading of Steve Biko and Frantz Fanon. Overall, the liberal solution is reformist rather than decolonial.

A decolonial interpretation that is based on studying the emerging student archive comprising of memoranda, speeches, graffiti, songs, placards, media articles, and presentations is unapologetically about decolonization.⁹³ The students openly embrace the black consciousness ideas of Steve Biko and Frantz Fanon’s ideas on decolonisation. The students speak of changing the very idea of the university from being a ‘westernised’ institution into an ‘African university.’ This decolonial change has to be realised in restoration of cognitive justice premised on the fact that African people as human beings have produced knowledge and that knowledge must be placed at the centre of the ‘African university.’⁹⁴ The students are also pushing for the use of indigenous languages in university learning and teaching. The ‘Fees Must Fall’ (FMF) strand of the RMF movements is specifically demanding the implementation of ‘the right to education’ that was promised in the Freedom Charter in 1955. The students’ emphasis is on quality, relevant and free education in their life time. The issue of alienating institutional cultures features prominently as a grievance in the student protests. University institutional cultures are deemed to be European, anti-black, racist, and patriarchal.⁹⁵ Hence, ‘depatriarchisation’ and institutional cultural change are part of the decolonisation drive.⁹⁶ Removal of all

symbols and relics of colonial apartheid and rectification of the dehumanisation and exploitation of black people through outsourcing constitutes part of the important demands by advocates of decolonisation of universities in South Africa.

What is emerging clearly with specific reference to South Africa is a country that is back at the crossroads in which the ‘rainbow nation’ is unravelling; reconciliation is being tested; Nelson Mandela as the ‘father of the nation’ is, for many protestors and activists back on trial in the public court; and the concealed ills of post-apartheid social, economic and

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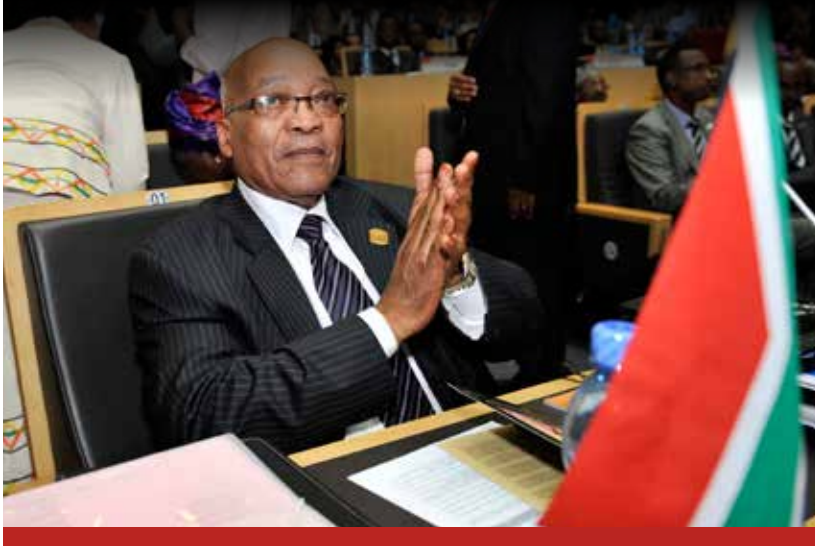
political order are daily unmasked and laid bare. ■

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The Constitutional Implications of the Doctrine of Separation of Powers and the Rule of Law on the Impeachment Motion of President Jacob Zuma



Although legislators have the constitutional right to vote for or against the impeachment of the President, they also have a duty to uphold, protect and respect the Constitution.

By Samuel Freddy Khunou and Molatlhegi Jubilee

This article discusses the constitutional implications of the doctrine of separation of powers and the rule of law on the Democratic Alliance's impeachment motion tabled in the National Assembly to remove President Jacob Zuma from office in terms of section 89 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 ('the Constitution'). These implications are discussed in the context of the Constitutional Court judgment on the conduct of the President and the National Assembly in the cases of the *Economic Freedom Fighters v Speaker of the National Assembly and Others* and *Democratic Alliance v Speaker of the National Assembly and Others*

('the Nkandla case'); Cases No.: CCT 143/15 and CCT 171/15. It is also argued that the majority domination in the National Assembly can render the enforcement of the binding and final judgments of the courts problematic and somehow an exercise in futility.

Background Perspectives

On 31 March 2016, the Constitutional Court in the Nkandla case ruled that President Zuma failed to uphold, protect and respect the Constitution when he refused or ignored to comply with the remedial action of the Public Protector. The Constitutional Court also ordered the President to pay the reasonable costs of non-security

features; (namely cattle kraal, chicken run, visitors' centre, amphitheatre and swimming pool) erected in his Nkandla private residence.

In addition, the Constitutional Court ordered that the National Assembly had failed to discharge its constitutional obligation of holding the President accountable for the Nkandla non-security upgrades. The Court stressed that the National Assembly was constitutionally obliged to facilitate and ensure that the President complied with the remedial action of the Public Protector. Following the Constitutional Court judgment, on 01 April 2016, President Zuma apologised to the nation in an address and said that he acted in 'good faith' and 'never knowingly and deliberately set out to violate the Constitution.'

Subsequently, the President's apology was accepted by the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) which pledged full support to him. The ANC Secretary-General, Gwede Mantashe, warned that the ANC had to put a united front ahead of the 2016 municipal elections and would not allow opposition parties to 'tear the ANC apart' with its motions in the National Assembly. ('Zuma Still Standing after Heated Impeachment Debate' <http://businesstech.co.za>)

In a separate development, the opposition parties called for President Zuma to step down. They were supported by some ANC stalwarts, South African National Defence Union (SANDU) members, former members of the Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) commanders and some members of the ANC in Gauteng. Subsequent to the Constitutional Court decision, however, the leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA), Mmusi Maimane, tabled a motion in the National Assembly to remove President Zuma from office. For that motion to succeed, the DA needed a two-thirds majority. But it had only 89 seats. Given the overwhelming ANC majority in the National Assembly, the impeachment motion became a mere political exercise destined to fail.

Impeachment Debate

On 05 April 2016, the National Assembly debated the said motion to have President Zuma removed from

office. However, the impeachment debate got a rowdy start when the Deputy President of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Floyd Shivambu, called for the Speaker of the National Assembly, Baleka Mbete to recuse herself from the parliamentary proceedings. Shivambu pointed out that the Constitutional Court judgment had found that the National Assembly violated the Constitution. He further told the Speaker of the National Assembly that: *'you do not deserve to be in that seat because you are not supposed to be sitting here. Will you please step down? Step down please'*. ('Rowdy Start to Jacob Zuma Impeachment Debate' <http://www.bdlive.co.za>).

The EFF leader Julius Malema also urged Mbete to recuse herself. Malema contended that Mbete presided over the National Assembly's failure to hold the President accountable for the Nkandla project. He further said: *'We are discussing [President] Zuma now. We cannot discuss [President] Zuma with you presiding over this matter. Let Deputy Speaker sit here. You are not qualified to sit where you are.'* The ANC's chief whip Jackson Mthembu sprang to Mbete's defence and argued that the Constitutional Court judgment was against parliament as a whole and not her in person. Malema replied that the Speaker had to take responsibility for 'the mess' which had culminated into the impeachment motion.

In addition, the DA chief whip John Steenhuisen argued that the Speaker was 'party to the crime'. After an hour-long consultation with the party whips, Mbete announced that she would not recuse herself because there was nothing in the Constitution or rules of parliament that required her to do so. She refused to recuse herself. Thereafter, the impeachment debate of President Zuma was opened by the DA leader Maimane, who acknowledged that the motion was put forward knowing that the ANC would support President Zuma.

Maimane further said that: *'when the votes are made later, you [the ANC] will claim victory-but in actual fact, when you win, you lose'*. He further lamented that corruption had infected the ANC like a cancer and complained

that President Zuma was not a cause of cancer but merely a symptom. On the other hand, the ANC Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Services, John Jeffery, rebutted the impeachment motion and contended that the Constitutional Court did not find any 'serious' misconduct by the President, which made the entire motion moot.

He further argued that although the governing party agreed with the Constitutional Court judgment that the President did not uphold the Constitution, it did not view the President's actions as a serious breach worthy of removal in terms of section 89 of the Constitution. Jeffery further contended that the President has issued an apology and agreed to pay for the non-security measures implemented by the Department of Public Works at Nkandla. ('ANC-Party Versus the People' 6 April 2016, *Sowetan*).

In reply, Malema argued that the ANC majority in the National Assembly was repeating its past mistake by second guessing the Constitutional Court judgment and trying to argue around the matter. He therefore called on the ANC Members of Parliament (MPs) to search their consciences and vote for the removal of the President. The United Democratic Movement (UDM) leader, Bantu Holomisa contended in his address that the National Assembly had failed its mandate and needed to be dissolved so that fresh elections could be held. The African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) leader, Kenneth Meshoe also told the National Assembly that, while President Zuma claimed he had always intended to pay something towards the Nkandla costs, he had stated in parliament that he would not pay for something he had not requested. (Dodds C 'We'll Fight On' 6 April 2016, *The Star*)

Subsequent addresses from other minority parties also spoke in support of the impeachment of the President. Generally, the opposition parties insisted that the President's violation of the Constitution was an impeachable offence and that failure to honour the Constitution by the President was not just a petty breach or minor infraction of the Constitution. At the end of the debate, however, the impeachment

motion was defeated, with 143 voting in favour of and 233 voting against the removal of the President with no abstentions. The motion needed two-thirds majority (66%) of the vote and only managed to capture 38%. Maimane called the result a disappointment and said that the National Assembly had made the same mistake yet again of not upholding the Constitution.

Generally, the opposition parties contended that the 243 votes against impeachment of the President was a vote in favour of corruption and violation of the Constitution. They further lamented that in one way or the other, failure on the part of the ANC majority in the National Assembly to vote in favour of the impeachment was equivalent to breach of the Constitution, more especially because they knew or should have known that the President had committed constitutional breaches.

The Significance of the Constitutional Oath

Schedule 2 (4) (1) of the Constitution which governs the oath or solemn affirmation provides as follows:

... 4. (1) *Members of the National Assembly, permanent delegates to the National Council of Provinces and members of provincial legislatures, before the Chief Justice or a judge designated by the Chief Justice, must swear or affirm as follows: I, A.B., swear/solemnly affirm that I will be faithful to the: Republic of South Africa and will obey, respect and uphold the Constitution and all other law of the Republic; and I solemnly promise to perform my functions as a member of the National Assembly/permanent delegate to the National Council of Provinces/member of the legislature of the province of C.D. to the best of my ability. (In the case of an oath: So help me God).*

In this context members of the National Assembly must be faithful to the Republic of South Africa and obey, and uphold the Constitution. As a result, the question which immediately arises is: whether members of the National Assembly who voted against the impeachment, for the failure of

the President to uphold, defend and respect the Constitution, are faithful to the Republic of South Africa or failed to obey, respect and uphold the Constitution? It is therefore contended that failure on the part of members of National Assembly to remove the President in accordance with the entire spirit of the Constitution is the same as the breach of oath. After all, they are constitutionally obliged to obey and uphold the Constitution and be faithful to the people of South Africa.

Another question which begs an answer is: how does a President who has failed to uphold, defend and respect the Constitution continue to exercise constitutionally entrenched authority? Put differently, what do we call the country led by the President who has violated the Constitution? To allow the President who has broken his oath of office to continue to lead is tantamount to setting the Constitution aside. Schedule 2 (1) of the Constitution provides as follows:

Oath or solemn affirmation of President and Acting President. The President or Acting President, before the Chief Justice, or another judge designated by the Chief Justice, must swear/affirm as follows: In the presence of everyone assembled here, and in full realisation of the high calling I assume as President/ Acting President of the Republic of South Africa, I, A.B., swear/solemnly affirm that I will be faithful to the Republic of South Africa, and will obey, observe, uphold and maintain the Constitution and all other law of the Republic; and I solemnly and sincerely promise that I will always promote all that will advance the Republic, and oppose all that may harm it; protect and promote the rights of all South Africans; discharge my duties with all my strength and talents to the best of my knowledge and ability and true to the dictates of my conscience; do justice to all; and devote myself to the well-being of the Republic and all of its people. (In the case of an oath: So help me God.)

The Constitutional Court judgment in the Nkandla case reminded the President that he is required to promise solemnly and sincerely to

always connect with the true dictates of his conscience in the execution of his duties. This he is required to do with all his strength, all his talents and to the best of his knowledge and abilities. Quite evidently, the Constitutional Court extracted its conclusion from Schedule 2 (1) of the Constitution which deals with the oath of the President and Acting President. Therefore, the question that arises is, what are the constitutional implications of the Constitutional Court judgment in respect of the conduct of the President? The Constitutional Court judgment signals a clear message that the President has broken his oath of office in at least two respects.

First, the President allowed the non-security upgrades to be erected in his Nkandla private residence. This conduct was unacceptable and amounted to corruption which went to the heart of

“Bantu Holomisa contended in his address that the National Assembly had failed its mandate and needed to be dissolved so that fresh elections could be held.”

his oath of office. Second, the President with the support of the majority ANC MPs in the National Assembly failed to comply with the Public Protector’s remedial action which enjoined him to pay the reasonable costs expended wastefully and unethically on non-security features.

Contextual Meaning of the Words ‘Serious Violation’

It is common cause that the fact that President Zuma has failed to ‘uphold, protect and respect’ the Constitution is in itself a serious breach. Whether the Constitutional Court used the word ‘serious’ or not in its judgment is not something which the ruling ANC majority should have capitalised on. Failure to uphold, defend and respect the Constitution is conduct which in itself constitutes a severe breach and

warrants resignation or impeachment. There is no worst crime that a sitting President can commit than violating the constitution. (‘What Will it be: Routine or Revolution’ 10 April 2016, *City Press*). The Constitutional Court judgment emphasised in the Nkandla case that the President is the head of State and National executive ... and only upon him has the constitutional obligation to uphold, defend and respect the Constitution as the supreme law of the republic been expressly imposed.

By way of an analogy, the Constitutional Court through its judgment found President Zuma ‘guilty’ for violating the Constitution. In turn, the Court left the process of ‘sentencing’ the President in the hands of the National Assembly. This process is clearly defined in terms of section 89 of the Constitution. Therefore, all that the National Assembly was required to do by the Constitutional Court judgment was to ‘sentence’ President Zuma accordingly. In other words, the National Assembly was constitutionally obliged to remove the President from office.

The contextual interpretation of the words ‘the President failed to uphold, defend and respect the Constitution’ should be construed to mean ‘serious violation’ of the Constitution. It should be recalled that the President did not only violate the Constitution but also the Executive Members’ Ethics Act 82 of 1998 (‘the Ethics Act’), the Code of Ethics for Members of the Executive and the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act 12 of 2004 (‘the PRECCA’). Therefore, the violation of the Constitution and these pieces of legislation is sufficient to constitute a ‘serious violation’.

Besides, wasteful and unethical use of the State resources is nothing else but corruption. Corruption affects the lives of everyone in South Africa and it is our common enemy. Therefore the conduct of the President with regard to the non-security features at his private residence cannot escape the definition of corruption as contemplated in the PRECCA. Quite evidently, the President failed to stop or report to the relevant authority the installation of non-security features at his Nkandla

private residence. The Constitutional Court correctly found that the President is the primary beneficiary of the non-security upgrades and thus the only one required to meet the demands of the constitutionally-sourced remedial action. In addition, the President and possibly the Department of Public Works were responsible for corruption and unethical use of State resources in his Nkandla private residence. (see, *S v Shaik and Others (Criminal Appeal)* (62/06) [2006] ZASCA 105; [2007] 2 All SA 9 (SCA); 2007 (1) SA 240 (SCA) (6 November 2006)).

There are serious governance implications for the failure to remove the President from office. For instance, while the President remains in office, the solemn dignity of the office of the President is compromised. The Constitutional Court has done its work. It cannot remove the President from office. It can only say that the President has violated the Constitution which it has done in the Nkandla case. It is for this reason among others that the National Assembly had a constitutional duty to remove the President from office. In view of the above, it cannot be correct to claim that the President did not seriously violate the Constitution unless one adopts a literal approach to construe the Constitutional Court judgment. But, the Constitution and the Constitutional Court judgment cannot be interpreted literally.

Implications of Separation of Powers on Impeachment Motion

The removal of the President is governed in terms of section 89 of the Constitution which provides that:

(1) *The National Assembly, by a resolution adopted with a supporting vote of at least two thirds of its members, may remove the President from office only on the grounds of-*(a) a serious violation of the Constitution or the law; (b) serious misconduct; or (c) inability to perform the functions of office.
(2) *Anyone who has been removed from the office of President in terms of subsection (1) (a) or (b) may not receive any benefits of that office, and may not serve in any public office.* (underlining supplied)

Quite evidently, section 89 gives

members of the National Assembly the right to vote for the removal of the President. But, in doing so, they must obtain a two-thirds majority. This means that members of the National Assembly have the right to vote for or against the impeachment motion.

Therefore, it is common cause that the right to vote in the impeachment motion is a constitutional right accorded only to members of the National Assembly in terms of section 89 of the Constitution. Yet, for possible reasons, the ANC lawmakers might have been instructed by their ruling party to vote in a particular manner, that is, to vote against the impeachment of the President. However, the courts cannot investigate the motives of the individual legislators on how to vote. (see, *Poverty Alleviation Network and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa*; Case No.: CCT 86/08).

As a result, the question that cannot be avoided is: what are the implications of the Constitutional Court judgement on the impeachment motion? Put differently, does the Constitutional Court judgment enjoin that President Zuma be removed from office? If so, can the court interfere and scrutinise the outcome of the National Assembly which defeated the impeachment motion to remove President Zuma from office?

This question obviously touches on the doctrine of separation of powers which means that specific functions, duties and responsibilities are allocated to distinctive institutions with a defined means of competence and jurisdiction. Basically, the principle of separation of powers is a separation of three main spheres of government; namely legislature, executive and judiciary. In this context, the meaning and the implications of separation of powers on the impeachment motion are of constitutional importance. (see, *Mojapelo P The Doctrine of Separation of Powers: A South African Perspective*, April 2013, Advocate 37).

The inception of the doctrine of separation of powers in the current South African constitutional order took its cue from Schedule 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 200 of 1993 which provided that:

There shall be a separation of

powers between the legislature, executive and judiciary with appropriate checks and balances to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness.

Chapters 4-8 of the 1996 Constitution provide for a constitutional scheme of separation of powers between the three spheres of government. For example, section 43 of the Constitution vests the legislative authority of the Republic at the national sphere in parliament and at the provincial sphere in the provincial legislatures. Sections 85 and the 125 vest the executive authority of the Republic in the President and of the provinces in the Premiers.

In addition, section 165 vests the judicial authority in the courts. Therefore, there is no doubt that the doctrine of separation of powers forms part of our constitutional design. Previously, the Constitutional Court stated that the doctrine of separation of powers is part of our constitutional design. (see, *Glenister v President of the Republic of South Africa* 2009 (1) SA 287 (CC)). Quite evidently, the doctrine of separation of powers limits the authority of the courts to interfere in the affairs of other branches of government. The role of the courts is to adjudicate disputes and not to prescribe to the National Assembly or the executive how it should conduct its affairs. For this reason, whether or not the National Assembly in the impeachment motion deliberately ignored the fact that the President seriously violated the Constitution, is something outside the purview of the courts.

In the light of the above, the question that immediately arises is: whether the Constitutional Court can dictate terms on how the National Assembly should conduct its business within the framework of section 89 of the Constitution? It is quite clear that the Constitutional Court has made the decision to the effect that the President's failure to comply with the remedial action taken against him by the Public Protector is inconsistent with his obligations to uphold, defend and protect the Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic. Therefore, the question of how the National Assembly

would exercise its right to remove the President in terms of section 89 of the Constitution falls outside the jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court.

Generally, the court may not interfere in the affairs of other branches of government unless there is a dispute which requires it to play its adjudicative role thereby determining what the law is and how it is applied. To this end, the Constitutional Court in the Nkandla case held that the executive led by the President and parliament bear very important responsibilities and each play a crucial role in the affairs of the country. They deserve the space to discharge their constitutional obligations unimpeded by the judiciary save where the Constitution otherwise permits. This accords with the dictates of the Constitutional Principles VI, which is one of the Principles that guided our Constitution drafting process in terms of Schedule 4.

The Constitutional Court further stressed that the judiciary is but one of the three branches of government. It does not have unlimited powers and must always be sensitive to the need to refrain from undue interference with the functional independence of other branches of government. (see also, *Doctors for Life International v Speaker of the National Assembly and Others* (CCT12/05) [2006] ZACC 11; 2006 (12) BCLR 1399 (CC); 2006 (6) SA 416 (CC) (17 August 2006). It was for this reason among others that the Constitutional Court went further to say that:

... It falls outside the parameters of judicial authority to prescribe to the National Assembly how to scrutinise executive action, what mechanisms to establish and which mandate to give them, for the purposes of holding the executive accountable and fulfilling its oversight role of the executive or organs of state in general ...

The Constitutional Court continued to emphasise that it is therefore not for this court to prescribe to parliament what structures or measures to establish or employ respectively in order to fulfil responsibilities primarily entrusted to it. It is against this background that the Constitutional Court or any other courts whatsoever, cannot dictate how the National Assembly should exercise

its right to impeach the President. The fact that the impeachment motion was defeated (whether or not with the ulterior motives of the dominant ANC MPs to protect the President against impeachment) is a subject beyond the jurisdiction of the courts.

Constitutional Supremacy and the Rule of Law

In view of the above, however, we still need to drill much deeper than merely endorsing the right of the legislators to vote in support of their political parties. Despite the restriction imposed by the doctrine of separation of powers on the courts, the constitutional obligation to impeach the President who has violated the Constitution does not end only within the chambers of the National Assembly. Outside the terrain of the doctrine of separation of powers, the application of the rule of law necessitates a debate on the moral and the constitutional role of the National Assembly to impeach the President who has violated the Constitution.

As already stated above, although legislators have the constitutional right to vote for or against the impeachment of the President, they also have a duty to uphold, protect and respect the Constitution. This constitutional duty should guide them to vote in a particular manner or towards a particular decision. For this reason, the MPs in exercising their right to vote should cater for certain democratic conditions which ensure justice and respect for the rule of law and the very same Constitution which accords them the right to vote.

As Erasmus correctly observed, a system whereby the majority forces their will upon all citizens is not a true democracy and is more reminiscent of a monarchy. As a result, Erasmus went further to quote Ronald Dworkin saying that: 'we think we are free when we accept a majority's will in place of our own; but not when we bow before the doom of a monarch or the ukase of any aristocracy of blood or faith or skill. (see, Erasmus A *'Striking a Balance Between Majority Rule and Minority Protection: A Constitutional Analysis of the South African Democracy'* Unpublished LLM Dissertation, University of Pretoria

2014) 10.

In actual fact, the constitutional or democratic order may very well have all the structural and procedural features present, but at the same time also have a system of domination in place that renders such an order completely undemocratic or unconstitutional. In this regard, there are concerns over the overwhelming power of the majority and the risk that it will abuse its power and ride roughshod over the interests of the minority. This is considered as a lasting problem of democratic theory. It is therefore contended that the outcome of the impeachment motion was reminiscent of the problem inherent in our constitutional order.

In practice, democracy requires government by the people for the people and not government by some people for the benefit of only some individuals such as the President or the Ministers. Democracy is therefore not as simple as the majority taking all the decisions without restrictions and without regard to the spirit of the Constitution and the rule of law. In short, majority domination may, if abused, stand in stark contrast to democracy. Although majority rule is a foundational principle of democracy and our Constitution, it may also run the risk of deterioration into untrammelled majority domination, which runs the risk of becoming undemocratic and unjust.

The idea of the rule of law is premised on the proposition that the sovereign and the State and its officials are limited by the rule of law. Similarly, the ANC majority in the National Assembly is limited by the rule of law. Therefore, they were obliged by the rule of law to do the right thing by supporting the impeachment motion and not escape from the implications and the message of the Constitutional Court judgment that the President has failed to uphold, protect and respect the Constitution.

Hence, Erasmus argued that constitutional democracy is a system of 'majority rule limited by minority' and it should therefore be premised on a 'limited majority principle' where the majority does not rule absolutely and where it is restrained by a respect for the minority and the rule of law. The good intentions of the democratic

order cannot exist where there is domination. Justice should be achieved through compromise so that the interests of everyone should equally be taken care of. For this reason, the aim of the impeachment motion calling for the removal of President Zuma was to make right, fair and balanced decisions and not merely to follow the wishes of the majority.

In the light of the circumstances of the impeachment motion, the majority rule prescript is set aside as soon as any law or practice that emanates from the majority is in conflict with or inconsistent with the rule of law as set out in the Constitution. As Rutledge correctly opined, in a society in which the rule of the majority trumps the rule of law, we will not be surprised to find that with time, the growth of corruption, arbitrary abuse of power and discrimination against groups and individuals will manifest itself in a myriad ways. In short; the tyranny of the majority, unlike law, is not premised on rational principles but rather on the emotional vagaries of promises and patronage. To avoid this, the Constitution and the rule of law should be used for good.

Our constitutional democracy is premised on the founding values which include supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law. It is by now a well settled proposition that rationality is a minimum requirement for the exercise of public power. This flows from the rule of law and the supremacy of the Constitution which are the founding values of a constitutional state. The Constitutional Court has often warned that the State may not 'regulate' in an arbitrary manner or manifest 'naked preferences' that serve no legitimate governmental purpose. In other words, wielders of public power – whether legislative, executive or administrative, are, at the very least, duty-bound to act rationally. (see, *Merafong Demarcation Forum and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa*, Case No.: CCT 41/07).

In view of the above, the ANC majority was duty bound to act sensibly while exercising their right to vote. This is so, because the gravity of violation of the Constitution by the President demanded his removal. Therefore, the ANC majority is required to restrain

from the tendency of tyranny and to ensure that fair and equal distributive outcomes are achieved. Majority rule can never supersede the rule of law. The outcome of the constitutional impeachment motion in which the rule of law was set aside in favour of the rule of the majority marks not only the continuation of the tendency towards autocracy, but a decisive break with the vision of the founding fathers and mothers of the Constitution. Hence, Malema argued that the majority voted against the Constitution and the people of South Africa. (see, Rutledge C 'Increase Majority or Hold ANC Members to Account' 6 April 2016, *The Star*).

Lessons of the Impeachment Motion

Although one may argue that the flaws of our Constitution were laid

“The conduct of the President with regard to the non-security features at his private residence cannot escape the definition of corruption as contemplated in the PRECCA.”

bare by enshrining majority rule, the objective truth is that it was not what the Constitution wanted to achieve in a case where the President has violated the Constitution. Runji cited the Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela, saying that the Nkandla scandal was a blessing in disguise because it made us alive to serious drawbacks in our democratic architecture. (see, Runji H 'Flaws of 'World's Best Constitution Laid Bare' 7 April 2016, *Sowetan*).

However, it should be emphasised that no matter how wonderful the Constitution may be, unless it is respected by all, executive, parliament, judiciary and citizens alike, it will not be of value. Despite the wonders of the Constitution and the Constitutional Court judgment in the Nkandla case, the outcome of the impeachment

motion reminded us that it would be foolhardy to become complacent. It is vital that the National Assembly should always be vigilant to ensure that the values contained in the Constitution are upheld. In this regard, the role of the National Assembly is of crucial importance, for unless it carries its responsibilities scrupulously the very essence of the Constitution will be eroded.

In addition, the outcome of the impeachment motion of the President has highlighted the constant clash between the voting right of members of the National Assembly (in terms of section 89) and the overall intention of the founding fathers and mothers of the Constitution. In fact, the Nkandla debacle has exposed not only the pitfalls of the majority who voted with a particular set of motives against the impeachment motion but it also revealed some loopholes in our constitutional order. The plain truth is that the primary objective of the Constitution is not to keep a President who has violated the Constitution in office.

In addition, the impeachment motion revealed the difficulties and the stumbling blocks inherent in the domain of separation of powers, more especially in a case where other branches of the government such as the National Assembly are given powers to do their business without the interference of the courts.

The DA impeachment motion has left us with a plethora of constitutional questions which cannot be answered overnight.

In view of the preceding discussion, it is profoundly significant that the public office-bearers, the President, the National Assembly and all the citizens of South Africa must respect and uphold the Constitution. The Constitution not only guides the State institutions, but also provides explicit instructions on how these institutions should operate. To ignore these rules or attempt to sidestep them is to be as guilty of disservice to the Constitution and the rule of law. Therefore, the dominant ruling ANC National Assembly should not have allowed itself to be used by the President as a corridor to escape impeachment or any liability. ■

Can the African Mining Vision deliver a developmental mining sector for Africa?



The AMV calls for an overall structural transformation of Africa's mineral economy along the entire value chain. This structural transformation will need to be financed in a sustainable manner. Such an agenda cannot be achieved through foreign funding.

By Claude Kabemba

It has been seven years since African governments adopted the Africa Mining Vision (AMV), a document which signals their recognition of the need for a paradigm shift in the role of minerals in Africa's economies. It is a development policy designed to optimise benefits from mineral resources (solid and liquid). It is a

vision designed to bail out the African continent from her crisis of resource curse.

Since its adoption a lot has been achieved. The African Mining Development Centre (AMDC) has been established as the strategic focal point for the realisation of the Vision and the work plan has been adopted.

The Country Mining Vision guide book has been developed by the AMDC, a good instrument for governments to initiate the participatory multi-stakeholder processes needed for national implementation of the AMV, and an Africa Mineral Governance Framework (AMGF) is being drafted. Since its establishment, the AMDC

has provided technical support for requesting countries in formulating domestic mining policies in line with the Vision. It has also cooperated with a number of Civil Society Organisations to raise awareness of the AMV. But the question remains, is this project sustainable, considering the history of failed or struggling Africa Union (AU) Initiatives?

The AMV is not the first development policy designed by African countries through the leadership of the AU. The AMV is part of a long line of policy frameworks that have been adopted over many years in an effort to resolve the most pressing social questions of poverty and underdevelopment. The poverty and underdevelopment on the African continent stand in stark contrast with the abundance of its mineral resources. Africa is struggling to utilise these resources to create wealth. Some of development policies adopted by the continent and which have collapsed include the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) adopted by the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government (AHG) in 1980. The LPA is considered to be the first effort to agree on a development policy by Africans. Since the LPA, there have been several other development programmes to review and adjust the plan to the changing needs and imperatives. They include the Africa's Priority Programmes for Economic Recovery (APPER), which was later transformed into the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD) (1986); the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment for Socio-Economic Transformation (AAF-SAP) (1989); the African Charter for Popular Participation for Development (1990); and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) (1990).

In 2001, African leaders launched the 'New Partnership for Africa's Development' (NEPAD), whose overriding goal is to end Africa's poverty and underdevelopment. At the centre of this plan is the recognition that economic growth and sustainable development cannot happen in the absence of good governance. NEPAD was followed by the 'African Peer

Review Mechanism' (APRM) in 2003 to monitor and evaluate the progress of African countries in complying with the principles and values of good political and economic governance and in achieving the objectives set out in NEPAD. NEPAD and the APRM are both struggling to perform at their fullest.

There are many reasons why African Initiatives collapse or fail to move in higher gear. These reasons range from weak leadership, the gap between policy and implementation, the lack of supportive institutions and, more importantly, a lack of funding. An important factor that has paralysed the implementation of many initiatives has been intrinsic contradictions and ambiguities linked to their external origin. A criticism of NEPAD has been its neo-liberal inclination. The enthusiasm from western countries to fund it has been because it reinforces

“The poverty and underdevelopment on the African continent stand in stark contrast with the abundance of its mineral resources.”

the neo-liberal discourse. These reasons are also haunting the AMV; and the question is, can the AMV circumvent these problems?

The first problem the AU must resolve is the over-reliance on external partners to fund the AMV. The AMV has not escaped the capture by external forces that other initiatives have experienced. Although it has its origin on the continent, it follows the traditional model where African initiatives, to survive, must depend on external funding. The AMDC is being funded by western governments, especially by Canada and Australia. While this is appreciated, it undermines the central ideal of AMV that of reclaiming control and ownership of minerals by Africans. The external funding also poses the problem of sustainability. There is no guarantee that our international partners will

continue to fund our initiative. What would happen if the two key funders of the AMV decided to withdraw their support?

It is problematic for the funding of the continent's most strategic sector to be left to external partners alone. The failure of the Lagos plan was attributed to donors' refusal to fund it. The heavy reliance on outside funding has contributed immensely to the paralysis of NEPAD and the APRM. Equally, the funding support from external partners is not always prompted by a benevolent attitude toward Africa. Whatever type of arrangements are put in place, aid (except maybe with humanitarian aid such as that which was given in relation to ebola in West Africa) has strings attached. This funding model has the potential to entangle Africa with external partners and perpetuate the relationship of dependency which has for years failed to bring about Africa's development.

This does not mean international partners have no role to play in the promotion of the mining sector on the African continent. For historical reasons and because they ought to recognise a moral obligation, they should help to restructure the African mining industry in line with the AU 2063 agenda and the AMV. The continent must guide outside funding toward key priorities which advance its own agenda.

The reliance on external financial assistance to implement an African vision is not necessitated by poverty but by poor management of revenue on the continent. There would not have been a need to look outside for assistance in this sector if transparent and accountable management of revenues had been practiced. Before the collapse of commodity prices, there was a spectacular increase in revenue collection in the resource sector on the continent, especially in resource rich countries such as Nigeria, Angola, Botswana, Gabon, Chad, Cameroon, Mozambique, Congo Brazzaville and Equatorial Guinea. With very small contributions from each African government, the continent could easily finance the implementation of the Vision.

The second problem is how to bridge the gap between policy and

implementation. It seems there is no political commitment at country level to implement the AMV. This lack of political will manifests itself, for example, in the refusal by African leaders to provide funding to the AMDC. In many countries, there is an absence of a conscious, systematic adoption of the AMV and its Action Plan. There is not yet a single African country where mobilisation and organisation around the reform agenda of the AMV is an overtly dominant political influence. At most, whatever minimal progress registered has been ad hoc initiatives, such as steps to revise mining fiscal regimes and revise contracts, which reflect some of the key concerns of the AMV. However these have been effected outside the AMV, and with little or no reference to it.

In particular, key progressive pillars of the AMV relating to economic transformation through linkages between mining and the other sectors of the economies, artisanal and small scale mining (ASM), and the rights of communities and workers have been virtually ignored. Many African governments continue to devote too much attention to foreign aid related mineral governance frameworks originating from outside the continent.

The third problem is how to strengthen the partnership between government, private sector, civil society and communities in the implementation of the AMV. The Vision's goal of "mutually beneficial partnerships between the state, the private sector, civil society, local communities and other stakeholders" must define the process of domestic implementation which must also involve a critical role for legislatures and MPs. Africa's governments need urgently to begin to lay the foundations for the realisation of our common dream of moving Africa from what it has been since colonialism, i.e. a source of raw materials for the development of others, towards making our minerals a key part of the industrialisation and structural transformation with equity.

The fourth problem is how the AMV can help stop the financial bleeding of the continent. The Mbeki Report has estimated that the continent loses

“With very small contributions from each African government, the continent could easily finance the implementation of the Vision.”

approximately US\$ 50 billion a year in illicit financial flows. This amount has been adjusted to US\$ 90 billion. Illicit financial flows are growing in importance as part of the African policy advocacy landscape with the extractive sector widely agreed to be of key significance. These issues with a direct or contextual importance for the AMV are critical components of any useful analysis and planning for advocacy around the AMV in each country and region.

The fifth problem is how to achieve the structural transformation of the sector. This entails the transformation of resource governance from the export of raw materials to that of goods where value had been added through beneficiation, which itself happens through the application of appropriate technology and innovation. The structural transformation is centred around reforming the colonial state largely as an exporter of raw materials and natural resources. This model is rooted in the export of low value, diminishing returns goods. Unless the funders of the AMV agree that this structural deficiency needs to be reformed the AMV will not achieve its objective.

“The Mbeki Report has estimated that the continent loses approximately US\$ 50 billion a year in illicit financial flows. This amount has been adjusted to US\$ 90 billion.”

But the major obstacle to the implementation of the AMV remains funding. The AMV calls for an overall structural transformation of Africa's mineral economy along the entire value chain. This structural transformation will need to be financed in a sustainable manner. Such an agenda cannot be achieved through foreign funding. The AMV can only be implemented in a sustainable manner through a self-reliance and self-sustaining funding model. A self-reliance approach is within the transformative agenda of the continent.

Africa is seeking in the AMV measures to address the constraints to optimising the value of our minerals. And one of those constraints has been the control of the mining sector by multinational companies. Most of these multinational companies are reluctant or refusing to implement the key pillar of the AMV – value addition to Africa's minerals. The multinational companies also resisted plans, at the peak of the resource boom, for resource rich countries to adjust their fiscal regimes and mining contracts to benefit from the high commodity prices. The relative decline of mineral prices in recent years and the resultant anxieties about mineral revenues have furthermore weakened the resolve of many governments.

The argument here is not an outright rejection of financial support that might come from international partners. The world is so much more intertwined today than ever before, so it would be an error to even consider such a backward argument. The point is to simply ask Africa to take full responsibility for its own development, through an effective utilisation of both internal and external resources. The external financial support must be fully integrated within the larger development context. For this reason it is recommended that in order to provide support to effective implementation of the AMV, the AU must create an Africa AMV Mineral Trust Fund (AAMTF) by remitting their contributions to the funds. The funds will be used to fund short, medium and long-term projects and activities agreed upon by all. ■



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Ideas, Imaginations and JNU



Subverting the status quo, questioning the norm, demystifying mysterious social rules, challenging orthodoxy, and questioning modernity are some of the distinctive characteristics of JNU culture.

By Mammo Muchie, Noklenyangla, Mishra Rajiv and Sheikh Fayaz

JNU has a campus full of green forest in the middle of New Delhi. Most of the staff, the students and guests stay in this unusual environment full of green trees and a variety of animals. This campus is like a world where different ideas can be expressed. Debates and dialogue flourish making all forms of ignorance, intolerance and dictatorship perish inside the campus. The nationalist versus ant-nationalism conflict was turned into a great

resource for learning, daily lectures and debates. Knowledge was flowing like a river every day. It was truly special to witness this extraordinary JNU experience as a visitor from Ethiopia and South Africa (for one of us), as it has been very engaging for the rest of us as India's emerging scholars.

In the pages of history, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and its formation provide many insights and answers related to the conception of

JNU being a unique university and how it relates to Indian society with its identity. Spread over a vast campus of more than 1000 acres, JNU is housed in a lush green dense forest in the Aravalli hill range, with more than 200 bird varieties sustaining a birdwatcher's paradise, and also some other forms of wildlife.

The hidden beauty of the campus, however, lies in its distinctive admission criteria whereby students from all

the nooks and corners of India are attracted irrespective of caste, creed, and economic status. Not only from India, but it has also enrolled students from more than 140 countries. This great student diversity makes JNU a microcosm of the world. It has not only fulfilled the much required intellectual duty for India but has significantly alleviated the disadvantage of downtrodden sections of India.

The main architect behind the conception of the idea for creating a university like JNU was MC Chagla. MC Chagla, a legal luminary, promoter of civil liberties and a liberal-minded former education minister was an ardent supporter of Jawaharlal Nehru (the first Prime Minister of India). This idea was formulated into the 'Jawaharlal Nehru University Bill', first presented in the Upper House (Rajya Sabha) of the Indian parliament in the winter session of 1964. The journey and course of events which followed after the JNU bill was tabled for the first time in the Indian parliament till the time it was passed holds many insights into the nature and fabric of this university which are still reflected in its current outlook towards society. The JNU Bill was passed and finally approved on 16 November 1966.

The passing of the JNU Bill heralded a new chapter in the education system of the country and became a watershed moment in the history of higher education in post-Independence India. The prime reason for JNU's uniqueness was the socialist ideals ingrained in its genesis and the notion of having a university which would empower the poor and marginalised sections of the society. JNU is still working towards the ideals of Nehruvian socialism, reflecting his strong inclination towards the cause of social justice, secularism and universalism.

The two key pillars which form the core of this socialist outlook relate to the teachers and students of JNU.

Firstly, teachers at JNU not only imbue scholastic notions in students coming from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds but also teach them how to orient themselves in a complex society like India which has rampant social ills like the caste system, untouchability, patriarchy,

dowry, female foeticide, religious fundamentalism, communalism, racial discrimination and many other social evils which are present in society in various ways. This is one of the prime linkages of what initially Bhupesh Gupta (a communist leader) thought and imagined about JNU.

Secondly, the JNU culture and its socialist ideas are very much reflected in large sections of JNU students and their politics. The first admission of students in JNU took place in the year 1971 for the MPhil and PhD programmes, and by 1973 MA admissions of students started. The process of cultural assimilation of students from different parts of the country progressed, especially at times when anti-Hindi agitation was its peak. Hindi was being emphasised as the lingua franca and it

“The hidden beauty of the campus, however, lies in its distinctive admission criteria whereby students from all the nooks and corners of India are attracted irrespective of caste, creed, and economic status.”

was at this time that English became one of the connecting languages for students in JNU. Furthermore, with incoming students another important phenomenon was the arrival of activists, writers and poets from different parts of the country. By 1972, two hostels were constructed near the Northern part of the University, which added another chapter in the JNU's unique life where the debates and discussions over social, economic and political issues of the time were continued over breakfast, lunch and dinner meals in the hostels.

By 1973-74 student politics, and especially left politics, started to get shaped in JNU. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) played an important role in establishing its student wing

called the Students Federation of India (SFI) on the campus. However, the political ideologies which largely reflected the views and inclination of students were related to three political affiliations: Marxists, Non-communist, and Freethinkers. It should be noted that the right wing has always been weak in JNU as there has been much less support for students affiliated to right wing groups. The SFI played an important role in establishing and institutionalising student politics in JNU. However, the role of other political student groups such as 'Free Thinkers' has been equally important in showing the flexibility of students' views and political inclinations.

What JNU thinks today, India follows tomorrow...?

It is often said that 'What JNU thinks today, India follows tomorrow.' This aptly describes this politically charged and academically vibrant campus located in the heart of New Delhi. Young at forty-two years, this university has undeniably emerged as an impressive academic institution, unique in the whole of South Asia. For its academic excellence, sobriquets like Oxford of Asia, Berkley of India are used to introduce this red brick higher learning institute. And as far as its political liveliness is concerned, it is cheekily dubbed as 'the Kremlin on the Jamna' by none other than the world's superpower – the USA. America, according to recent WikiLeaks, has put this university under a watch list for a new generation of left leaders who "will use relations with the US, Indian foreign policy, and growing conflict over globalisation to solidify Left party gains."

As India's pre-eminent graduate institute, JNU continuously features among the top universities in world rankings. Recently in its first-ever nationwide ranking of more than 3000 educational institutions and other universities in India by the Ministry of Human Resources, Government of India, JNU was ranked third with the Indian Institute of Science-Bangalore and the Institute of Chemical Technology taking the top slots. JNU has not only produced scientists and academicians of global repute

but some famous social activists and dynamic top politicians are also part of the JNU heritage. Some notable alumni of this university have served in important political offices around the globe. The President of the African Union, the Prime Minister of Libya, and the Prime Minister of Nepal are some examples.

JNU is not only a dream destination for those who seek their career in academics and politics alone but also for those who want to join government as future bureaucrats and diplomats. For instance, in the current government, some key posts are held by people who have studied at the JNU. Commerce Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, NITI Aayog's CEO Amitabh Kant, one of PM's favourite bureaucrats, Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar and Deputy NSA (National Security Adviser) Arvind Gupta, are a few JNU alumni from the long list. In science and innovation studies too, Jawaharlal Nehru University has been named the winner of two of the three Visitor's Awards President Pranab Mukherjee instituted in 2015. These awards were given to JNU for developing a vaccine and therapeutic antibody against anthrax, and on malaria, amoeba and kala-azar parasites. For making global impact from his research, a professor from the School of Environmental Sciences has been selected for the prestigious 'Thomson Reuters 2015 list of Highly Cited Researchers'. The Professor has published over 100 articles and has received more than 14,500 citations with an h factor of 47. This is the second time in a row that a JNU professor will be receiving this award; he was selected as 'Highly Cited Researchers' in 2014 also. Such evidence marks the academic excellence of JNU and shows its potential as an institute of international repute.

Notwithstanding its tangible academic contributions, JNU is more renowned for its liberal culture and freedom of expression. Afzal Guru's hanging (accused for attacking the Parliament of India) is challenged and questioned only in JNU. The slogans for the freedom of Kashmir, Tibet, Palestine reverberate loudly every evening in the fresh air of JNU. The ills of crony capitalism, immoral expansion

of the markets, unequal distribution of wealth, injustice in the world are issues which even the JNU tea sellers can debate for hours together, let alone JNU students! Marxism, socialism, and communism are the watchwords of JNU. Subverting the status quo, questioning the norm, demystifying mysterious social rules, challenging orthodoxy, and questioning modernity are some of the distinctive characteristics of JNU culture.

Every evening hundreds of posters on the re-colonisation of Africa, India, and Latin America are churned out and distributed on the hostel's dinner tables. India's sell-out to the corporate world; its surrender to the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and the domination of WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation) concerns every single individual at JNU. Climate change, terrorism, wealth inequality and

“JNU is still working towards the ideals of Nehruvian socialism, reflecting his strong inclination towards the cause of social justice, secularism and universalism.”

freedom of expression are some of the hot topics which occupy JNU these days.

JNU is not a place where arcane academic models are developed to obfuscate knowledge and people. It is nevertheless a space where unceasingly attempts are made to demystify and decolonise bizarre models of knowledge and culture.

On the night of 9 February 2016, a cultural event under the theme *The Country Without a Post Office* was organised by some ultra-left leaning students of the University; the event marked the death anniversary Afzal Guru (one of the accused in the 2001 Indian Parliament attack). The main agenda which was widely publicised by the representatives of the various student political organisations was to

question the nature of his trial and to criticise the capital punishment given to him. This triggered a strong reaction from the right wing nationalist students' organisation of the campus leading to an exchange of heated arguments from both sides, which drew the attention of some right wing news channels to cover the event. Once the media came into the picture, news of this event spread like wild-fire making headlines on various prime-time news channels.

After this event was completely blown out of proportion by the media, the president of JNU Students Union on 11 February addressed the students in the administrative block. He criticised the coercive measures taken by the right wing ruling regime which aimed to control and curb the voices raised, most often from this left-leaning university, against human rights violations, communal violence, state terror and oppression of any kind. The next day, on 12 February, the president of the students' union was arrested by the Delhi police. This arrest started a cataclysmic chain of events demonstrating strong resistance by the majority of the students, teachers and staff of JNU. The whole university came to a standstill, raising the voice of freedom. The word of 'Azadi' became a catch word which was chanted by the students' union. Azadi or freedom connoted freedom from coercion, freedom from communal violence and freedom to live without fear. The romance and strength of resistance was not only shown and reflected in the protest and slogans against the government, but it led to open air lectures, musical events and public talks related to the state, the nation and nationalism.

Eric Hobsbawm in his classic work on nation and nationalism discussed the historically contested idea of nation and nationalism. But when one hears the extreme form of sloganeering done by some yet to be identified person, then in a healthy democratic discourse like JNU, it is something which is far fledged. From our observations, no student of JNU would want any damage to India, but every student of JNU would want that all should be open and democratically more tolerant to diverse views. Such tolerance towards diverse

views should indeed be encouraged because it predominantly changes the curriculum and encourages more effective representation in the field of academics, which brings about vibrancy in the process of nation building. The 9 February incident which heralded a discourse on nationalism and anti-nationalism culminated in a series of open-air lectures. Violence, including Naxal violence, political extremism and mindless militancy cannot be justified. But one needs to ask serious question of society and the government as to why some of them feel compelled to choose these paths.

Students' movements are not new to the world, including in South Africa where there are protests about issues ranging from fee structures to decolonisation to race; such is the case with the students of JNU. They have been sensitive to various issues, be it sexual harassment, militant atrocities, scholarship issues or matters relating to the policies of the country.

One interesting trend which cannot be ignored is that when JNU holds a protest it becomes a national issue, unlike other universities in the country. Such attention can be for two reasons: one, its being a premier university; and the other, its being a university which has foundations in left ideology. When the recent issue took place, there was national solidarity formed among universities and groups condemning the actions taken against the university by the government. Indeed, there was also international solidarity received from students and teachers. There was mobilisation through various social media groups and the need for building a greater dialogue became apparent. Such incidences show the unity which exists among the academic fraternity, and demonstrate the weight of JNU's influence.

JNU: aspiration and beyond

Jawaharlal Nehru University is a mini India in itself. The rich composite of race, culture, region, religion, gender etc., makes this claim justifiable. Metaphorically, JNU is a battleground for India's culture, where cultural value itself is debated, refuted or embraced. Right from its conception, this university stood for

democratic space and welcomed all kinds of diversity and differences and continues to do so. Students and faculty at JNU irrespective of political party, contribute towards healthy discourse by posing critical questions and expressing dissenting ideas and opinions. To dissent, investigate and cooperate are the features that distinguish JNU. Debates are peaceful and avoid violence, providing a space for people or organisations outside the universities like media to participate.

Overall, JNU provides an opportunity for personality development and building networks. In a way, this university gives expression to a student's interpretation of world, power structures, society and the aspirations of younger citizens. JNU under its ambit covers inclusive policies which are, of course, anti-discriminatory, gender-just etc.

However, with all its merits, this university has been time and again brought under the radar of criticism for its radical left politics. No doubt it has produced many prominent leftist leaders, but some of the alumina of this university have right-wing affiliations and are serving in the present ring-wing ruling government. Constantly mocked as the last bastion of left politics, the element of hypocrisy which can sometimes be found in JNU's left politics has been unceasingly attacked; especially on the basis of caste, where there has been a subtle practice of caste discrimination as felt by students from the marginalised section. Some of the scholars have vehemently pointed out things which are wrong with JNU. For example, the space for analytical thinking and questioning over the very own leftist ideological hegemonies.

Nevertheless, the core aspect of JNU is still its socialist, secular and humanistic approach. Many of the critics of JNU, especially those from the right communal forces, have always criticised JNU as a den of Naxals, Jihadists and communists, but they fail to understand the larger societal role which JNU has played. JNU has not only moved further from the narrow meanings of nationalism to humanistic principles which people like M.N Roy (Indian revolutionary, radical activist

and political theorist) once propagated. JNU's very fabric is sensitive to the fate of the working class and peasants of the country, the marginalised sections, the people who face caste atrocities and fight the menace of fascist forces. It offers a strong platform to those who fight state violence, forced occupations and the ills of market.

Finally Indians should learn to recognise India as a civilisation; they should not reduce it to merely a nation. The world should go for creating one humane nation where the overriding and enduring identity is humanness before everything else. All other varieties of identities are assets and not sources for creating antagonism and conflict. Diversity should be celebrated and appreciated. Human similarity should be celebrated and all differences should be recognised and expressed to fully promote the need to self-define, self-organise, self-determine and self-identify. We need a world to go for new humanity, new civilisation and new history. Places like India, China and Africa should unite and work together by promoting their deep values for constructing and recreating associational life to make this world move out its current state of disorder and into a new re-order. Let India go beyond the sloganeering of nationalism and anti-nationalism to promote this new humanity and new civilisation by replacing the current divided united nation, with a true human one nation! We say to India go for it, let the JNU critical debate continue until the world realises the deep ideals of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" that the whole world is one family from the Vedic scripture Maha Upanishad (Chapter 6, Verse 72):(ayam bandhurayam neti ganana laghuchetasam udaracharitanam tu vasudhaiva kutumbakam.) "Only small men discriminate saying: One is a relative; the other is a stranger. For those who live magnanimously the entire world constitutes but a family". ■

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Consolidating and realising in practice values that steer and sustain a democratic Republic



We must be rewired to loving the Republic which we have hated over years. This has not happened; hence we continue to loot and vandalise its resources because we can't embrace and love it.

By Isaac Nkuna

The country is celebrating the 22nd anniversary of the dawn of democracy in 1994. All bona-fide South Africans agree that it was with great jubilation that the country was finally liberated from the apartheid rule that lasted for so many decades. Our constitution has been hailed by many as one of the best in the world. However, the question remains as to whether there is an alignment between the constitution as a living document and the life of the citizens on the ground.

Given our smooth and celebrated transition many would argue that the ushering in of a democratic dispensation heralded a paradigm shift in various

spheres of life. Most important is that institutions that previously served a discriminatory system have been transformed in line with the ideals of a newly formed democratic state.

Twenty-two years has been a long walk indeed and worth celebrating. However, it is important to reflect on some of the key issues which are critical for sustaining our democracy. In his famous book titled *The Republic*, the Greek philosopher Plato writes about the importance of consolidating desired values to the citizenry. I believe this is a task which is fundamental and relevant for all states, ancient or modern.

The thesis of this piece of writing

is that matters of democracy and the creation of a sustainable republic cannot be left to chance; hence it is important that citizens must not just insouciantly know what is expected of them but act in tandem with the heartbeat of the republic. Hence conscious efforts and strategies that span through the society and its institutions must be put into practice. A constitution remains frozen when not actualised in the behaviours of the citizenry. Many of us have wondered why some nations seem to have citizenry that is more loyal and patriotic to the state (not a political party) than us even with one of the best constitutions in the world.

The key questions are: Why is it that

in some nations even when people are unhappy with the government of the day, they are still loyal to their country/ the nation state/the republic? What is it that we must do to consolidate the 22 years of democracy and to have many more? As part of celebrating 22 years of democracy we need to reflect on these critical questions so that we can celebrate many more years of democracy.

An overwhelming transition?

Our transition has been overwhelming in the manner in which it happened. It was peaceful and admired by to all who witnessed it. After the release of former President Nelson Mandela, negotiations were held and to the shock and dismay of pessimists a peaceful settlement was reached paving a way for a democratic take over by the ANC. South Africa was declared a free and democratic republic with all its citizens at liberty to participate taking into account historical considerations or hindrances from the past.

Citizens of the Republic found themselves with the challenge of adjusting to a new dispensation after being subjected to a brutal and oppressive system for many decades that excluded the black majority from participation in the economy. Education was designed along racial lines which saw many of the black people struggling to access quality education as the Bantu Education Act of 1953 'was drawn up on the understanding that blacks were to be educated to do menial jobs' (Russel, 2009: 99). Those who proposed levelling the playing field by empowering the previously disadvantaged were seen by some as taking the country on a backward trend by creating a platform for mediocrity and incompetency. In fact even some of those who supported or tolerated black economic empowerment for a while are now feeling that the implemented measures were sufficient to have addressed the systematic exclusion which saw the majority being pushed to the periphery of society and trapped in the most underdeveloped parts called Bantustans.

Even more challenging was the fact that South Africans had to

simultaneously acquire new values and unlearn the undesirable values of the past which were often inconsistent with the new democratic society. The assumption was that once a new constitution was in place, citizens of the republic would be forced to abide by it otherwise the courts and law enforcement agencies would be ready to deal with any violation of the new constitutional dispensation.

Notwithstanding the splendor of the transition, there have been some isolated and desperate attempts by minority groups and individuals who were not happy with the transition who tried to threaten the stability of the country by blowing up bridges and randomly shooting citizens and performing other violent acts to vent their anger. The state must be commended for dealing effectively with such physical threats.

The apartheid system was consolidated through psychological warfare which focused on education (aimed at perpetuating the inferiority complex of the black child). Even the assassinations that followed were adopted to eliminate freedom fighters who posed a threat to the state not only by taking up arms but by challenging the legitimacy of the apartheid state. The armed struggle was adopted as a supplement to the ideological warfare which was aimed at mobilising South Africans to fight an illegitimate government.

In fact all oppressors fear the enlightened, hence in countries such as America during the days of slavery, slaves were forbidden to read and if found learning to read they could even be punished by death. The manner in which the transition happened was so overwhelming that there was little reflection on how to transform the minds of those who had been damaged by apartheid. The general view was that the kind of society that we wanted was broadly defined in our constitution (non-discriminatory, non-sexist). The values of Ubuntu were also brought into the picture as the values that should govern the operations of our institutions.

The assumption was that the citizens would somehow find a way of acquiring these values. The key

question still remains: How did the state ensure that these values were inculcated in citizens? Can we say that after 22 years of democracy that these values form part of our institutions or society? If not, why not and what were we expecting?

How did other societies succeeded in achieving the above? For instance, it would be interesting to see how Japanese society is able to instill integrated values that run through the schooling system, home and work environment. What is clear is that these societies have consciously worked hard to ensure that they do not only have functional political systems but well-structured values that permeate throughout the critical structures to sustain and keep a nation intact and highly effective.

This is a highly contested issue which many of us are afraid to deal with. Coming from an apartheid system that indoctrinated people to do wrong, many of us are skeptical or even afraid of entertaining the idea of consciously shaping our society towards a particular structured direction where all South Africans can feel the heartbeat of the country. We often hide under politics and say if it were not for that Political Party I would work hard for this country but the reality is that even minus those parties we can't even feel the heartbeat of the republic. If that is the case, then there is no justification, something is surely terribly wrong. We must be rewired to loving the republic which we have hated over years. This has not happened; hence we continue to loot and vandalise its resources because we can't embrace and love it.

Social engineering for the citizenry?

Social engineering refers to efforts to influence popular attitudes and social behaviours on a large scale, whether by governments, media, or private groups. Karl Popper (1971) distinguishes between two forms of social engineering: piecemeal and utopian social engineering; he argues that the former is better in that it focuses on specific problems whereas the latter attempt to reform the whole society (Swirski, 2011).

Talk about social engineering brings shivers to many South Africans. This is

to some extent understandable given the fact that a majority of the people have witnessed a brutal system that not only used physical violence but resorted to psychological means to fight its racial wars. The system was designed in such a way that South African society was wired to think and act in a particular way. It should be noted that racists were not a product of chance, but conscious creations perfected in the classrooms, families, communities, cultural and religious formations of the old South Africa.

The wiring was so widespread that its web covered all critical structures and institutions in society ranging from the schools, church and the family. The school created an ideal place for indoctrination as the child spends more time at school than at home. In fact in terms of knowledge small children trust their teachers more than parents. Having noted the above it is clear that in line with the values of ideals of a democratic state a better society can be created by ensuring that the right values are inculcated into the minds of our children at an early age. The benefits will be massive as we will have less trouble making them fit into the society when they are grown up.

Societies where citizens have been consciously socialised in a structured and coherent manner tend to have fewer problems when it comes to matters of national identity, crime and loyalty to the country.

The question of whether there is a society where people can be completely free from control is a million dollar question. Societies have values and laws that govern how we should behave and relate to one another. The question of the relativity of values (especially as enshrined in the constitution) and the extent to which citizens can exercise freedom is debatable and more complex than is generally perceived.

States grant the freedoms and define them clearly for individuals (the Constitution). There have been times and places in history when human beings have led barbaric lifestyles (chopping each other's heads off and using them as trophies and having no social norms to protect the weak or vulnerable). The reason why there are

states is that individuals have entered into a social contract with them and hence have surrendered some of their power to them. In the light of the above, there is no society with perpetual and unlimited relativity of values; otherwise the state would struggle to enforce the law.

A brief reflection on Plato's Republic

As we celebrate 22 years of democracy it is important to reflect on whether we have crafted a republic that can sustain the legacy brought about by the struggle for freedom and democracy. Sustainability of the above cannot depend on the availability of the armed and police forces but on an entrenched legacy that has been instilled in the hearts of the citizenry. I refer to Plato fully knowing that many

“It should be noted that racists were not a product of chance, but conscious creations perfected in the classrooms, families, communities, cultural and religious formations of the old South Africa.”

will be scared of some of his radical proposals, but what is interesting is that he is bold enough to make them.

Indeed, Plato's proposed state may not be realistic and practical but however it sets a basis and principle for thinking about the development and consolidation of the state. In his book *The Republic* Plato, through his student Socrates, espouses through logical dialogue his determination to establish, philosophically, the ideal state, a state that would stand as a model for all emerging or existing societies operating during his lifetime and extending into future times. He outlines exactly what the ideal state should look like. There are both good and scary ideas. Some of the good ones which also form part of our constitution deal with gender equality where he

argues that the natural differences between men and women are not relevant when it comes to the jobs of protecting and ruling the city. He also emphasised that the just city (Kallipolis) should encourage physical education (gymnasium) and good literature which instills the virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance and justice (Reeve, 2004). It was Plato's belief that art is critical for the formation of good character.

The views that would make him unpopular in our modern society are proposals such as: rulers should after receiving didactic education have 15 years of practical political training and statements such as 'the tyrant need a very large army and will spend the city's money'. The question is not whether we like or agree with his views or not but whether we can sketch what we would call an ideal state and if we are bold enough to pursue those ideals. Plato's Republic deals with a wide range of issues that help us reflect on our state, contextualise and align the debate with our constitution.

The issues covered from Book I-X range from justice, education, human happiness, knowledge, virtue, ethics, good and bad political regimes, the family, the role of women in society to the role of art in society (Stanley, 2005). Plato's critics over the years have focused on the fear that his proposals can temper with the freedom and rights of citizens while downplaying the fundamentals of social integration, nation building and the creation of a sustainable Republic. I think the degree to which the ideal state can be sketched, structured or restructured is what should be debated rather than whether there is a need to shape the state; no state is the product of chance alone. The Chinese, Japanese or American state is the way it is because of the way it has been shaped. The identity of the state and patriotism is a conscious creation rather than a work of chance. The citizenry bow to the flag and sing the national anthem not out of superficial tendencies but what has been instilled in them over the years of their existence.

To be proudly South African is not a creation of brands, sport, events and a few adverts but something that should be embedded in our hearts.

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Karl Popper's (1971) views on social engineering come in handy when dealing with matters of shaping society. According to Popper redrawing the slate from scratch on a blueprint may be challenging and problematic; hence he proposes piecemeal engineering as the ideal. Operating in the global world where global capital is in charge, utopian social engineering could be a challenge if implemented in a thorough and drastic manner. States should however reflect on such critical matters rather than leaving them to chance or to a risky and dangerous 'global social engineering' conducted without consultation or input from ordinary citizens.

It is not only about the institutions but the whole society

Many would argue that for democracy to flourish institutions such as service delivery agencies, NGOs and community structures must be driven, defined and guided by the right values. However, that may not be sufficient and sustainable as individuals are members of a society whose values define their behavior outside an institution. For instance, an individual may mechanically subscribe to the vision and mission of an institution for contractual purposes but what happens when they are outside the confines of an organisation as ordinary citizens of a society?

Many government Departments have the values of Ubuntu written in bold but why are they not implemented as espoused in the founding document? It is worth noting that until the values are successfully inculcated in a society, it will be difficult for them to be sustained through organisational arrangements, even where enforcement is involved. Even in states with oppressive laws and penalties those states do not only rely on enforcement but inculcation of the values remains fundamental, even to the point of indoctrination. For instance, take a monstrous and murderous pariah state such as Nazi Germany: Hitler even had a Minister of Propaganda (Dr Goebbels). The apartheid masters learned most of their tricks from institutions in Germany where some of them studied. It is interesting to note that Hitler had the

most feared Gestapo but he realised that social engineering (although a negative and destructive sense in his case) was one of the most effective tools in the creation of one nation.

Societies not products of chance

Having noted the role of values it is important to take cognisance of the fact that values cannot transfer themselves but a conscious effort must be taken to do so. A society, even when it remains open to global influence, must have its own unique identity. This unique identity can sometimes be mistaken for exclusion and isolation. A society, like a work of art, must be consciously designed and perfected over the years by a conscious cultural revolution symbolised in its arts, literature, music, culture and other social archetypes. We have been constantly complaining about some South African behaviour. However,

“What we see in South Africa today (whether we like it or not) it is our own creation as a society.”

what we often complain about when we look at our society is our own creation (conscious or unconscious, by omission or commission). There is no middle ground. The question is what are we allowing our kids to watch or read? Whatever it is, the output cannot be different or unique. What we see in South Africa today (whether we like it or not) it is our own creation as a society.

Globalisation brings opportunities but also economic and cultural challenges

The end of apartheid ushered in a new dispensation in South Africa and the country became part of the global community. The expectations were too high both in South Africa and the rest of the world, as we were now expected to compete as equals with the rest of the world after so many years of isolation. As noted by Hart (2002) the

feeling was that South Africa 'must now liberate its markets along with its newly enfranchised citizenry'.

Notwithstanding what has been noted above, there is a general belief that opening societies to global influence always bring benefits economically; however it can be a challenge when a country is not prepared to compete in the global arena. There are two spheres from which the competitiveness of society must be viewed: economic and social. The economic sphere is the obvious one, where the industries, companies and firms of one society are well developed to compete with the rest of the world. Those in favour of globalisation often argue that the application of protective measures or protecting local industries from competition weakens them; however, world renowned economist Joseph Stiglitz argues that opening up to globalisation too early can be disastrous in the global trade. Stiglitz (2002:8) notes that 'in too many instances the benefits are said to be less than its advocates claim'.

The globalisation of the world from a social point of view throws up many challenges. At this level citizens who are lacking in critical thinking may fall victim to all of the information that is dumped on the internet. On the contrary citizens who are educated have tools to use the information consciously and be able to make the right choices based on their knowledge. Education remains a key on which all democracies must be founded, especially because their citizens have the right freely to make their choices.

As we celebrate 22 years of democracy we can consider some of the many possible ways of consolidating and putting into practice the desired values that will help sustain the ideal state, our Republic. These could focus on the best use of the following:

- media;
- literature;
- arts, sport and other communal activities; and
- communal libraries.

Media

The media remains one of the most important channels of communicating values of a democratic state. These

values could be consciously packaged in the movies, dramas, soapies and comedies that the citizenry watch. It is for this reason that the content that the SABC chooses is fundamental in shaping the minds of both young and old. For instance, if the content is dominated by violence and dysfunctional behavior it will shape society in a particular direction.

The question of whether there is a correlation between watching TV and violence is a terrain of psychology. Although the view that those who display violence may have been exposed to violence even before watching TV may be true, it is however important that even in that case violent behavior may be triggered by constant exposure to violence. We do not want to watch horrifying things simply because they reflect what is happening in society. Constant exposure to them may be psychologically traumatising. Small children and teenagers may even think there is something cool about watching movies displaying hooligans as heroes. A balance between reflecting what is truly happening in society and the well-being of the viewers is needed as any extreme position will be disastrous.

Dramas and movies must reflect what we stand for as a society even through the settings. It is strange that when watching South African movies you will hardly see a South Africa flag even in a police station. Most of the American movies that I have watched would have the flag displayed in schools, police stations and even in areas that you would hardly think of.

Furthermore, the question of reporting should be handled in a professional manner. The media should also report on the good things happening in the country and not concentrate only on the bad things. The right to know of the citizenry must take precedence. They must be well informed about what is happening in their country to meaningfully participate in its processes.

Literature

The literature that is prescribed in our schools must represent the values that we want to promote and proliferate as a nation. It is interesting

that when it comes to literature there is a limited exposure to literature from Africa and from the Diaspora especially at primary and high school levels. It is at these formative levels that kids must be exposed to our own literature. Conscious of the challenges of exposure to works that undermine the values of society, Plato critiqued some of the works of writers like Homer and Hesiod who he accused of appealing to the emotions of the citizens and writing materials that undermine the values of society. In this view Aristotle would disagree with Plato as he viewed the exposure to that type of material as part of catharsis (cleansing) (Lukas, 1977). However, whether we agree with Plato or Aristotle we need to ensure that we know what we are doing and its impact on our children, especially because

“The key question is what lessons are children learning from the literature they are reading? Are critical values and virtues being transferred? Whose values are those? Are the values South African, African or Western?”

what may be a catharsis to an adult may not be so to a child. The South African state must use the available literature to shape the young minds at an early age. The key question is what lessons are children learning from the literature they are reading? Are critical values and virtues being transferred? Whose values are those? Are the values South African, African, Western – or human?

Education

The education system must ensure that learners receive education that does not only empower them in terms of technical skills but life skills and values that define a democratic society. We need to ensure that settings and examples used in language books and

other disciplines are in tandem with the ideals of the society we want to create, our Republic.

Learners must also be educated and empowered with critical language skills so that they can read materials (in any discipline) with analytical minds. The reason why so many learners, especially those learning in a second language, struggle is because they lack the necessary language skills to deal with content subjects such as Biology, Physics etc. Furthermore, these skills are essential especially in the context of the massive information that young people are faced with in the light of the global network provided by the internet. Citizens of a democratic state must read and observe events with critical minds. A learner with a critical mind can read, compare and evaluate the information available. This is an important skill in a democratic society where there are competing views and ideas, whether political or economic.

Furthermore, civic education remains fundamental to shaping young minds to become real citizens of the republic. Patriotism must be developed at an early age commencing as early as Grade R where learners can be exposed to the basics (which include symbols such as the SA flag, coat of arms, the national symbols and their meaning and the national anthem) about their country. Children must be taught to feel proud of being South Africans, and understand what South Africa is, and who are ‘all its people’ who share it.

The gap that has existed is that the emphasis in the area of education has been to ensure that learners have the right skills from a technical point of view. The common saying is that the curriculum must be relevant to the needs of the economy. This is acceptable but education must not only produce technical robots that will use their skills even to endanger society when manipulated by those aiming to achieve their own objectives. Education should develop learners who will love to serve their country irrespective of the nature of job they are performing. I believe that education is being underutilised to enhance the ideals of a democratic state. The downgrading of the arts and humanities in many

universities remains problematic as they are key to championing the cultural revolution and critical thinking. A democracy cannot be properly consolidated without the contribution of the Arts and the Humanities.

Reviving the arts, sport and cultural activities

In *The Republic* Plato emphasised the importance of physical education. There is a need to keep citizens fit in the light of the lifestyle diseases that are common these days. The democratic state must promote healthy life-styles and nutrition at school and in the community. Crime and violence arise in situations where people are idling. The state will also, through these initiatives, save money on treating diseases that can be prevented by exercising and eating properly. Schools must be in the forefront of educating the citizens about healthy eating and staying fit. In fact there was a time in the past when it was part of the school curriculum for learners to learn how to grow vegetables. These skills are crucial for inculcating healthy eating and doing things for oneself, especially when combined with information about what to eat, how best to cook it and why certain foods are beneficial while others can be harmful. Community gardens could mushroom as a result. Democracy should teach citizens about the value of work and keeping in shape by ensuring that every learner participates in activities that will empower and instill the right values.

The need for community libraries

As part of consolidating democracy it is important that the citizenry is encouraged to read. Democracy and literacy go hand in glove. Public participation is a token when citizens who wish to participate are poorly informed and do not have the necessary resources and knowledge. Currently there are communities that are without even a single library. These libraries do not have to be very big but basic with essential materials that citizens can use to stay well informed. An ill-informed citizenry is dangerous hence some of the violent strikes can be linked to the frustration due to the lack of knowledge

about government programmes. Where possible electronic devices such as computers should be introduced in some of these libraries, especially in rural communities, to bridge the electronic divide.

Consolidating values for sustainable democracy

What the country should not forget as we celebrate our democracy is that at the centre of any society are values that must be consolidated and put into operation. These values provide the compass to assist the society in terms of the political, social or economic direction that should be undertaken. All states, including the worst states that indoctrinate their citizens, use effective tools that communicate and consolidate values. These values can infuse social cohesion and nurture nationalism in the sense of Ubuntu, not in the sense of rejecting or disliking those who are considered not to be of 'our' nation.

It is of fundamental importance that the ideals and values espoused in our constitution are not just frozen in writing but remain poignant in our society. When values that we aspire to as a democratic state are not consciously entrenched in the minds and hearts of the citizens through our education, community, family, religious institutions, social and political systems, these values will not become part of our everyday practice. These values must be put into practice rather than idealised.

Our pride in our country should be justified by our country's actions, by the positive effect these actions have on the continent and the world. Shallow 'patriotism' is not a positive value, as it can encourage values based on reactionary ideas and practices. Our values must be based on our constitution, and it is these values that the education system, families and our social and political institutions need to inculcate and promote through their words and their actions. Saluting flags and singing anthems can be positive nation-building devices only in a clear context of Ubuntu.

Values like tolerance, consideration, caring for all human beings and rejecting cruelty and negative discrimination

are very important. Our society must build a nation of people who care for all the people of this country, continent and planet; who conserve the natural beauty of the world rather than destroying it; and who are driven by Ubuntu rather than greed.

Failure to entrench the right values in our society will result in us constantly blaming the youth for not being passionate about their country. We will forever be explaining to citizens that it is good to buy South Africa products; that they must not vandalise property even when they are angry and have genuine grievances; that they must respect people even if they do not agree with them; and that they must support their local teams and businesses.

All these ideals should come naturally when we have done our work as a country by not leaving things to chance. A society cannot sustain democracy only through courts and law enforcement agencies. Democracy must be inoculated in the veins and heart of a society for it to continue to keep the society going for many years to come. The damage of leaving things to chance has reached such alarming proportions, it is high time to rethink our strategy with regard to re-engineering the new South Africa.

To create a cohesive society, it is important that the country continues to intensify its strategies to improve service delivery and bridge inequality in our society. Democracy will function well when peoples' needs are met and as Plato noted in *The Republic*, the trust between the rulers and citizenry will be restored, a true republic will grow from strength to strength. We will then have many more anniversaries to celebrate. ■

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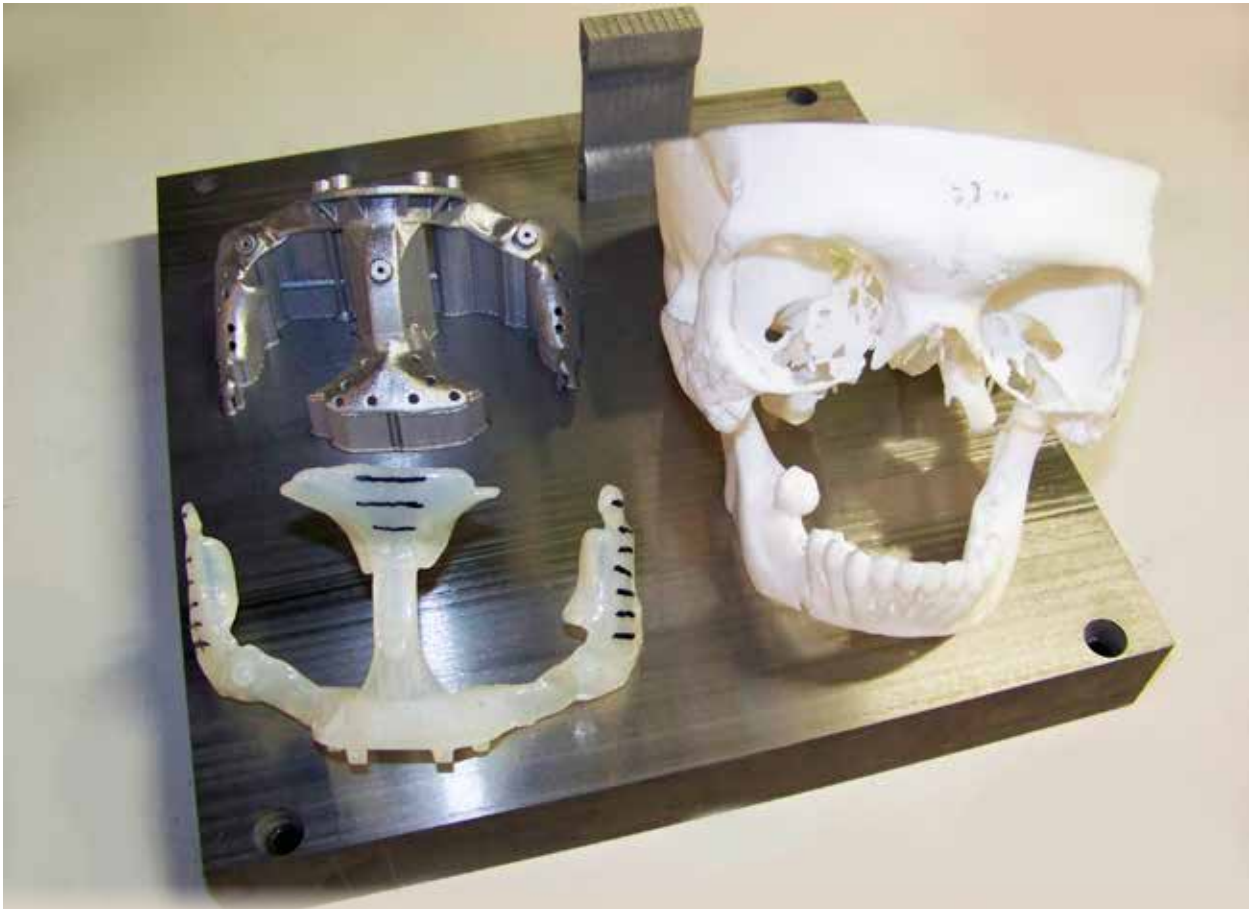
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3D printing technology improves traditional manufacturing sectors

Customised implants for public sector patients particularly (but not exclusively) for reconstructive surgery following cancer removal, physical trauma or to correct congenital birth defects. (Source: Centre for Rapid Prototyping and Manufacturing, Central University of Technology).

By Department of Science and Technology

South Africa's objective to create new manufacturing industries in the country has been taken a step further with the launch of the Additive Manufacturing (AM) Strategy at Bloemfontein's Central University of

Technology (CUT) on 25 August 2016.

Commissioned by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), the Strategy is aimed at identifying future market opportunities and products in which AM – also known as 3D printing

– technology development is required to position the country as a competitor in the global market.

Speaking at the launch of the strategy, the DST's Director: Advanced Manufacturing, Mr Garth Williams,



Low-cost prosthetic device made by Robohand (local company). There is a huge need for low-cost, high-quality solutions for the lower income grouping in SA as well as across Africa.

said that additive manufacturing is a technology that straddles the current and "Fourth Industrial Revolution".

Mr Williams also stated that AM can be deployed within industry in a stand-alone fashion for product development, prototyping, and, increasingly, manufacturing of structural parts and assemblies. It is also a digital technology alongside other Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies such as big data, the industrial Internet of Things, cybersecurity, autonomous and collaborative robots and augmented reality.

Huge investments by the DST and its entity, the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), are already benefiting a range of sectors and young entrepreneurs.

Themba Sehawu, a young entrepreneur and founder of Senovate from Mbombela (Nelspruit), who has benefited from the use of AM in his business, came up with an innovative fruit-picking machine that allows people to harvest fruit without having to elevate themselves, thereby avoiding scratches and bruises.

Themba explained that he was inspired by his aunt, who was a fruit picker and often come home with cuts and bruises on her arms from having to harvest fruit from high branches.

He received a grant from TIA for making certain components of the prototype. This went into paying designers at the Design Institute for conceptualisation and making



Themba Sehawu, a young entrepreneur and founder of Senovate

decisions about materials and shapes that were both durable and lightweight. The prototype was then constructed using 3D printing.

South Africa began investing in AM technology in the early 1990s. The public sector has collectively invested approximately R358 million in AM research and development (R&D) and systems since 2014.

The DST has also committed R30.7 million to a collaborative R&D programme in AM research, development and innovation projects and infrastructure. This programme focuses on R&D and innovation support in AM of titanium medical implants and aerospace components and polymer AM in design. It also seeks to increase the adoption of AM as an accepted and viable manufacturing technology.

This investment has imbued South Africa with specific world-class capabilities, positioning the country to participate in sub-sectors with high growth potential in AM, such as aerospace applications and medical and dental devices and implants.

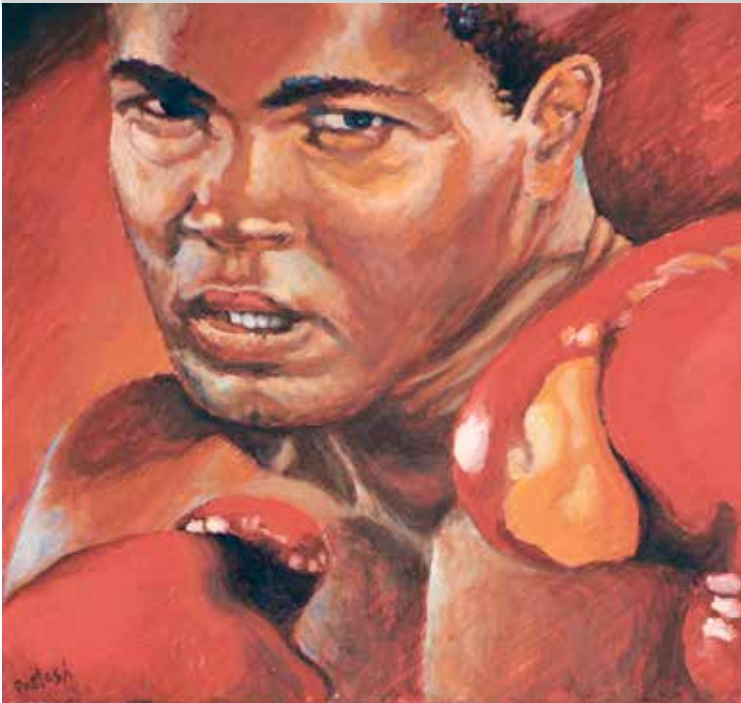
AM also holds much potential to improve competitiveness in traditional manufacturing sectors through shorter lead times, toolless manufacturing, increased part complexity, freedom of design, incorporation of moving parts without assembly, customisation and diverse materials options. ■

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THROUGH A CREATIVE LENS

We share with our readers in this issue three more poems from Afzal Moolla. The pain and anger he expresses at the mindless cruelty inflicted on so many people worldwide is tempered by his appreciation for the actions which make up the lives of the countless men and women who persevere in trying to make the world a better place, day after day. Here he remembers with love and admiration our hero, Muhammed Ali; adds his perspective to the #blacklivesmatter campaign; and reflects on the horrifying and shameful Marikana massacre.

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Muhammad Ali
1942 - 2016

the flame is gone,
the fire rages on,

he fought beyond the call, he fought for us all,

may his soul rest as his spirit soars free,

he who floated like a butterfly,
he who stung like a bee

– June 2016

#blacklivesmatter*21st Century Lynching*

Gone are the white masks and sheets,
today the KKK struts in plain sight,
on nameless blood-soaked streets.

The past still lives,
breathes,
spewing hate,
stereotyping and profiling and generalising,
'the Nigger deserved it',
they still say,
as they continue to hate,
and to slay.

Justice is blind,
we are so often told,

but it's deaf,
and mute,

and can be,
and is,
bought and sold,

just as they once,

traded,
bought,
sold,
flogged,
whipped,
lynched,

and raped human-beings,
and just as each of those human-beings of colour was
called a slave,

today, in the 21st century,

a person of colour,

still better 'know' his or her 'place',

or face the racist murderers' hate,

and be shot down,
and be clubbed
and be beaten, to an early, shallow grave

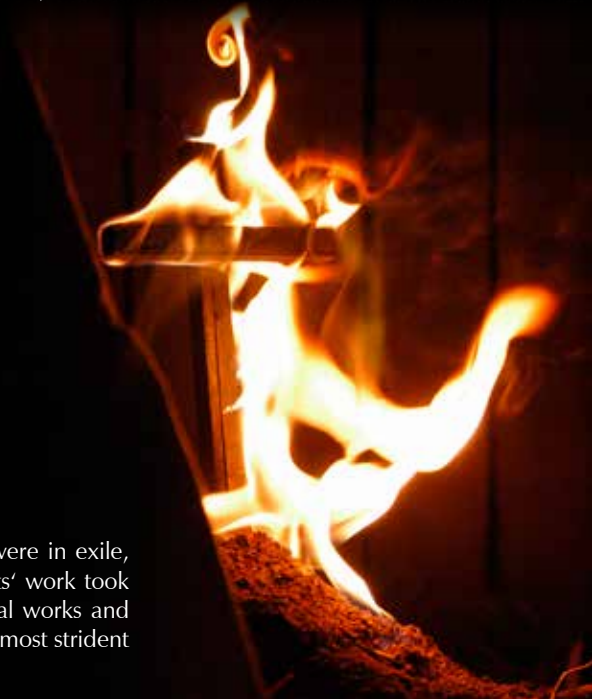
April 2016

Afzal Moolla was born in Delhi, India while his parents were in exile, working for the ANC. He then travelled wherever his parents' work took them and he still feels that he hasn't stopped travelling. Afzal works and lives in Johannesburg, and shares his literary musings with his most strident critic - his 12 year old cat.

Who Killed the Marikana Miners?*

who killed the miners at Marikana?
definitely not the executive
nor the executives
far removed from the grime
and the slime
Who killed the miners at Marikana?
not the Prez
and not even the Press for a change
strange
so who killed the miners at Marikana?
the unions perhaps
or the errant miner
led astray
in that obscene demand for better pay
who killed the miners at Marikana?
not armed cops,
firing bullets of lead into the back of the head
execution-style it's been said
who killed the miners at Marikana?
it seems no one can be found
as bodies decompose deep under gold dust ground
while families grieve
there
ain't no one around to take the fall
so
who killed the Marikana Miners?
no one
no one at all

** inspired by the protest song "Who Killed Davey Moore", a topical song written in 1963 by American folk singer/songwriter Bob Dylan.
June, 2015*



SA HIP HOP AND HOUSE

A threat to African values and beliefs



By Thokozani Dladla

I am worried about South African Hip Hop and House music. They are growing rapidly in popularity and that is what we want – growth and development. The threat is that these two music genres seem to adopt a lot from Western culture and ideologies. They give society the impression that the perfect way of doing things is doing them Westerly.

These two genres are doing this through their music videos and songs' lyrics. Their music videos have a great number of semi-naked women. These women are not just dancing in these music videos, but they are acting as sex objects, as a source of entertainment for men. They are twerking, flirting and modelling in front of men.

If we want to change the society to a better one women must be represented as subjects as opposed to objects. In most of these music genres' music videos they are dressing in such a way and playing a role that portrays them as inferior and less important than men in society.

Kwaito music does not conform to this culture of objectivising women. Let me refer you to the old school Kwaito music because the contemporary one is beginning to degenerate too. When watching old school Kwaito music videos you will notice that they always tell a story. Women are not playing the flirting and men's source

of entertainment role but they are portraying brave women fighting for something or struggling, and at the end obtaining the desired victory. They are certainly not presenting themselves as powerless and submissive, flirting and twerking. For example, watch and listen to Trompies – 'Sweetie Lavo' and Mdu Masilela – 'Sobabili'. These tracks with their music videos talk about women but they do not show women as submissive and inferior beings. These music videos portray the true style of South African music culture.

Compare the old school Kwaito music videos with the 21st century Hip hop music videos. Let me be more specific. Watch these music videos; Emtee – 'Pearl Thusi', Kwesha - Ngud' ft, Cassper Nyovest, Ma-E – 'Ke Summer', Aero Manyelo – 'Tshunga' and many other South Africa Hip Hop and House music videos. The West, particularly the United States of America, is well known for this kind of music video. Hence American music is identified with them and it has become their culture.

I believe that our best international music stars see nothing wrong with this kind of culture of representing women this way. Watch R. Kelly ft. T.I. and T-Pain – 'I'm A Flirt Remix' and Chris Brown – 'Run It!', Lil Wayne Feat, Future, Yo Gotti – 'Cross Me' and Juicy J Feat, Lil Wayne & August Alsina -

'Miss Mary Mack'. While watching also listen to the lyrics; how these artists rap about women – what they are saying in their lyrics.

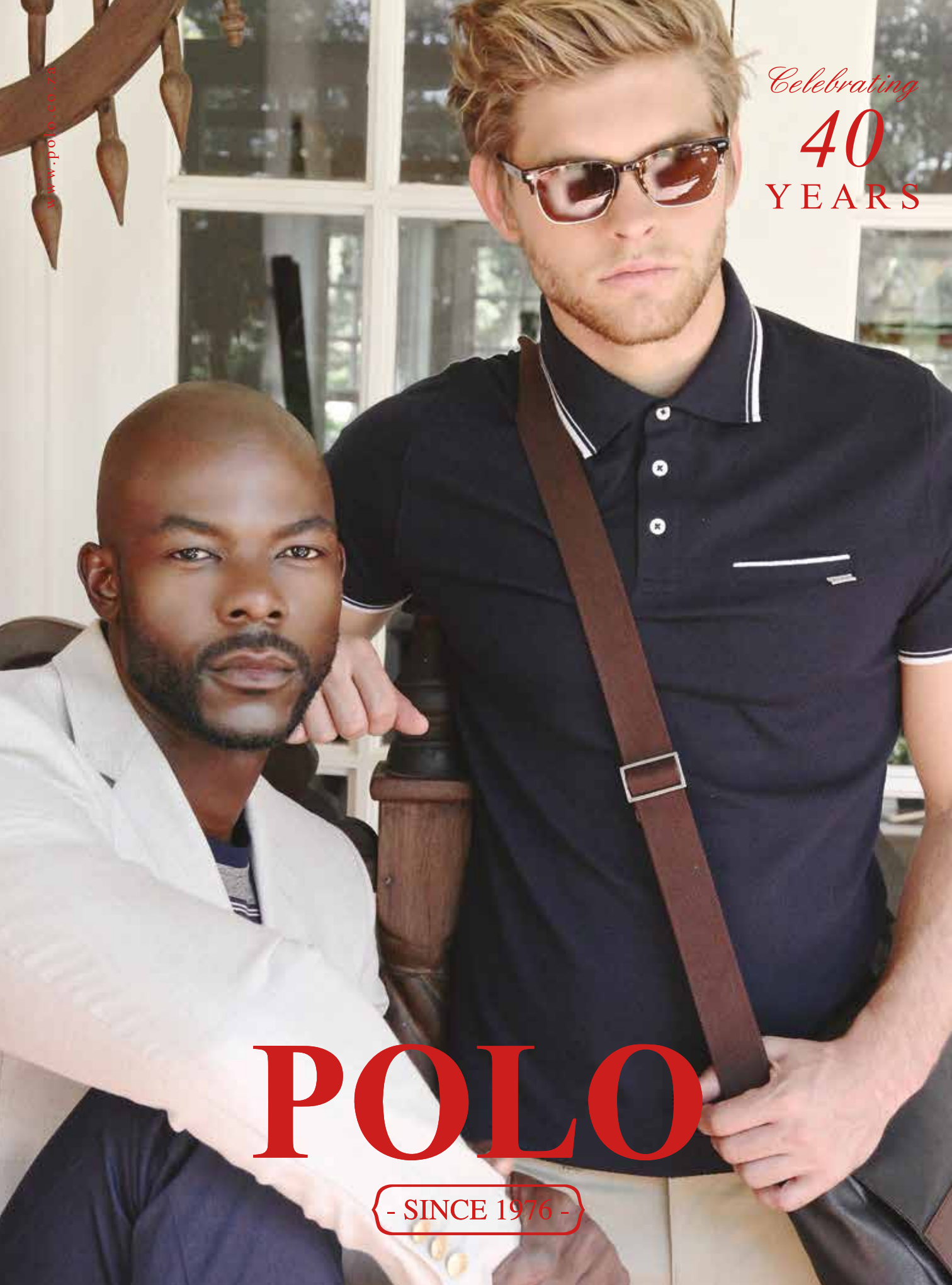
Recently this Western style of singing and rapping about women has increased rapidly in South Africa. What does Emtee say about Pearl Thusi in his song titled 'Pearl Thusi'? Is he rapping about her beauty, particularly her inside beauty or it is more than that? Emtee emphasises how sexy Pearl Thusi is, in his lyrics he says "her bootie, the boobs, the molar-yonke into ihleli nge-order are in order" and again look carefully at Pearl Thusi's role in the music video. She is portrayed as this good looking female celebrity; at some point she appears on television while Emtee is watching. There is also a scene where she is sitting in bed and throws a lot of money all over the room.

What does this illustrate about Pearl Thusi? Does the music video portray her as a beautiful women in all respects, worthy to be a role model, as even Emtee wrote a song about her?

So far, the track has been in different radio stations' top 10. True FM had this track in their top 10 for a couple of weeks. Compare this track with Juicy J Feat. Lil Wayne & August Alsina - 'Miss Mary Mack'. How is Juicy J rapping about Mary Mack? The things he says about Mary Mack are similar in content to how Emtee raps about Pearl Thusi.

There is no formula for writing a song or recording a music video. However, there are ways to avoid portraying women as inferior human beings and objects to be used as by men to have fun. If the director of a music video tells the women to dress semi-naked, model and twerk in front of the completely dressed-up male artist, that is one way of using women as objects and degrading the whole female gender. The young ones will grow up with the mentality that it is a victory to get men's attention by dressing and behaving in a certain way.

Focusing on the physical beauty of a woman when writing a song which is supposed to honour her – focusing on the parts of her body which make her attractive to men – is another way of seeing women as form of amusement for men; and making them into sex objects. ■



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