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NEW AGENDA

SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY

Our national trauma

Dikgang Moseneke

The effects of Water shortages

Transport in Crisis

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IFAA's Student and Youth Department

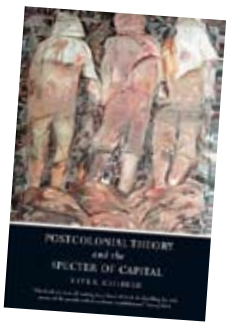
The Student & Youth Department aims to establish a community and network for progressive students and youth in South Africa.

The IFAA Forum

The IFAA Forum provides a platform for young progressives to share academic work and debate topical issues. The IFAA forum has the following objectives:

- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning among graduate students in South Africa
- Encourage interdisciplinary thinking
- Foster collaboration and communication between students and young academics
- Deepen intellectual networks between universities in South Africa
- Provide a platform for discussing progressive political/ economic/social theory
- Democratise academic knowledge by opening up participation in the forum to social activists and engaged members of the public

The IFAA Reading Circle



IFAA's Student and Youth department runs regular reading circles throughout the year. This is part of our aim to deepen the youth's intellectual engagement with progressive social theory.

In 2018 IFAA is conducting a fortnightly book Club on Vivek Chibber's "Post-Colonial Theory and the Specter of Capital" and Eddie Webster and Karin Pampallis (ed) "The Unresolved National Question in South Africa."

Reading Circles are convened by IFAA at the request of members of the IFAA Student and Youth Network. To become a part of our reading circle please contact Rekang at: studentandyouth@ifaaza.org.

Political Education Courses

Monwabisi, a student in the course, sharing his views with the class

The IFAA Student and Youth department prepares and delivers courses on political history and theory, with a particular focus on South African and African issues at large.

IFAA works in collaboration with INDONI ACTT to run a Politics, History and Identity Course for Indoni Dance, Arts and Leadership Academy. The course has focused on the intersection of identity, the arts and politics. Our goal is to promote civic engagement, leadership, social consciousness and political awareness.

The Progressive Corner

~~The Progressive Corner~~ provides a platform for the dissemination of progressive theories & perspectives in a non-sectarian way. We publish essays and produce podcasts on current affairs, social theory, and political and economic history. This is a public forum for students by students.

We encourage the free and open exchange of ideas with the intention to promote critical analysis of economic and social problems confronting South Africa, the rest of the African continent, and the globe at large.

CONTACT IFAA'S STUDENT & YOUTH DEPARTMENT:

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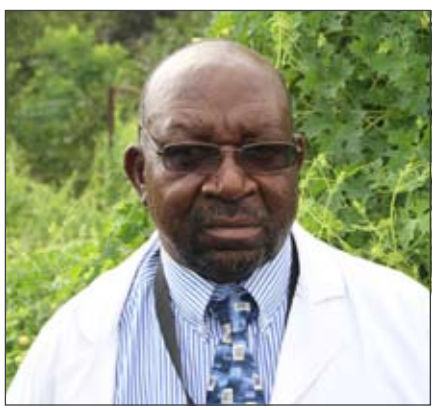
Science and Agriculture at the University of Limpopo is a hub for future researchers, reports its Executive Dean

The academic year gone by (2017) will go down in the history of the University of Limpopo's Faculty of Science and Agriculture (FSA) as the most successful, especially in research development and post-graduate training. Nine years ago, the Faculty, under the focused leadership of the current Executive Dean, Prof Hlengani Siweya, introduced Faculty Postgraduate Research Day (FPRD). The aim was two-fold, namely,

- Create an academic platform for Masters and Doctoral students to share their research activities and, importantly, to justify and defend their enquiry;
- Increase the number of accredited publications through joint articles with their mentors.

To ensure that the Faculty achieves both objectives, participation and presentation at the FPRD comes with prizes for Best Presenters in the Masters and Doctoral categories from each of the four Schools (of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Mathematical and Computer Sciences, Molecular and Life Sciences and Physical and Mineral Sciences). Last year (2017) saw the highest number of presenters from each School. The Honours category which was introduced in 2015 (but for Poster Presentation only) also saw a substantial increase.



Senior Prof Phatu Mashela (N3-rated scientist) was the Best Faculty Researcher for 2017

Here is a summary of the 2017 Best Presenters (all categories), all led by Senior Academics.

Student Prize Winners at the 2016 Faculty Postgraduate Research Day					
School	**Level**	**1st Prize**	**2nd Prize**	**3rd Prize**	**4th Prize**
SAES	Hons	Moabelo	P Mamadi T	NONE	
	MSc	Sebothoma	Tshehla T	Rampele EM	
	PhD	Chimeri			
SMLS	Hons	Simali S	Mapheto K	Matundu E	
	MSc	Nthangeni A	Masiphephethu MV	Makgoo L	Mangoakoana DF
	PhD	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
	Hons	Nkuna C	Mthombothi TT	Morukuladi T	Manyama D Maifo B
SPMS	MSc	Maponya TC	Makhofola MD		
	PhD	Mashamaite MP	Chuma MH		
SMCS	Hons	Mukwevho I			
	MSc	Sejaphala LC			
	PhD	Makhalemele CR			

There were three plenary speakers at FPRD:

- Dr Thebedi Ramontja (an Honorary Adjunct Professor at Wits University) who spoke on "Recent development in science and research in South Africa's mining industry";
- Senior Professor Phatu Mashela who was judged the Faculty's Best Researcher for 2017 and spoke on "Green technologies in nematode management: Past, present and future challenges/successes";
- Senior Professor Phuti Ngoepe whose address was titled "Viewing the materials world through a Simulation Microscope".

The Faculty is home to many outstanding scholars in the following dominant research areas:

- Animal Science
- Agronomy
- Agricultural Economics
- Agricultural extension
- Cancer
- Computer modeling of materials
- Food Security
- Cowpea Production
- Medicinal Plants
- Phytomedicine
- Biodiversity and Ecology
- Longitudinal Studies: life style diseases
- Diabetes
- Nanotechnology
- Plant Protection
- Nematology
- Fish Parasitology
- Energy Forecasting
- Fluid Mechanics
- Topology
- Time Series Analysis
- Fermentation: Marula wine production
- Synthetic chemistry

The Executive Dean acknowledges financial support from the following organizations:

- PPS
- Esco Technologies
- Wirsam Scientific & Precision Equipment
- South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)

There are many other research areas that the Faculty also excels in. Prospective postgraduate students and prospective collaborators (to our FPRD) can contact the Faculty for more details.

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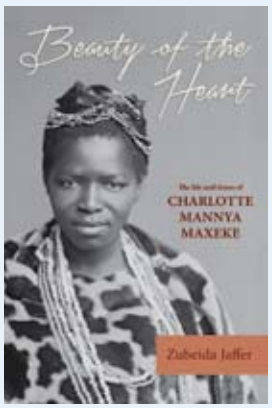

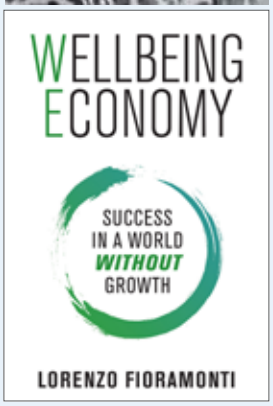

#WMC Must Fall

Knowledge for enhanced economic efficiency

Erdil Sahin observes that "In the world of globalisation, economic growth is associated with the amount of innovation created. The expenditures on new product development, thus research and/or development (R&D), is the main factor for the economic growth of both developed and developing countries. R&D expenditures are at the centre of new growth theories. The countries that produce technologically advanced products have the ability to compete internationally and show progress in production levels and qualities". This is supported by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development's G20 Innovation Report for 2016, where expenditures in R&D and innovation are found to be pro-cyclical, positively related to an economy's level of activity.

Innovation as a driver for socio-economic growth becomes even more important as we face the fourth industrial revolution where anticipated technological advancements are taking place as predicted globally and articulated by the founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF), Klaus Schwab: "We stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another. In its scale, scope, and complexity, the transformation will be unlike anything humankind has experienced before".

These technological advancements are currently unfolding before us and as an emerging economy on a developing continent we need to be in a position to respond, to adapt and where necessary, to lead. The question hot on our lips is thus, as an emerging economy, how do we address our immediate burning aspirations set out in the National Development Plan: Vision for 2030, while dealing with the triple challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty, but equip ourselves to respond as the Fourth Industrial Revolution unfolds? The Department of Science and Technology has been resolute in this regard, actively promoting and supporting R&D while also working to ensure that investments in R&D should result in outputs, outcomes and positive impacts in society.

The most recent data shows that South Africa has GERD/GDP of 0.77% and 1.5% remains an elusive target and one which we are unlikely to achieve by 2019. But it is worth analysing the factors contributing to a GERD of 0.77% (as a percentage of GDP) and to further compare this with other international jurisdictions.

It is not surprising that the innovation-driven economy of Singapore, which ranks number 2 on the Global Competitive Index (GCI), has a GERD (expressed as a percentage of GPD) of 2% in 2013. Denmark's figure is higher at 3.08% but this jurisdiction finds itself at position 14 on the GCI. Greece has a GERD (as a percentage of GDP) of 0.81% yet it finds itself at position 81, with South Africa at position 56. This snapshot indicates that while we drive for the increase in the quantum of the investment we also need to be mindful that a plethora of factors, including the rate of efficiency of use of the available funds, are important.

When dissecting our R&D funding, reflecting on the split between government and business sector contributions, it is apparent that the South African government continues to be the largest funder of R&D activities at 43.9%. Contributions from the business sector amounted to 40.8% of R&D, with the balance including foreign sources at 12.5%. A constant trend shows that most of the R&D activity is taking place in the fields of engineering (18.7%) and medical and health sciences (18.6%), with growth observed in the fields of biotechnology (5.4%) and nanotechnology (2.8%), open source software (2.8%), materials sciences (3.6%), with the environment-related R&D reaching 6.8%.

The focus of the Ten-year Innovation Plan was the transition from a resource to a knowledge-based economy and identified enablers including those to address the "innovation chasm" between research results and socioeconomic outcomes. An instrument to address financing and fragmentation of funding instruments was acknowledged as well as an Intellectual Property Management Office to enhance protection of intellectual property rights and to develop national capacity to manage technology licensing and commercialisation. Significant progress has been made, including the establishment of the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), tasked with, amongst other functions, funding technology development and commercialisation.

Furthermore, August 2010 saw the enactment of the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (IPR Act), which established the National Intellectual Property Management Office as the office responsible for implementation of the IPR Act through a combination of compliance monitoring, advisory functions and financial support. The IPR Act legislatively mandates all institutions (the 26 higher education institutions [HEI] and 11 schedule 1 [to the IPR Act] institutions including the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the National Health Laboratory Service, the Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa, MINTEK, as well as the Medical Research Council) to have an Office of Technology Transfer (OTT), which must ensure the effective management of the intellectual property (IP) within their institutions.

IP transactions concluded have increased significantly over the period with institutions receiving, on average, R32.9 million per year in IP transaction revenue. The majority of IP transactions yield less than 000 per year. This figure is in line with international norms with most big institutions, including Michigan University of Technology and Stanford University, large licensing income coming from a couple of "big hits". Also worth noting is the fact that start-up companies formed per year have more than trebled between 2009 and 2014 with the total number of full-time personnel employed in these companies, originating from HEIs, between 2010 and 2014 having grown by 29%, from 238 to 308.

Research was conducted at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology for the development of a supplement rich in the correct levels of omega-3 fatty acids needed, for amongst others, brain functioning. Spinnler Benadè and Maretha Opperman developed and patented a health supplement called Omega Caro-E. Health Canada recently approved the product licence authorising the sale of Omega Caro-E in Canada, with revenue having accrued to CPUT. CPUT has subsequently formulated Omega Caro-E Kidz, which is an emulsion for pre-school children who are not able to swallow capsules, as well as NUTRI Caro-E which is a nutritional supplement premix that can be added in various applications, such as fortified biscuits, porridge and peanut butter. This is a clear indication of research which can have economic and social benefits.

By: MR MMBONENI MUOFHE
(Deputy Director-General: Technology Innovation)

science & technology
Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

PESSIMISM IS A PROBLEM

By ***Ben Turok***

The ANC seems anxious to leave all Jacob Zuma's wrongdoing in the hands of the courts. Clearly it does not want to engage in public condemnation of his actions as President to avoid schisms in the movement and antagonize his supporters in the run up to the general election.

However, this does not preclude due recognition of the harm Zuma's rule did to the morale of the country. Especially in his last years as President, pessimism and cynicism became pervasive as South Africans all over the country came to doubt any prospect of improvement in the economy, our education system, the capability to control crime, and so much else. Race relations deteriorated as Black labels were hurled around but the solutions to so many problems

So it is quite remarkable that the election of Cyril Ramaphosa seems to have been a turning of the tide against defeatism. It is early days indeed and there is much caution in the positive comments being made about his performance, but it has to be acknowledged that his speeches hark back to the traditions and values of the Tambo and Mandela eras.

In those days, ANC members and supporters were proud of their identity and there was worldwide appreciation of what the anti-apartheid struggle stood for. And this positive mood was hugely reinforced in the first years of our democracy. It was astonishing to see how so many people, including former segregationists, rallied behind Mandela, wanting to give this grand social experiment a chance.

Looking back, one is reminded how important it is for a nation to believe in itself and espouse values that transcend the immediate concerns of

Ben Turok

its citizens. Indeed we have seen many countries rising to deal with major challenges, whether they be a call to war or dealing with some natural calamity, if such a call is seen to be deserving of support. We have seen such moments in our own history and the Mandela moment was but one.

The point is that in a country faced with such serious schisms as ours, the decline in belief in possible remedies becomes a huge problem and is self-defeating. This is Zuma's legacy. Even though all this lies in the realm of psychology and philosophy, it takes on material form and has lasting effects.

Post 1994 most South Africans understood and accepted that the historically disadvantaged had to be given special recognition and support in every way. Apartheid was a dirty word and new social and economic relations were on the agenda.

But slowly this just and equitable principle became distorted to reflect personal greed and hunger for power. Individual interests displaced public interests and it seemed to matter less and less how individuals climbed the ladder to wealth and status.

It is going to take enormous effort and wisdom for Ramaphosa and his associates to turn this around.

We see a similar phenomenon in Trump's America. His flamboyance, his disregard for formal process, his erratic decision-taking, all undermine long traditions of democracy, even if they were deeply flawed.

And so the US is reeling from idiosyncratic conduct by its all too powerful President, and its sense of national purpose is failing. Unfortunately, the disarray in the wake of Trump's performance has yet to find a positive expression.

We are left to reflect on the fate of nations which lose their rudder and moral compass. South Africa has immense problems. That is a given, but it has shown that it can also rise to the occasion behind good leadership. As it is said, we live in interesting times. NA

A TRIBUTE TO WINNIE MADIKIZELA MANDELA

New Agenda joins the nation in grieving at the passing of Winnie Madikizela Mandela. We are all deeply affected by this unexpected development and find some consolation in the huge demonstration of affection for her as we record her special contribution to our freedom.

But we also reflect on the unfairness in this belated recognition which ought to have occurred in her lifetime. Why is it that our society was so begrudging in its appreciation while she was alive and deserved to know that her heroism was properly recognised?

That her suffering and deprivation was exceptional is now widely known, as is her courageous resistance to intimidation and persecution. Much has been written and said about that in the last few weeks and does not need belabouring here.

WAS IT ALL IN VAIN?

By Dikgang Moseneke

The writer is a South African judge and former Deputy Chief Justice of South Africa. A former member of the Pan Africanist Congress, he spent 10 years imprisoned on Robben Island. He was admitted as an attorney in 1978 and called to the Bar in 1983, forcing it to abolish its "whites-only" membership rule. Moseneke served on the technical committee that drafted the interim constitution and was Deputy Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission which conducted the first democratic elections.

Dikgang Moseneke

We reprint here an extract from Dikgang Moseneke's autobiography, My Own Liberator. It is a call to citizens to drive their development and that of their communities; to be their own liberators. He argues that those who become the authors of their destiny will have the ability to make the tender moguls impossible and limit the role of the political elite. He appeals to the young to chart a course away from consumerism and toward reconfiguring the social structure that is stunting growth. First published in 2016, this piece is re-published in New Agenda because of its remarkable foresight and relevance to South Africa's current social and economic crisis.

Was our democratic transition all in vain? There is no single and simple answer. I choose to start with the good news. We have managed a treacherous transition and set up ground rules that underscore our democratic ethos, public morality and governance. We have inducted a representative democracy premised on proportional representation and a closed party list. We have established and maintained a functional democratic state with all the customary markers, including multi-partyism, regular elections, and rule of law and separation of powers. Our parliamentary system functions more certainly at an elective than at a participatory level. In some parts of our country, local government functions and renders the basic services the law commands.

Our courts are independent and effective. Our institutions meant to police our democracy – the auditor general, the electoral commission, the human rights commission and the public protector, to name a few – have teeth and often they do bite. We boast a robust civil society that takes up social causes around just about every social concern: for instance, campaigns on land inequity, on defence of the constitution and the rule of law, on private and public corruption, on electoral probity, on HIV/AIDS and access to health care, on gendered violence, on access to quality education, on free expression and access to public information, on funding of higher education, on public transport and road

The absence of a social pact was a far-reaching omission given the inequality embedded in the social structure of the country at the start of the transition.

tolls and, most recently, on the use of taxes. We have more than our fair share of open and public dissent and street protests, mainly by the unemployed and poor and worker formations. We have a strong labour movement, although now hobbled by economic stagnation and the large-scale laying-off of workers.

Our press is free, prying, fearless and unbending. None of our citizens has been jailed only for political, religious or other beliefs. Our levels of violent crime are tormenting, but we are not pitted against one another in an open civil war or genocide or terrorist attacks. Our transition has indeed yielded a measure of democratic dividend.

But now here comes the bad news – the wrinkles of our democratic transition. When the constitution was negotiated, the parties skirted around the need for social change. The negotiators did not stare in the eye the historical structural inequality in the economy. There was no pact on how to achieve the equality and social justice the constitution promised. Instead, the constitution imposed qualified duties on the state to facilitate access to social goods such as health, housing, water, education and social grants. But these socio-economic entitlements were premised on and limited to state transfers as and when funds were available. On the face of it, the protections were praiseworthy and they promised a state-sponsored reduction of poverty, but in practice socio-economic rights did not speak to how to restructure the economy in a way that rendered it more productive and inclusive.

The absence of a social pact was a far-reaching omission given the inequality embedded in the social structure of the country at the start of the transition. I am, however, not debating whether at the time of negotiations, given the balance of forces, a radical social pact was feasible. Short of an outright military

> **. . . the real guardians of our democracy are the citizenry.**

conquest, probably it was not. I am simply observing the plain fact that an existing and insular economic arrangement survived the transfer of political power. This simply meant ownership of productive assets (plainly including investment to grow the economy) and management prowess by and large remained unaltered.

In a compelling stud[illegible] *Manifesto for Social Change*, the auth[illegible] provide a graphic representation of the social structure our country inherited. The economic elite continues to own productive assets and to control skilled management; they are focused on maximising profits and retaining ownership. The political elite remains propertyless. Their prime strength is control of the state and its revenues. Their consumption is funded by the state coffers and not by profits garnered from productive activity or investments. The political elite seeks to retain power by increasing the consumption of the middle class and of the underclass of the poor and unemployed, on whose votes they depend to retain political control. But the political elite cannot themselves create jobs or invest in or expand the economy. They must earn the collaboration of the economic elite to do so. While the blue-collar workers form part of the formal economy, they, as the economy stagnates, face ongoing retrenchment, loss of membership and loss of influence on the political power elite.

On the other end of the scale, the underclass has neither productive assets nor management skills. They operate outside the formal economy. They are unskilled, unemployed, poor and dependent on social grants. Social grants, like the salaries and benefits of the political elite, are state transfers only for consumption and not for investment or expansion of the economy. The only assets of the underclass are large numbers and their vote. The authors explain that intermittently the underclass, and so, too, blue-collar workers, resort to violence to express social grievances. The state, in turn, responds with counter-violence to quell the uprisings. That, the authors argue, explains in great part the unfortunate incidents such as the Marikana shootings of August 2012 and other acts of violence on protesters by the police.

After a cutting analysis, the same authors seek to explain the present economic stagnation by reference to a collection of causal and interrelated factors, the first being rapidly declining manufacturing. As they put it, the production machine has gone quiet. This deindustrialisation of society must be contrasted with accelerated private household and state consumption. They suggest that the country and its people are caught up in a capitalism of consumption rather than of production.

The second factor would be declining capital investment spawned by the reluctance of investors to commit to what they perceive as relative insecurity caused, in part, by an uncertain regulatory framework, misgovernance and corruption, and the ironic risk of deepening social inequality. The commodity-boom retreat is also cited as having a material part in the economic stagnation. The low growth, in turn, has led to growing government debt; blue-collar workers losing jobs; one in four able-bodied people being unemployed; and one in two youth unemployed. The authors conclude that stagnation inevitably leads to the onset of instability pushed back now mainly by ››

government transfers to the unemployed and poor.

This is a terrifying diagnosis. I am not an economist, but this time around, although not always, I follow what they are saying. The spectre of a stagnant economy yielding widening social inequality, stubborn unemployment, and a growing and poorer underclass is not only stressful but also deeply at odds with our notions of a just society. This threatens to wipe out our democratic dividend. Of course, the rule-of-law framework imposed by the constitution is important. It continues to represent the minimum agreement and common convictions of our people. It has drawn heavily from and is well aligned with minimum international standards of human rights and human decency. It has created a valuable framework for holding the ruling elite to act within the law and in the best interest of the people.

It requires us to weed out all corruption, and wasteful and unauthorised expenditure at all levels of the state and by and within independent private capital. Patronage and inept and incompetent public appointments, corrupt tender practices and so-called state capture all strike at the heart of fundamental features of our law, our democratic ethos and the mortal fight to equalise society.

The people, courts of law, civil society and all democratic institutions ought to ensure meticulous compliance by all, and by the political elite in particular. In all this, democratic accountability is all-important. Not the judiciary, not the public protector, not other constitutional watchdogs, but the people are the final arbiters of who, how and for how long a party or person may act in their name and in their stead in public office. I am stating the obvious: the real guardians of our democracy are the citizenry. In the space that representative democracy affords, citizens ought not to hesitate, if warranted, to hold the feet of any ruling elite to the fire. Ordinarily, democracy is premised on insecurity of tenure. Elected representatives hold office only at the pleasure of the people (provided the electoral system is credible). For that reason, regular elections and a limited term of office are vital features of democratic accountability. They are the means by which the people and not the political elite govern.

“ . . . the national conversation, particularly with the youth, must urgently concentrate on what is hurting the people of our country most – economic inequality and stagnation.

And yet often on our African continent leaders subvert popular accountability by evading limited terms and staying in power for decades. Some go so far as to fiddle with the electoral process. Many overturn the democratic prism by making the people subservient to the leader. In that low scenario, personal and public agency of the people wilts, economic growth stalls and the political elite feed off the only material resource – national treasury, which is made up mostly of loans, foreign aid and meagre revenues.

Going back to our constitutional arrangements, it is well and good to have the near-perfect normative standards, but they are not a panacea. Even if they were, they are sometimes observed in the breach. So the normative standards tell us little about how to achieve inclusive growth in a way that overcomes structural economic inequality and resultant low growth. This must surely mean that the national conversation, particularly with the youth, must urgently concentrate on what is hurting the people of our country most – economic inequality and stagnation.

Should we not be pointing our young people to some obvious and burning questions? For example, how, within the discipline of our constitution, do we collectively reconfigure the social structure of our country? What structural changes to the economy are necessary to create a wider spread of access to productive existing and new assets? Where would the access to and use of land be located in that debate? Closer to home, and crucially, how might the unemployed and poor underclass escape the constraints of capital and management skill and join economic production? What stance should the working class assume to push back retrenchments and increase their numbers? Is it true that we need to industrialise again? If so, how do we get the production machine to hum again – and sustainably? Put more simply, what plans do we need to create new captains of industry, entrepreneurs, new jobs and new economic output? How do we shift the national paradigm from consumption to savings, investment and manufacture? How do we, in time, convert the consumption of social grants to production and excess? What should the ideal regulatory framework be within which domestic and foreign direct investment would be ratcheted up?

The next complex question is by which fiat should the economic debate be kick-started again and in earnest? Should all social classes be drawn around the table to fashion a restructuring plan? I can almost hear the murmurs saying that all this has been tried before. Yes, but it is far

more urgent now than ever before in the 22 years of democracy South Africa has had. The political elite alone are unlikely to achieve that fiat despite their perennial claim that they can fix the economy and create jobs. History has shown us differently.

The economy, not the political elite, yields jobs. We should also disabuse young people of the fallacy that joining and worshipping the political elite is the only valuable path to personal reward or national growth. Their campaigns must refocus from a bid to access political favours to productive roles that will in time reduce the social distance and deficit our nation is staring in the face. We must shift the paradigm away from political party bigotry and contestation towards models that emphasise hard-nosed economic skills. Businesses matter. New goods and services are primal. Economic activity has everything to do with destruction of the social burden. Our youth must look to themselves alone or collectively to enter economic activity. We must again remind the youth of the indispensable place of learning and acquiring useful skills. Let us restore hard work and determination to their rightful places.

But above all, we must assure our youth that honesty matters. Integrity, particularly in public life, in business, at the workplace and in all social interactions, is indispensable. Truthfulness and honest dealing in the public space must never be sacrificed at the altar of convenience or self-benefit.

The better social ethic is not always to demand and demand that one's needs are met but rather to go out there and help to find real, fair and lasting solutions.

Each young person must search for her or his chosen field and then work it hard. In time, this will add to the domestic product. No true success comes easily. Young people must strive for a day of decent work, whether this is in the formal sector or, even more importantly, outside it. Let's urge our young citizens along a path of newness, of creativity and of self-reliance. The youth must shun patronage. They must turn their backs on mindless consumption and instant gratification. I urge them to embrace the difficult fact that resources, whether private or public, are scarce. Bluntly, beyond the defined public obligations of the state, nobody is entitled to have their private needs fed or to being dissatisfied when they don't get this and more. The better social ethic is not always to demand and demand that one's needs are met but rather to go out there and help to find real, fair and lasting solutions. To borrow from the Great Trek pioneers, although in a different context, who reminded themselves: 'n *boer* maak a plan. Go out there. Make a plan.

For instance, it is vital that we introduce a fresh ethic on how we make space for the ever-growing underclass of the unemployed and poor to gain access to productive resources. Should the state not devise models in which homeless people, appropriately supported with public resources, build their own homes, clinics, roads and public facilities? Why can't the model be extended to planting their own trees and producing their own food? Why can't we have, with appropriate and patient training and financial support, villagers building their own boreholes, dams, piped water, sewerage, roads and irrigation facilities? Why is it necessary always to call for state tenders on areas of development well suited to be executed by the people who are

. . . it is vital that we introduce a fresh ethic on how we make space for the ever-growing underclass of the unemployed and poor.

otherwise jobless and dependent on social grants? When we do this, are we not, in effect, directing resources to the already productive class and only deepening the hopelessness of those on social margins?

What I am suggesting is that, carefully and thoughtfully, social grants could be converted from consumption to productive spend. Similarly, a reduced state salary bill could also be directed towards development. We must think hard about how we free our marginalised people from only waiting and waiting for the delivery of something by the state. Let the tender moguls step aside and let the people develop their countryside and informal urban settlements. Why not? It would surely go some way to restoring their sense of self-worth. In my parlance, the people must again move towards their personal and public agency.

You may have sensed that I am pleading that our country finds the ingenuity to resolve its social injustice, because no one should be called upon to fight two revolutions in one lifetime. It comes back to my swansong: each one of us is his or her own liberator and together people are their own liberators.

God bless.

New Agenda thanks the publisher of 'My Own Liberator' for permission to reproduce this extract from the Epilogue. NA

TRANSPORT CRISIS PARALYSING SOUTH AFRICA

By ***Tony Ehrenreich***

The writer is Provincial Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu).

Tony Ehrenreich

Is there an explanation for the paralysis of the rail passenger service in Cape Town? The impact of this crisis is felt by all residents – employers and employees, students and teachers – with huge losses to the economy and well-being of commuters. Mr Ehrenreich gives us a ~~hard hitting~~ analysis ~~on~~ the possible causes of the failures in the public transport system. While he focuses on Cape Town, his comments mirror the situation in the rest of the country.

The public transport situation in South Africa is plunging the working poor into chaos. They have been placed far away from industrial and commercial centres where they work. For this dysfunctional arrangement, one of apartheid's worst legacies, they are paying a prohibitive price. There is a systemic transport crisis in most areas of the country, but we reflect here on its manifestation in Cape Town and the Western Cape.

Public services to some extent reflect the levels of social solidarity in a society. When citizens pool their resources to provide a public good they engender cohesion and form bonds based on common purpose. It is one of the defining features of the social development of societies as they go through stages of material progress. Failure in the provision of public service often results in the "social injury" of its citizens. The public transport system in South Africa should be built on this principle and developed progressively by the state.

The crisis that exists, however, is not confined to rail transport, but is a general crisis of all the modes of private and public transport. Besides improving the mobility of people, public transport has to undo the apartheid spatial divide that separates South Africa's population on racial and class lines.

The following are some of the features of public transport as it relates to the greater Western Cape and Cape Town communities:

RURAL TRANSPORT

Rural transport is virtually non-existent with people having to take the occasional taxi or catch a lift on the back of a truck. There is no regulated subsidised public transport in the rural areas of the Western Cape. Sadly there is no pressure on the Provincial and National governments to provide a better level of transport services in rural areas.

TAXIS

The taxi system is inadequately regulated, with safety and security issues an ongoing nightmare for commuters. There is also no regulation on the times that taxis should provide a service. Taxis, therefore, only run when there are sufficient commuters on board to make the trip profitable. The bonus system that is currently in use results in drivers speeding and disobeying traffic rules, which are a leading cause of the high level of road fatalities in the country. Intra-operator violence and extortion by gangsters for protection in most areas also results in loss of life and limb of commuters. A better system would be to have taxis that are driver-owned and licenced which would give them a sense of ownership and encourage compliance with regulations and traffic rules. The concentration of

ownership in the industry needs to be ended.

THE BUS SERVICE

Bus services have scarcely expanded into the new townships that have emerged since 1994. National and Provincial governments have subsidised bus services only in certain areas where it is deemed profitable. The other areas are then left for taxis to provide occasional transport and often these are furthest away from city centres. This mode of operation is characteristic of the bus services that have been operating in predominantly black areas.

The new rapid transport service has seen municipalities cherry pick the areas they want to be served. In Cape Town, the ~~My City~~ buses operate 90% of their services in the historically white areas, with the adjacent townships being recently included into the system. There is a perception that ~~My City~~ is a Rolls Royce bus service – with large expenditure allocated to a service that will be rolled out in a limited number of areas. The rest of the township areas, such as Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain, will have to wait for services sometime in the distant future.

~~My City~~ has the most attractive bus stops in the higher income areas, where there is landscaping and all the trimmings of a world class city. These high-quality facilities are absent in the townships. National government has not defined the areas or stipulated other criteria for the ~~My City~~ roll out, which gives municipalities broad lee-way to advance their particular political agendas, with poorer people invariably being treated to second-class service.

PRIVATE CARS

The level of congestion in the City of Cape Town has led to a situation where road networks are completely gridlocked during peak hours. One explanation for this state of the traffic is that city

authorities have not developed road networks to keep pace with housing developments. So in the new housing suburbs there is already a shortage of public transport and people are forced to use private transport. This perpetuates the apartheid legacy of long commuting for those who live furthest away from centres of economic activity.

South Africa was notorious for having one of the longest commuting distances in the world under apartheid. Despite the creation of dedicated lanes on major routes for buses and taxis travelling into city centres to get workers there faster, these dedicated lanes are not available for the return journey, leaving commuters stuck in traffic for extended travelling times. Besides the economic impact and the effect on the quality of life of workers, it dramatically cuts into the time that parents have to spend with their families and exacerbates other socially dysfunctional forces at work.

THE NON-MOTORISED TRANSPORT LANES

These lanes are generally confined to the wealthier areas of the city and are mainly used for recreational purposes. The working class areas that need these dedicated lanes have a patchwork of lanes which increases the risk of accidents. This is another sign of municipalities rolling out delivery to secure political objectives, rather than responding to the most urgent needs. The funds would have served a greater and urgent need for mass transport in townships.

THE RAIL SYSTEM

The rail system in Cape Town is the backbone of the public transport system as it provides subsidised transport to the majority of commuters. It is also meant to be the fastest and most effective mode of public transport moving the largest number of people. There has, however, been systematic under-investment in the rail system by ~~Metro Rail~~ and the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa) over the last few years. In 2000, when Cosatu filed a section 77 of the Labour Relations Act against ~~Metro Rail~~, the rail service was already overcrowded by 80%. Even though ~~Metro Rail~~ was obliged to conduct regular surveys on overcrowding, these were never updated. So the levels of overcrowding that existed, and led to fatal accidents, were never monitored and addressed. The safety and security of commuters was compromised by the lack of compliance with Prasa's own codes of good practice. The coaches ➤➤

at that stage were, on average, 30 years old and urgent revamps and new infrastructure was required.

The case that went to the Constitutional Court in 1996 about the 2001 murder of Juan Van Minnen who was stabbed to death on a train reaffirmed the operational obligations that ~~Metro Rail~~ had. The court said that the safety and security of the trains had to be improved. The court further said that ~~Metro Rail~~ must ensure that access and exit from the trains are tightly controlled, to ensure the safety of passengers. The obligation of ~~Metro Rail~~ to compensate people for injury and deaths on the trains was also established. After wasting millions of rands on the court cases that reaffirmed their own standard operating procedures, Prasa/~~Metro Rail~~ refused to address the challenges under the pretext of the issue of costs.

Since that court case, safety has declined even further, with more deaths and injuries recorded. Vandalism of trains has also increased because security could not be raised to a satisfactory level to address the threat. The damage to trains has seen the number of sets reduced from 109 to 89 in the system. The size of the train sets were reduced from 10 to 8 coaches on many of the lines. Under-spending on maintenance and infrastructure led to breakdowns that cascaded across the entire system. This meant that the system was effectively operating at 50% capacity on a daily basis.

The commuters who depend on the train service for their means of transport were left stranded and out of pocket. The monthly or weekly tickets they bought on the basis of the ~~Metro Rail~~ tariffs and schedules were practically unusable. With delays, cancellations and overcrowding, commuters had to abandon the trains in favour of buses and taxis. This makes ~~Metro Rail~~ criminally liable for deceiving commuters by selling a service schedule that was non-existent. Is ~~Metro Rail~~ not obligated to compensate commuters for not providing a service they had paid for?

This system has been paralysed by bad management and the threat from unknown sources intent on destroying the infrastructure. Management at various levels are at war with each other and this significantly undermines the focus on running an effective service. The lack of intelligence to determine if it is just rampant vandalism, or an orchestrated plot to destroy the system to benefit other transport providers, is quite apparent. If this modus operandi continues, the service will grind to a halt and when this happens all the assets – from the cabling to tracks – will be stripped, never to be restored.

FREIGHT RAIL

This part of the transport system has seen significant investment in infrastructure and maintenance from the state to service the coal and iron ore mines. The safety standards are impeccable and no expense is spared to ensure that the system runs 24/7. Is this again because it serves the interests of the elite in South Africa, both black and white?

WHAT ABOUT SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS (SAA)?

This service was one of the best in the world but became a huge cost to tax payers with continuous cash injections from Treasury. The high- and middle-income segments of society comprise most of the commuters on SAA, which has impressive safety standards and facilities at the airports. The fleet is one of the most modern but the enterprise has been systematically looted by corrupt officials and ruined by inept managers who make political, rather than business and developmental, decisions.

The Department of Transport and Prasa have been absent throughout the period of decline of public transport. This is a serious case of bad political management and oversight, with decisions driven by self-interest, rather than the transport needs of the most deserving in society. The boards of all the enterprises/parastatals involved in public transport are alleged to have been given contracts to politically connected individuals. It is fair to say that decisions about the sourcing of goods and services is driven by who can benefit, rather than what is required. So we see the wrong trains being bought and huge kickbacks in different forms flowing to key officials of the parastatals. The phenomenon of selling off inventory to score bonuses became standard practice in these enterprises, so the balance sheet looks good, but the business has been run into the ground.

CONCLUSION

The entire public transport system is dysfunctional, with rail the most severely affected. Urgent action is required to address the crisis if it is to be turned around. This must start, it seems, with political intervention: the complete removal of all officials and managers who were directly or indirectly involved in corruption or who were part of the leadership while corruption took place.

Second, technical expertise needs to be restored in the system to avoid outsourcing goods and services from politically connected companies who are the main beneficiaries of a dysfunctional system. Third, public confidence in the service must be restored. This could best be done through an interface between management and commuters or their representatives from civil society organisations. The principle that must underpin this, however, has to be the maintenance and expansion of public services through social solidarity, and developmental action from the State and its leadership. NA

DEVELOPMENTAL STATES, THE ROLE OF EXPERTS AND CAPE TOWN'S WATER CRISIS

By ***Mike Muller***

Mike Muller is a visiting Adjunct Professor at Wits University's School of Governance. He is a Professional and Chartered Engineer (SA and UK) and a Fellow of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering and the Water Institute. He was a member of South Africa's first National Planning Commission from 2010 to 2015.

Mike Muller

While most of our water supply is dependent on rainfall, Mike Muller points to several other factors that have contributed to the water crisis in Cape Town. Among these is the relationship of technical experts to politicians and wider society and the role that environmental activists have played in determining how water supply and demand has been managed.

A water crisis has been constructed in and for Cape Town that, in some respects, has been imaginary. The complete 'Day Zero' shutdown of supplies that had been predicted was not going to happen, despite two years of low rainfall (2015 & 2016) and one year of real drought (2017). It continues to be unlikely, even if nature inflicts a succession of similar years. It is a real possibility albeit of low probability.

On the other hand the crisis was real. Cape Town's Metro Municipality actively enforced restrictions on consumption which, in the city's more affluent suburbs, required citizens to spend a few months living like the majority of their compatriots. The city's summer consumption fell to below 600Ml/day (million litres) from previous summer maxima of up to 1200Ml/day. The shocked reaction to what national government described as 'the new normal' suggested that they failed to understand the irony. Nor was it evident that the drama occurred despite repeated advice to prepare for such events.

Wider restrictions on all users of the Western Cape Water Supply System (WCWSS) impacted on jobs and revenues in the region's agricultural economy. Tourism has also suffered after foreign media globalised the domestically manufactured myth that Cape Town could be the first city in the world to run out of water.

These events raise important questions. Are politicians, their officials and the broader society able to take timely and appropriate decisions about complex, long-term challenges? Whose voices are heard when decisions are ››

Whose voices are heard when decisions are taken, why are others ignored, and at what cost?

taken, why are others ignored, and at what cost? Have we understood the role of technical agencies in successful developmental states or simply abdicated responsibility to politicians to follow focus groups and lobbyists along the most immediately attractive path?

And why so little attention to the far worse circumstances endured regularly by far more of Capetonians' compatriots? 'Sunset clauses' in the 1996 Constitution give substantial autonomy to local government, a last bid by the outgoing Nationalist government to secure control of its constituencies' privileges (Cameron 2001), leaving many people hidden in the long shadow of sunset federalism. Yet, now that it is in trouble of its own making, Cape Town demands that national government should pay the cost. Has South Africa's urban elite come to terms with what it means to be part of the emerging urban Africa in this third decade of democracy?

COMPETING PERSPECTIVES ON DROUGHT'S IMPACT

Competing perspectives emerged about the management of what was characterised as a drought crisis. Domestic users were concerned about the way in which the pain of restrictions was distributed. Despite the stated (and objective) urgency of reducing the city's water consumption, some areas and activities were initially exempted from formal restrictions. While the business sector was exhorted to save water, it was not formally obliged to do so. Supply to central business districts, tourist facilities and large shopping centres continued.

Then there was agriculture. Some city dwellers were outraged to learn that farmers were still being allowed to draw water from the same system that supplied the city. Yet agriculture remains an important part of the regional economy. A sudden curtailment of agriculture would lead to serious financial losses and, potentially, many bankruptcies. Once orchards and vineyards die, it would take years to bring them back into production, if farmers were willing – and able – to make the investments needed. Meanwhile, at least 50 000 seasonal jobs were at immediate risk (Engineering News 2017). The region's winelands are also central to its tourism 'brand', supporting jobs and revenue across the hospitality sectors. So while city authorities wanted farmers to share the burden and reduce their consumption, they did not suggest that their supplies be cut entirely. Western Cape farmers have already led the way in water use efficiency, because it was the only way to sustain and expand their businesses rather than shoulder any social responsibility.

Back in the city, while attention focused on suburban restrictions, it was noted that residents in many poorer communities were accustomed to living on less than 50 litres per person per day, if only because of the burden of fetching and carrying water. For them, little changed. 'Day Zero' plans were to cut off suburban households and provide water at standpipes. Supplies in poorer 'high density' areas would be maintained in part because many water saving interventions had already been made in places like the Cape Flats which are ideally suited to water saving through pressure reductions (McKenzie and Wegelin 2009). The clear message from these communities was that 'we have already saved, now it is your turn'.

Nonetheless, residents with links to the rural areas of former Bantustans recognised that they were still better off in the city. In many rural municipalities, the reliable availability of safe household water supplies has been declining, an anecdotal trend confirmed by household surveys (StatsSA 2016). Even where there is water supply infrastructure, it is not uncommon for weeks and even months to pass without any water coming from the taps. This problem is, typically, most acute in hot weather when water is most needed.

Cape Town residents have thus remained a privileged community in the wider South Africa. These different perspectives on the same societal event beg for a more careful interpretation. And they offer a lens through which to view the dynamics of the wider society as well as to understand the particular challenges for developing countries of managing the complex systems on which 21st century cities depend.

COLONIAL PREVARICATION MEETS POST-COLONIAL SOCIAL PREFERENCES

Cape Town has been here before. A century ago, the city was running out of water as demand exceeded the supplies from springs on Table Mountain. "Will it come to this?" asked a Boonzaier cartoon in 1918, showing a queue of (white) people with buckets in front of the City Hall. Local village councils were dithering about whether to cooperate to build the Steenbras Dam or one at Wemmershoek. Most of them had amalgamated into a single City of Cape Town administration in 1913, largely to deal with the water challenge (Wall 2017). But the debate continued for some years and construction was further delayed by a shortage of imported materials following World War One. The small first phase of the Steenbras Dam was only completed in 1921; by 1928, it already had to be substantially enlarged.

The city's growing population, together with the region's expanding agriculture, required continued supply expansions. To meet these needs, national government completed the Voelvlei Dam north of the city in 1952 and the Theewaterskloof Dam in 1979. Both lay outside the city limits, serving the wider area covered by the WCWSS. There was less controversy about these dams which, initially, primarily

served government's farming constituency and were funded from government's budget.

But old habits reasserted themselves with the new actors of the 1990s. Technical studies of the region's WCWSS had indicated that, if there was a drought, there would be significant shortages. The Skuifraam Dam on the Berg River was identified as the most cost-effective intervention to reinforce the supply. But, by the time the project was ready for implementation, it had become controversial. Then Minister, Professor Kader Asmal, was also chairperson of the World Commission on Dams whose secretariat was based in the city. Allowing a major dam to be built would affect his standing as chair of what was nominally an objective process (although it was dominated by anti-dam NGOs). So Asmal demanded that the city undertake substantial conservation measures before he would approve construction.

Permission for the dam to be built was finally granted by new Minister Ronnie Kasrils. But even after Cabinet approval and a funding agreement was reached between the city and national government, there were still objections. Dynamised by the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, a South African Civil Society Water Caucus called for the Minister to "prohibit construction of new large dams (e.g. Skuifraam) until full demand-side measures are undertaken" (Bond 2004). Court action was threatened to stop construction. Fortunately for Cape Town's citizens, a minor drought and resulting supply restrictions in the following year weakened the resolve of the objectors and the dam was eventually completed in 2009. (Ironically, during the current crisis, some of the objectors now reluctantly agree that the dam has saved the city from a real calamity.)[1]

Disputes about large infrastructure projects are common, particularly with large public water projects where the immediate need is not obvious and the project raises policy issues. The specific concerns and the parties involved inevitably change over time, reflecting changing, often ephemeral, social dynamics and preferences. On the Berg River Dam, social movement campaigners allied with the region's strong environmental conservation organisations. Agriculture sought simply to maintain its existing allocations, not seeking any additional water (although the project improved the reliability of their supplies). Meanwhile the wider citizenry stayed on the sidelines, relying on their municipality to do whatever was necessary to sustain reliable services, except in Franschoek where they lobbied for the jobs and housing benefits offered by the project.

Whatever the drivers, these dynamics create potentially disastrous delays and invite sub-optimal decisions. Most politicians focus on short-time horizons, at best from one five-year electoral cycle to the next. But major infrastructure projects usually take much longer from conception to inauguration – two decades in the case of the Berg River Dam. And, because of the decadal time scale, important lessons are not learnt, as Cape Town has shown. How can public policy successfully achieve long-term goals in such a short-term environment?

VULNERABILITY: THE RESULT OF NATURAL VARIABILITY AND HUMAN (IN)ACTION

Procrastination is particularly dangerous in water resources management because it allows vulnerabilities to grow, unobserved, until an event like the current drought occurs. Managing supply from natural systems is effectively about managing the risks created by climate variability and, specifically, variable rainfall. South Africa's rainfall varies dramatically from place to place as well as across and between seasons. The flow in rivers and streams is even more variable because the conditions of the landscape determine how much rainfall runs off or seeps into the land. Aside from generic wet and dry seasons, these variations are unpredictable. Rainfall cannot be forecast accurately from one week to the next. River flows are even more uncertain and the threat of climate change introduces further unknowns although the evidence is that the best way to prepare the water sector for climate change is to strengthen its ability to manage 'normal' climate variability.

The engineering professions, hydrologists, climate scientists and statisticians use historic data on rainfall, river flows and underground resources to model a range of possible water futures. Using historic variability data, they make thousands of simulations of possible sequences of rainfall and river flow to estimate the probability of extreme droughts and floods. From this they calculate the reliability of supply from a given system. Different user sectors have different risk tolerances. Typically, agriculture can accept restricted supplies once every ten years; urban users, once in fifty years; critical sectors such as electricity generation aim for a one in two hundred year risk. ››

Future demands for urban water are equally complicated to estimate since they are driven by many factors. Population numbers and household incomes are important but so too are parameters such as the physical size of household plots. Municipal water supply tariffs may affect consumption in lower income households but not in those with higher incomes. Water efficiency measures such as low flush toilets also make a difference but have a slow impact because, usually, they are only installed in new houses. And changes in peoples' water use habits are hard to predict.

A further critical dimension of water demand is the efficiency of management by the water suppliers themselves. Non-revenue water, water that is not metered as well as water lost to leakage before it reaches consumers' premises, varies from a best of around 15% to over 50% in smaller municipalities (McKenzie, Siqalaba and Wegelin 2012). But, while potential savings can be estimated, predicting organisational performance is often guess work. However, better management of water used in public institutions can often make an immediate difference.

Given estimates of future demands, supply options can be identified – South African practice describes this as a 'reconciliation' process. Options include both infrastructure to augment supplies, such as new dams, measures to reduce demand such as leak control or intermediate solutions, such as the reuse of wastewater. The recommended choice and sequencing of supply options is usually based on their unit costs. These methods have proven to be robust. Where the recommendations have been followed, as in the country's critical Vaal River System, needs have been met. Where they have been ignored, as currently in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, shortages have been experienced.

For Cape Town, the 2007 reconciliation study recommended three interventions be implemented by 2015 to get the city to 2030: Increased diversions from the Berg River to Voelvlei Dam; development of the groundwater of the Table Mountain Group aquifer; and then reuse of wastewater. Those perspectives have remained consistent over time. In 1970, the city's longer term dependence on water reuse and desalination was already recognised. In 1986 it was stated that by 2007, the city would have to consider the utilisation of groundwater, reuse of wastewater and desalination. In 2007, the timeline for these was extended to 2015. In 2012, the National Development Plan recommended a programme of major water resource investment projects, including "Western Cape water-reuse and groundwater projects, which are to be completed by 2017"[2]. In 2013 these recommendations were repeated but not accepted by the City (Muller 2017a). All the options mentioned are now being executed with great urgency.

SCARCITY CONSTRUCTED AT THE POLITICAL INTERFACE BETWEEN CITIZENS AND TECHNICIANS

The technical recommendations for Cape Town proved to be remarkably accurate. But why were they not translated into collective action? Is it just an inevitable hazard of democracy? Can such mishaps be afforded or avoided?

The cost of earlier interventions would have been substantially less than the cost of dealing with the resulting shortages. Since water projects will not be fully used unless a 'worst case' rainfall scenario occurs, such investments are best considered as insurance. The 'peril' insured is the threat of water shortages; the finance charge is effectively an insurance premium. On this basis, early investments to augment reliable supplies from the WCWSS would have been fully justified. A rough estimate, based on published data, is that

- R1 billion invested in 2015, annual finance cost = +/-R70 million
- Investment delayed to 2022, total savings = R490 million
- Direct cost of water shortages = R2.5 billion, and rising.

So, while the city saved R500 million by not investing in 2015, it has already incurred direct costs (revenue loss and cost of emergency works) that is five times that. In addition, indirect costs include loss of business income and damage to the city's tourism brand. Yet cost was an explicit consideration for city leadership. The councillor responsible stated in April 2017 that "in our context, it is not practical to ring-fence billions of rand for the possibility of a drought that might not come to pass" (Limberg 2017). And, since the city was already in the grip of (still relatively mild) restrictions, she added that "it is impractical to fast-track supply schemes of sufficient scale quickly enough to compensate for a drought". These statements illustrate, at the very least, a failure to understand the nature of water management challenges.

This elementary failure highlights the gulf between the world of practitioner and politician and the cost it imposes on citizens. It raises questions about the role of technical experts in public management (Muller 2017b). Literature about effective developmental states emphasises the importance of ensuring that technocrats are effectively 'embedded' in public management systems with sufficient autonomy to do their jobs (Evans 2008). Perhaps because the technical cadre in South Africa is still predominantly white and from the *ancien regime*, they are not 'embedded' and it has been easy to ignore them. But while this may be a general problem, it cannot easily be applied to the case of

Cape Town under an administration led by the Democratic Alliance.

This points to two wider issues, the societal rejection of the expert and the influence of external lobbies. Many environmental movements in Europe and North America vigorously oppose the construction of new infrastructure, advocating the management of demand and greater reliance on eco-system services (see, for instance, Palmer et al 2015). As illustrated on the Berg River project, this narrative has been adopted by South African environmental activists who are particularly active and influential in Cape Town. They must share responsibility for the city's failure to act appropriately and timeously.

While there is ample evidence of over-investment in the developed countries of the north, where populations are stable if not actually declining, the south faces huge challenges. Sub-Saharan Africa's urban populations are expected to grow by 720 million people by 2050 (United Nations 2014). It is going to require huge investment – and innovation and discipline – to meet their bare minimum requirements of water supply and sanitation. Cape Town (and South Africa) is not immune from these trends and requires policies and programmes that respond to them. This was not recognised in Cape Town's decision making.

TOWARDS SOME CONCLUSIONS

Water management traditionally progresses by taking advantage of crises such as floods, droughts and cholera. Can Cape Town's current crisis contribute to a better understanding of the underlying technical challenges of achieving water security and encourage more effective action to address them? More ambitiously, does it support transformation of South Africa's still deeply distorted society? The evidence so far is not encouraging.

The cost of earlier interventions would have been substantially less than the cost of dealing with the resulting shortages.

Despite the direct economic losses in jobs and business revenues and the damage to the city's valuable tourism 'brand', there is as yet little evidence of systematic reflection by key political, business or wider civil society interest groups. Their responses to date appear to have been driven by narrow, short-term interests rather than a desire to understand and address the longer-term strategic issues.

At a political level, the city's administration sought to characterise the drought as 'unforseeable'. Yet, over the preceding decade, the planning models used were consistently recommending that investments be made to increase supplies. Even more damning was the city's own admission that its approach was guided by the view that it could not invest "... for the possibility of a drought that might not come to pass". But there was no divergence between political parties about the singular need for demand management. This position, initially promoted by national Minister Kader Asmal in the 1990s, was enthusiastically adopted by city authorities controlled by opposition parties and later claimed as their own.

Some responsibility must thus lie with the (formal and informal) environmental lobby groups that promoted this approach to the exclusion of other interventions. Their northern environmental narrative contributed to the marginalisation of other sources of technical advice. This is not out of keeping with the broader global trend to reject 'experts'. But in South Africa, the rejection of the expert is accentuated by the social divides that separate what is still a predominantly white technical class from the black majority. We are a long way from having the 'embedded technocrats' envisaged by Peter Evans as the core of effective 21st century developmental states. Meanwhile, environmental activists appeal to easier and emotionally attractive 'green' themes.

Yet Cape Town's total reliance on demand management was, politely put, poorly informed by the objective nature of the risks that this entailed or by an understanding of the drivers of growing demand. The continued promotion of essentially northern narratives also reflects a poor understanding of the challenges posed in the south by the combination of dramatic urbanisation overlain by climate variability and change, whose impacts are orders of magnitude greater than in Europe and North America.

This once again simply highlights the failure of better informed domestic voices to be heard. So another important lesson from Cape Town is to keep politicians distant from operational involvement in the management of complex systems that require a long-term perspective. Their role should rather be to ensure that the institutions responsible have clear mandates and the support needed to achieve them. The ANC has demonstrated the importance of this principle with Eskom's contribution to the national electricity crisis. Through its failure to manage water effectively in Cape Town, the DA has now demonstrated that this is a generic political issue.

However, party politics did contribute to the failures. The contestation between local DA politicians and the national ANC ››

government meant that the City ignored warnings from national planners while national government allowed them to do so. But these were acts of omission rather than commission. The political criticisms that ensued were largely narrow attempts to manage the political impact of the crisis, complicated by the internal politics playing out in the DA in Cape Town.

In two areas, the city has managed relatively well. The first has been widely recognised – management of water distribution and reduction of non-revenue water sets benchmarks for the rest of the country. Receiving less attention has been its efforts to protect the interests of poorer communities. This is unfortunate because, in most South African cities, these communities account for a substantial proportion of water use and managing their water use is challenging. In Gauteng, a relatively minor short-term supply crisis in 2016/7 saw supply to poor communities cut by administrative fiat, some for many days. So there is a particular need to learn lessons in this area.

Less creditable were the repeated suggestions by both the Provincial Premier and Deputy Mayor that national government's failure to build and pay for the necessary infrastructure had contributed to the problems (Yeld 2018). This was stated to be a budget issue. Yet, just outside the city, the Berg River Dam stood as a practical demonstration that all that was needed to fund infrastructure interventions was the city's signature on a supply contract.

In this appeal for national funds, to mitigate a largely self-made disaster, we see a reversion of the city to its sunset clause roots. The assumption remains that former colonial centres must be privileged even if their 'crisis' leaves them better off than many other communities. Missing from the narrative of city and provincial politicians was a recognition that the autonomy they enjoy was based on the assumption that they would themselves fund higher levels of service because they are so much more productive. Rather, we see demands for the city to be treated exceptionally, even as it enjoys and insists upon its autonomy. When poor judgement leads it into difficulty, and it has failed to take out insurance, it wants to be treated as part of the national collective, a public sector equivalent of 'privatise the benefits, nationalise the costs'.

Finally, one thread that runs through this review is the specific challenge of effectively harnessing technical expertise to support public policy decision-making in complex sectors. In pre-1994 South Africa, that expertise was produced through the training pipeline of government bursaries and post graduate 'pay-back' employment. The technical cadre learned and practiced together and even when they eventually dispersed into diverse institutions in the public and private sectors, they could draw on the social capital and trust of that shared background. Equally, the politics of the time meant that there was a greater degree of trust and inter-dependence between political and technical communities.

The weakening of South Africa's technical agencies has seen the training and development pipeline dry up, undermining what had once been a formidable community of practice. Societal trust has also been lost in the current conjuncture. The challenge for the third decade of South Africa's democracy must be to nurture supportive complementary relationships between the political classes and a new technical cadre. That could yet create the basis on which to engage with the wider society in search of the elusive democratic developmental state to which many of us still aspire.

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NOTES

1 Declaration of interest #1 – As Director General of the national Department of Water Affairs, the author was responsible for this process and signed the contracts for the project's implementation.

2 Declaration of interests #2: in 2011/12 the author drafted these lines in the NDP after consultation with DWS officials who said that there was no need to mention the Voelvlei diversion, because it was already 'on track'. NA

DECOLONISING HIGHER EDUCATION: POSTCOLONIAL THEORY AND THE INVISIBLE HAND OF STUDENT POLITICS

By ***Wahbie Long***

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Wahbie Long

The decolonisation movement that emerged from the 'Fees Must Fall' protests has become a home of hope for many seeking radical change in education. It has also, however, created unease among others, including students and faculty, as it has adopted a race-based rationale to press its demands. Prof Long walks us through the discipline of psychology to explain the ideas that guide this movement and why it has departed from the universal principles of a coalition of people working towards a just and humane society.

In the following reflections on the decolonisation of higher education, I have three objectives. First, I intend to analyse decolonisation discourse both theoretically and experientially. I do so partly on account of what I would call its viscerality but also because lived experience is an essential category of analysis in postcolonial theory. Drawing on theoretical resources as well as several encounters with proponents of decolonisation, I argue that the politics of the decolonisation movement is in some respects deeply conservative – hence the mischievous titular reference to an 'invisible hand' directing student politics today.

Second – and because of this conservatism – I assert, with reference to the discipline of psychology, that its proposed decolonisation is clearly an ideological venture. But I also suggest that our obsession with decolonisation discourse is to some extent unavoidable, involving what psychotherapists would call a repetition compulsion that cannot be relinquished until the original trauma of apartheid has been mastered. And third, I draw on Marxist literary theory to problematise the disciplinary order itself and, in so doing, focus attention on a paradox that lies at the heart of the decolonising project.

I have always been distrustful of the rhetoric of decolonisation. Our inability to define what we mean by 'decolonisation' not only consigns it to a realm of pointless obscurity but also – and more importantly – frustrates our cause, which I understand to be the reimagining of the entire knowledge-making apparatus in the pursuit of a just, humane and equitable social order. The major problem with the term 'decolonisation' is, in other words, its status as an empty signifier. Whereas the post-Marxist, Ernesto Laclau (2005), considered empty signifiers essential to populist causes because they succeed – at least symbolically – in framing the political terrain, my concern is that the radical potential of decolonisation discourse – because of its indeterminacy – is always at risk of being co-opted by hegemonic political formations, a possibility analogous to what Marcuse once termed 'repressive tolerance'. We have witnessed such reversals, for example, in the fate of the so-called 'African ››

Renaissance,' an idiom that was meant to signify continental rebirth but was converted instead into the ideological glue that rationalised Thabo Mbeki's export of free-market economics across Africa (Louw, 2004). And we observe it in university life today with the relentless commodification of 'engaged scholarship' into just another signpost on the road to tenure.

But there is a broader context for my insistence on the careful deployment of concepts, a context best illustrated by recounting a well-known incident that scandalised the humanities in the mid-1990s. Alan Sokal, professor of physics at New York University and University College London, wrote a paper arguing that quantum gravity was a social construction. On the day the paper was published in *Social Text*, a journal for postmodern cultural studies, Sokal revealed in another outlet, *Lingua Franca*, that he had punk'd the editors of *Social Text*. He slammed his original article as a hoax, "a pastiche of left-wing cant, fawning references, grandiose quotations, and outright nonsense … structured around the silliest quotations [by postmodernist academics] I could find about mathematics and physics." His hypothesis all along had been to test whether *Social Text* would "publish an article liberally salted with nonsense if (a) it sounded good and (b) it flattered the editors' ideological preconceptions" (Sokal, 1996).

My intention in revisiting the Sokal affair is to highlight the postmodern specialty of bombast. Misleading an audience with theoretical sleights of hand is bad enough – but to do so in the name of social critique is plain bad faith. For, within academic life, there are few things more jarring than claiming to write in the service of social equality while engaging in conventions of writing of the most undemocratic kind. 'Decolonisation' is at risk of becoming another one of those radical chic terms that lends itself to obfuscation.

Inevitably, identity becomes the basis for political mobilisation as the possibility of universal comradeship slowly disintegrates.

Everyone who cares about the future of higher education in South Africa is talking about it yet most admit their cluelessness as to what it actually means.

It is no accident that the looseness of the term is consistent with the anti-foundationalist values of the intellectual tradition with which it is most closely associated, namely, postcolonial theory. Indeed, the postcolonial genre is itself difficult to master, being viewed in some quarters as not theory at all. It has been regarded, even, as a form of post-theory, which, in the view of the Marxist sociologist, Vivek Chibber, brings it close to the zone of unfalsifiability. Criticise a postcolonial writer, Chibber warns, and you may be dismissed for having misunderstood. I won't belabour the point that Marxists and postcolonial theorists are not the best of friends.

But there is a second problem with the term 'decolonisation': it seals us within a colonial imaginary (a tomb, really) in which the binaries of coloniser and colonised, white and black become impossible to displace. If we are committed to a nonracial future as enshrined in our constitution, it is difficult to imagine how that can ever be realised as long as we continue to reify certain highly contentious markers of social difference. I am of course speaking about 'race,' for despite the commonsense that it is a social construction – that, in the words of Fanon, "the black soul is a white man's artifact" (1952/2008, p. 6) – some of us continue to believe in the fictional value of strategic essentialism. It cannot be denied that racism remains an integral part of lived experience in South Africa – but it has to be distinguished from race, which, again, has no external referent.

This brings me to the third and, possibly most serious, problem with the 'decolonisation' thesis, namely, the social vision that is its necessary consequence. In this regard, I have been struck by what I can only describe as the racial provincialism of some decolonisation supporters. I recently showed a video of a trauma room in a Khayelitsha hospital to a group of what many would call 'political' postgraduate students. The video depicted a steady stream of inebriated young men presenting with stab-wounds to all parts of their bodies. One man's leg had been amputated and disposed of in a plastic bag, another man had been stabbed in the eye, a third had been stabbed in the head. Anticipating that my students would offer a psychosocial commentary on the mayhem in a township less than 30 minutes' drive from the lecture venue, their responses left me confused. Some felt appalled by what they had seen; others commented on the contrasting 'races' of the doctors and nurses, and the white doctor's accent when addressing the black patient. One student asked me afterwards why I had shown the video in the first place. But what none of them was able to do – which is typical of metropolitan social theory – was name the material violence that prevails under conditions of material oppression.

I would like to illustrate this provincialism with a few more choice examples. Eighteen months ago, I was present at a group discussion with one of UCT's leading postcolonial voices – an expert on Biko, no less. I listened

in disbelief as she insinuated that Africans were blacker than coloureds and Indians. The room was well stocked with postcolonial scholars who said nothing when I objected to this almost Orwellian sentiment that some were blacker than others. No one seemed to take offence, even, at a white colleague's suggestion that black academics could be – and I quote – 'role models' for black students. With the benefit of hindsight, however, I now realise that this meeting actually initiated me into the subtleties of the postcolonial position. For I have come to appreciate that in postcolonial thought – where 'race' thinking enjoys pride of place – it is not beyond the pale that a student should demand the removal of white people from Ngugi wa Thiong'o's UCT lecture, or that radical black feminists should request the removal of white men from Ericka Huggins' public lecture. I can also understand how a Black First Land First leader can warn the South African public: "If white people attack the Guptas, we are going to defend them." And finally, I am able to comprehend how black students can sit opposite black academics – and I am referring to an open meeting of staff and students in UCT's Department of Psychology – and deny the blackness of the very academics that mentored them on the presumed grounds that the people in question are coloured and, therefore, do not count as black.

I have drawn several lessons from these incidents whose occurrences I attribute to the remarkable rise of postcolonial theory on our campuses. First, there are certain occasions when Biko's definition of 'black' applies only in theory. Second, a black monopoly capitalist is potentially defensible whereas a white monopoly capitalist is not. And third, the stabbing of black men by other black men can become irrelevant when the doctor in the ER is white. But perhaps the greatest lesson I have learnt from my encounters with postcolonial scholars and students has to do with the importance of praxis. I now know that I am unable to reconcile myself to a theory whose practices would rehumanise some by dehumanising others. It is my fervent belief that the value of any social theory has to be measured according to the type of world it inaugurates, reminding me of a certain Jewish maxim: "I didn't come to hear the rabbi speak, I came to watch him tie his laces."

I have alluded anecdotally to the occasional pettiness of postcolonial pandering but what kind of politics does the theory actually inspire? Notwithstanding an opacity that thwarts any prospect of a straightforward answer, it would not be inaccurate to state that postcolonial theory proceeds from the premise of social difference, an insistence that underpins its trademark critiques of Eurocentrism, colonial ideology and economic determinism (Chibber, 2013). The postcolonial assertion alleges the cultural exceptionalism of the non-Western world. Theorists will argue, for example, that the history of labour cannot be built on materialist and rationalist assumptions, and that the lived experience of the worker in the so-called Global South is distorted when approached by universalist, Eurocentric categories of analysis. The result is an abiding suspicion of grand theory and a corresponding focus on marginality, alterity and particularity instead. Inevitably, identity becomes the basis for political mobilisation as the possibility of universal comradeship slowly disintegrates.

Whereas the May '68 generation pursued causes that extended far beyond the confines of the academy, to date, our students have shown little interest in backing the causes of the South African majority.

In this regard, the influence of postcolonial theory on student movements in South Africa has been substantial. Whether unable or unwilling to frame their struggle in terms of the universal values of dignity, security and equality, protestors have opted for the particulars of white privilege and black pain, practicing a form of identity politics that I have dismissed elsewhere as unmistakably middle-class. Trapped in a self-referential form of protest, an unmistakable narcissism has set in – I can think of no other term – as self-styled radicals reveal a decidedly un-radical preoccupation with their own bourgeois destinies. Whereas the May '68 generation pursued causes that extended far beyond the confines of the academy, to date, our students have shown little interest in backing the causes of the South African majority – most of whom will never set foot inside a university. Young people who are functionally illiterate and virtually unemployable have no interest in decolonising consciousness – let alone in resurrecting the past glories of the colour 'black'. Lest we forget everyone's favorite revolutionary, Fanon himself insists that "[t]he discovery of the existence of a black civilization in the fifteenth century confers no patent of humanity on me. Like it or not, the past can in no way guide me in the present moment" (1952/2008, p. 175).

I am not attempting to disavow or trivialise the lived experiences of ››

protesting students. What they perceive more than anything is an acute sense of dislocation – a feeling of otherness that is the fate of anyone entering an institutional space that is deeply alienating. But these psychological concerns must be recognised for what they are, namely, an emergent elite's struggle for a coherent sense of self, rather than a movement for radical social change.

I am reminded of an incident late last year when four protestors walked into my third-year clinical psychology lecture just as it was about to begin. The topic? The inaccessibility of psychological services in our country. Instead of conscientising themselves about the workings of a middle-class discipline that continues to sideline the mental health needs of non-university-going South Africans, the protestors contributed to that sidelining by shouting about how their black pain warranted the termination of the lecture.

We need to remind ourselves that the future of our country does not depend on the fate of the middle class – black or white. It depends on the millions of South Africans whose terminal state of wretchedness is both a necessary and sufficient condition for revolution. But the fact that decolonisation discourse is saturated with bourgeois concerns also tells us that something is seriously wrong with the academy. The marketisation of knowledge-making processes over the last four decades – and the gradual insertion of South African higher education institutions into that global landscape in the post-apartheid years – has resulted in the assembly-line production of graduates who are quickly assimilated into the well-oiled machineries of a market-friendly economy. Yet decolonisation activists, by and large, do not seem to take issue with the instrumentalisation of their education, directing all their energies towards the attainment of what

. . . these psychological concerns must be recognised for what they are, namely, an emergent elite's struggle for a coherent sense of self, rather than a movement for radical social change.

they call 'free, quality, decolonised education'. Instead of a materialist reading of the asymmetries of academic life, they support a decolonisation agenda that centres on the notion of epistemic violence, a term that refers – broadly speaking – to the subjugation of indigenous epistemologies, methodologies and knowledges.

The results can be horrifying. In UCT's Department of Psychology, for example, some students who I can only assume have not read outside the postcolonial canon have begun insisting that the field of neuropsychology should not be taught because it does not resonate with their lived experience. What they appear to have missed is that their rendering of biological reductionism as social irrelevance overlooks the essential service that UCT's neuropsychologists offer brain-injured and HIV-infected children from poor and working class communities. If neuropsychology were ever to be subjected to the logic of decolonisation, it is quite likely that an already inaccessible discipline would become even less accessible – but only a South African with a lived experience of grinding poverty, concrete violence, and a resulting reliance on neuropsychological services in government hospitals would know that.

When it comes to Psychology, conversations about decolonisation reveal it to be a most troublesome discipline. The history of the field in South Africa and around the world affirms that it is only under specific social conditions that Psychology can be expected to thrive. Many postcolonial psychologists, however, approach the decolonisation of Psychology in completely ahistorical terms. Going no further than proposing certain topics of study they believe will address its Eurocentrism, they fail to offer a sustained examination of the discipline's socially embedded character. Psychology is a distinctly modern creature that emerged from the social mayhem unleashed by the Industrial Revolution. It has become a formidable tool of social management that places particular 'technologies of subjectivity' at the disposal of bureaucratic and social elites who facilitate therewith the relatively smooth functioning of modern societies. It is, in other words, a discipline for followers, a discipline of the status quo. Accordingly, any talk of decolonising Psychology is inadequate without some reflection on the discipline's coordinates within an extra-disciplinary network of power relations – a task that does not sit well with the aforementioned narcissism.

Indeed, the historian of Psychology, Kurt Danziger (1990), reminds us of the two prerequisites for discipline formation, what I shall call the epistemological and utilitarian criteria. The establishment of a discipline requires the production of knowledge in forms acceptable to established knowledge-makers as well as some guarantee of its social utility. In the case of Psychology, it has proven successful on both counts, embracing

a science-like cult of numbers on the one hand while ministering to the needs of educational, military and industrial elites on the other. But what this bifurcation suggests is that any attempt at rethinking the discipline has to engage with both sides of the divide. Unfortunately, the insularity of decolonisation discourse has resulted in extensive discussion of the epistemological criterion with little interrogation of the discipline's ambivalent positioning in capitalist societies. For those with Marxian inclinations, it comes as no surprise that postcolonial scholars and students of Psychology – oblivious to its social character yet convinced that there is something 'revolutionary' about the decolonisation thesis – end up accomplishing little more than the disclosure of their own bourgeois interests.

To be sure, a similar predicament confronts anyone who would equate the decolonisation of Psychology with the Africanisation of the discipline. The assumption here – and it is an assumption indebted to postcolonial thought – is that there is something special about African people that necessitates the creation of a correspondingly special Psychology. There was a time when that kind of thinking would have been dismissed as racist – but times do change. These days it has become fashionable for us Africans to write about ourselves in the third person as though we were psycho-anthropological specimens. We appear, moreover, to have little trouble talking about African ontology while quoting Fanon, despite his description of the black man's incarceration in a "zone of nonbeing" (1952/2008, p. 2). In fact, if one thinks about black men stabbing other black men, then there is surely something perverted not only about fetishised musings on Ubuntu but also about the pursuit of "cultural questions at the very moment their erstwhile subjects [are], quite literally, vanishing from the face of the earth" (Crais, 2011, pp. 4-5).

If we are hoping to make Psychology accessible to South Africans by somehow 'Africanising' it, then we have to remember that the discipline has only ever entered the lives of people who have entered modernity. For all of our history, most South Africans have been denied the fruits of modernity and if we choose to ignore that essentially materialist history, then, in the words of George Santayana, we are "condemned to repeat it." It is this kind of repetition compulsion that Chibber is referencing when he asserts that, "far from landing a blow against colonialist and Orientalist presentations of the East, Subaltern Studies has ended up promoting them" (2013, p. 26, original emphases). Of course, it is equally true that this neurotic enactment of categories of trauma – black, white, coloured, Indian – suggests a psychological inability to give them up, pending a resolution of the original trauma. As for the shape that such a resolution should take? I think it is probably the most burning question in public discourse today.

Apart from its provincialism, the idea that only black people may speak for black people, that only women may speak for women . . . . in short, the idea that only the oppressed may speak for the oppressed is surely one of the most dangerous ideas in circulation today.

I would like to offer one final thought on the term 'decolonisation,' namely, its implication that the academic disciplines we have inherited remain suitable as disciplines in a society as historically contingent as ours. What I am suggesting is that it is one thing to question, for example, the form and content of Psychology, as proponents of decolonisation do, but it is another matter entirely to question the existence of Psychology altogether.

The work of the Marxist literary critic, Fredric Jameson, is of central importance to this question of what forms a discipline and, more specifically, our preoccupation with the decolonisation of higher education. For Jameson, the existence of disciplines as we know them is a symptom of our estrangement under late capitalism: the economist understands matters in one way, the sociologist views them in another light, while the psychologist brings a new perspective altogether. In Jameson's view, these false specialisations are a testament to a fallen social reality that was once whole and indivisible but has now splintered in countless directions. To speak of a decolonised 'psychology' or a decolonised 'economics,' is to endorse a disciplinary regime that only exists because of the alienation that permeates our lives today. Located at the heart of the decolonisation project, this is a paradox not easily dispelled.

The real tragedy, however, is to be found on the left, where internecine conflicts among academics and students – both internationally and in South Africa – have meant that even ››

socialists and anti-racists can be put down as conservative and racist.

Apart from its provincialism, the idea that only black people may speak for black people, that only women may speak for women, that only disabled people may speak for disabled people, that only disabled black women may speak for disabled black women – in short, the idea that only the oppressed may speak for the oppressed – is surely one of the most dangerous ideas in circulation today. It denies the possibility of empathy – of a shared humanity – something that, as a practicing psychotherapist, I can never agree with. Nearly every religion, culture and ethical tradition in the history of our species has advocated some version of the Golden Rule: treat others as you wish to be treated, and do not treat others as you do not wish to be treated. Yet the realisation of that principle requires an appreciation not only of one's own mind but also the minds of others. Postcolonial theory effectively denies the latter possibility – and it is for that reason that it cannot provide the moral vision we need now more than ever.

On the basis of my lived experience, then, decolonisation discourse is not as radical as it claims to be. It forms the ideological superstructure of an identity project that resonates powerfully with the interests of an emerging social elite, but its revolutionary credentials are far from clear. This much is evident when decolonisation discourse is applied to the special case of Psychology where it fails to problematise the ambiguous role of the discipline in modern, capitalist societies. And as for the disciplinary order in general, the working assumptions of decolonisation discourse lead it to endorse rather than interrogate the alienation so characteristic of capitalist social formations. Is Marxism, the New Left, or post-Marxism the answer? I don't know. What I do know, is that when it comes to debates about transformation, our terms of reference have to expand beyond the self-serving particulars of postcolonial theory.

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PHILOSOPHY PLAYS ROLE IN THINKING ABOUT SOCIAL EQUALITY

By ***George Hull***

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George Hull

Recent developments in political philosophy shed light on the justification for equality, the shape an equal society would take, and the route which will lead us there.

Inequality is perhaps the greatest challenge South Africa faces today, and the current economic downturn is likely to exacerbate it. Effective policies making for a more equal society are urgently required. Can philosophy help frame them?

The idea of equality has been at the centre of philosophical thinking about politics and society since the 18th century, and it continues to preoccupy political philosophers, not least in South Africa. The Cape Town Social Equality Conference, hosted on 15 to 17 August 2014 by the Philosophy Department at the University of Cape Town, was devoted entirely to equality: its nature, value and how to achieve it.

EQUALITY OR FAIRNESS?

Although it has widespread appeal, *equality* can be seen as a rather arbitrary ideal. From a humanitarian point of view, to relieve suffering or to uplift people living in absolute deprivation are immediately comprehensible goals. The same is not true of equality: why should an equal distribution of resources be considered as good in itself?

Concerns of this kind can drive people to abandon "equality" and embrace an ideal of "fair shares" instead. *Fairness* tells us to focus on individuals' diverse contributions to society. According to a familiar conception of fairness, those who have contributed more and sacrificed more for society's joint endeavour merit a larger share of the social product. Those who choose not to contribute so much can fairly receive a lesser share.

Fairness can be an unforgiving ideal. People who live a life of deprivation due to imprudent choices made in their youth may, according to fairness, be only getting what they deserve. As a consequence, many advocates of fairness grant that fairness must be tempered by *humanitarianism*: a caring determination that nobody, however lazy or irresponsible, should experience absolute deprivation beyond a certain level.

But South African society offers inhospitable terrain to fairness. The country's history of oppression and exclusion ensures that inherited privilege or disadvantage determine individuals' contributions to society to a far greater extent than their free choices. Judgements about fair shares are thus well nigh impossible. Under the circumstances, an equal distribution of resources becomes attractive as a "reset to default" position, enabling policy to be based on fairness eventually, at some point in the future.

Is this the most that can be said for equality, then – that it is a tolerable understudy when fairness is indisposed?

Egalitarian political philosophers think not. In recent years they have argued it is mistaken to view an equal distribution of resources – *distributive equality* – as the egalitarian goal. Rather, distributive equality (or something close to it) is only valuable because it tends to foster *social equality*. And social equality is not a matter of how much people have, but of their standing in relation to one other. The new egalitarianism in political philosophy says that the equal society is not primarily a society in which people have equal amounts, but rather a society in which people meet each other on equal terms.

This relational conception of equality enjoins us to avoid asymmetric relations of hierarchy, deference, domination, exclusion, exploitation, servility and humiliation (Wolff, 2015). In effect, theorists of social equality argue that the true egalitarian goal is a form of *social cohesion*. Not just any form of social cohesion, though, and most certainly not a form achieved through systems of violent coercion, practices of habitual deference, or myths of natural superiority and inferiority.

Discriminatory laws and conventions of oppression have created societies marred by stigma, exclusion, hierarchy and relations of domination. Theorists of social equality stress that an excessively unequal distribution of resources can have much the same effect. So the new egalitarianism views distributive equality not as an end in itself but as a necessary means to achieving a cohesive society of equals.

What, then, becomes of fairness? Should individual effort and responsibility have no impact at all on the distribution of resources in a society?

Egalitarian political philosophers increasingly view equality and fairness as two independent and potentially conflicting values. The distribution of resources can depart from equality for reasons of fairness as long as the inequality is not extreme enough to bring about hierarchy, exclusion, domination and other unequal relations. But there will be situations where shortfalls in fairness must be tolerated because of the overriding value of creating a society of equals.

EQUALITY OF WHAT?

Whether our focus is fairness or equality, we must next ask about the "currency" of egalitarian justice. What is it that should be distributed equally? Or what should people have fair shares of?

"Money" is an obvious answer. Income and wealth are quite easily measurable. They can be exchanged for a host of both necessities and the good things in life. And redistributing them is, in principle, relatively straightforward.

Yet, as the Indian philosopher-economist Amartya Sen has insisted for decades, we must beware of equating the currency of commerce with the currency of justice. Money is a means to achieve valued goals rather than an end in itself, and the same amount of money may translate into very different levels of wellbeing for different individuals. Freedom from disease and the ability to move around independently are both valuable aspects of human wellbeing. But for a disabled person, who may need stairlifts and a wheelchair, it evidently costs more to achieve a decent degree of mobility than it does for an able-bodied person. Likewise, avoiding debilitating disease is likely to be a more expensive affair for people who live in the midst of water-borne parasites than for people who do not.

Distributive equality (or something close to it) is only valuable because it tends to foster *social equality*.

There is an important lesson here for advocates of fairness. Fair shares cannot be determined solely by looking at people's different contributions to society. Their different needs – whether due to environment or their physical constitution – must be taken into account as well. And advocates of equality must look beyond money for the currency of egalitarian justice.

According to the American philosopher Martha C. Nussbaum, the appropriate measure of a person's wellbeing is not their income or wealth, but rather what they are actually able to do and be. Her list of ten "central human functional capabilities" includes things like "affiliation" and "control over one's environment". Nussbaum would be the first to point out that an equal distribution of such capabilities requires institutional change rather than just a redistribution of cash.

Other philosophers use the language of "capabilities" to try to pin down the rich and multifaceted nature of the human good. Feminist philosopher Miranda Fricker has argued that theories of justice and human wellbeing must not view people just as consumers, workers and planners. Humans also flourish, or suffer, as communicators and interpreters of the social world in their *epistemic* (knowledge-related) roles. Those who are marginalised because of their gender, sexual orientation or racialised group, argues Fricker, often face forms of injustice in their capacity as knowers. For one thing, societal prejudice may ››

mean they are not taken at their word or that what they say is not taken as seriously as what others say. This Fricker calls *testimonial injustice*.

More deep-seated, indeed existential, harm is done by what Fricker calls *hermeneutical injustice*. This form of injustice is of particular relevance to postcolonial societies, such as South Africa, in which it often occurs along racial lines. Hermeneutical injustice arises when a marginalised group is systematically excluded from arenas of knowledge production and opinion formation – politics, the arts, academia and the media. In South Africa, this form of injustice was diagnosed by the Black Consciousness thinkers Steve Biko and Barney Pityana in a series of brilliant essays in the 1970s.

Marginalisation from knowledge production can create a situation where experiences that are specific to a racialised group – relating to indigenous cultures, the new urban black culture, or racial discrimination and oppression – cannot be communicated with the linguistic resources of the cultural mainstream. Members of the group in question may find themselves unable to articulate some of their central social experiences in anything other than a distorted way (as "superstition", "barbarism", etc.). They may even lose a sense of who they truly are. To contrast it with the material hardship that colonialism and apartheid inflicted on black South Africans, Biko and Pityana called hermeneutical injustice "dehumanisation" and "spiritual poverty". To suffer hermeneutical injustice is to find oneself bereft of the concepts and forms of discourse necessary to communicate – and even to articulate adequately to oneself – important social experiences, due to the marginalisation of a social group to which one belongs. It can continue long after the group attains legal, or even material, equality (Hull, 2017).

There will be situations where shortfalls in fairness must be tolerated because of the overriding value of creating a society of equals.

Fricker has stressed that no conception of human wellbeing can afford to ignore the epistemic aspect of the human good. She now argues that *epistemic contribution* – the capability to contribute to the flow of information and interpretations which makes up the epistemic life of a society – should be added to Nussbaum's list of central human capabilities (Fricker, 2015).

HUMILIATING AID

As noted above, the new egalitarianism in political philosophy does not view distributive equality as an end in itself. An equal distribution of resources (or something close to it) is valuable as a means to social equality – to achieving a society whose members relate to one another as equals.

If this way of thinking about equality is correct, then it would clearly be counterproductive to try to bring about distributive equality in ways which themselves create division, stigma and hierarchy. Paradoxically, a society's attempts to uplift disadvantaged people may themselves erect barriers to social equality. Means testing for welfare benefits, state services or financial aid is a case in point.

Extensive and intrusive means testing often has the effect of undermining social equality. It can be experienced as humiliating or demeaning when it requires people to make shameful revelations. It can also give the impression that people subjected to the means test are not trusted equals, but rather objects of distrust and suspicion. Further, means testing can all too easily play into a divisive narrative which represents one group of people in society as able to "fend for themselves" and stigmatises another as, at best, "scroungers" or, at worst, dishonest "cheats".

Finally, extensive means testing can communicate disrespect to the poorest in society when they are subjected to a level of scrutiny and control not experienced by the better-off. All in all, state assistance that depends on a means test often ends up being – in the words of philosopher Elizabeth Anderson – "humiliating aid".

Issues raised by students during the October 2015 campus protests resonate with these warnings. Wits student Phaphama Dulwana wrote of "the humiliation of standing in a National Student Financial Aid Scheme line, of being treated like a number while your entire future hangs on how someone's day is going, being told you have to prove the degree of your impoverishment." A member of the UWC Fees Must Fall movement, Thozama Nozuko, wrote in a similar vein: "[W]e are calling for the student credit management office, which expects students to prove their poverty before every registration, to fall."

Some circumstances, such as disability, will almost always require individual assessment for need. However, from the point of view of social equality, universal benefits are clearly preferable. For example, a system of quality healthcare provision that is free at the point of delivery for all removes the need for means tests.

In the case of university tuition, full public funding is objectionable from a fairness perspective. It would not be fair for all members of society – even the very poorest – to be made

to pay for a competitive advantage enjoyed by the minority who attend university (Cudd, 2015). But this does not mean that a solution involving universal non-means-tested provision is ruled out. Universal eligibility for a comprehensive student loan to cover fees and living expenses, with income-contingent repayment, would reconcile the values of fairness and equality. If well designed, with a rational interest rate on the loans, this policy would also be affordable (Hull, 2016).

PHILOSOPHY'S ROLE

In South African universities and intellectual circles, the discipline of philosophy – especially "analytic" philosophy – is viewed with some suspicion. One hears it asked whether philosophy has ever contributed anything of social relevance, or indeed, whether we really need philosophy departments.

I would be the first to defend the value of academic teaching and research with no measurable social impact. Still, it is troubling to hear about bright, engaged activist intellectuals wishing to study issues of justice, power and social change being turned away from South African philosophy departments in the 1980s and beyond. Evidently, many South African intellectuals, academics and activists of the older generation had bruising run-ins with analytic philosophy at a time when it was narrowly focused on questions about the nature of linguistic meaning and the definition of knowledge. It is understandable that some take for granted that the transformation of the academy must involve moving beyond analytic philosophy.

The truth, though, is that there is no distinctive subject matter of analytic philosophy. All the philosophers whose work I have discussed in this article would likely be classified as analytic, though the topics of their research are far removed from those of the "logical positivists" and "linguistic analysts" of the 1950s. What is more, the hallmarks of the analytic style and method – precision, patient analysis of concepts through the drawing of distinctions, systematic analysis of arguments – are hallmarks of much of the best philosophy, as indeed of other intellectual work, from all traditions and all epochs.

Philosophy cannot hope to solve the socio-political problem of inequality on its own. But it can attempt to articulate the variety of wrongful forms of inequality, and to frame concepts, arguments and principles upon which policymakers and activists can draw to address them constructively. As discussed here, the new egalitarianism in political philosophy warns us not to confuse the goal of equality with the means used to achieve it. Furthermore, it can help policymakers avoid counterproductive methods of redistribution that end up undermining social equality.

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BOKONE BOPHIRIMA FARMER SUPPORT CONFERENCE SPARKS NEW IDEAS FOR CHANGE

New ideas to transform and steer agricultural extension and advisory services to greater heights in the North West Province were at the centre of ~~deliberations~~ during a week-long annual conference during February 2018. The conference was the 10th to be hosted by the Department of Rural, Environment and Agricultural Development (READ) successively.

Held under the theme "Digitalization of extension and advisory services for radical socio economic transformation", the conference stoutly deliberated on an urgent need for the Extension and Advisory Practitioners in the province to take advantage of technological devices at their disposal when rendering their services to the local farming community.

Agricultural extension play a crucial role in promoting the objectives of extension, such as increased agricultural productivity, increasing food security, improving rural livelihoods and promoting agriculture as an engine of pro-poor economic growth.

Over five hundred (500) delegates comprising Extension and Advisory Officers employed by the Department, renowned experts in the extension profession from institutions of higher learning, and from the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Extension Technicians, Crop Technicians, Natural Resource Technicians, Value Chain officers as well as Research Institutes were part of this year's conference.

During the deliberations, delegates were urged to align their ~~day to day~~ activities to the Extension Recovery Plan (ERP) which is aimed at addressing the gaps identified in agricultural extension services and which will ultimately assist the province to meaningfully contribute towards achieving the 2030 National Development Plan targets.

MEC Manketsi Tlhape addressing delegates during the 10th Extension and Advisory Services Conference held at Haartebeespoort

Leading a high panel of discussions on digitalization of extension and advisory services, Professor Elliot Zwane of University of Limpopo reiterated that utilisation of technology in extension and advisory services was crucial as it would bring much needed change. "With employment of technology to your daily extension and advisory services as the theme of this year's conference says, you will achieve more and most importantly your services will significantly improve," Professor Zwane told delegates.

Extension Officers at the 10th annual Provincial Extension and Advisory Service Conference

The same sentiments were shared by his counterpart from North West University, Professor Simon Sebatana Letsoalo. In his presentation Letsoalo said digitalization has been a significant contributor to growth and socio-economic development in business sectors, countries and regions where they are well adopted and integrated. “The large adoption and integration of digitalization has reduced transactions costs, it has improved services delivery, created new jobs, generated new revenue and saved resources,” Letsoalo indicated.

MEC Manketsi Tlhape assured the delegates that after the conference, things would be done differently. “I can assure you that when we go out from this conference, things will be done differently. Digitalization is the way to go, therefore our Extension and Advisory Officers have no choice but to utilize technological devices at their disposal to the fullest as discussed in the conference,” she said.

Tlhape also cautioned farmers and delegates about climate change. “Climate change has become a threat to the productivity and long-term sustainability of the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sector, particularly the household and smallholder producers. The adoption of smart agricultural practices is therefore of great importance.”

In the spirit of ‘saamtrek saamwerk’, MEC Tlhape urged non-government organizations to continue working with government and continue providing a cross sectorial perspective and to build a strong agricultural sector which will create more job opportunities for the people of Bokone Bophirima.

Cooperatives and individual farmers involved in agricultural activities in Bojanala District were visited by delegates from the conference for expert advice and donations through an outreach programme. Vegetable gardens inputs as well as livestock were handed over to the local communities of Moretele Local Municipality.

The department also during the conference honoured Agricultural Advisors and Managers who are making commendable contributions to the long-term achievement of the objectives of the National norms and standards of Extension and Advisory Services. Winning categories included the Best paper presented at the conference, Best Agricultural Advisor, Best Senior Agricultural Advisor, Best Extension Specialist, Best Assistant Director (LDC Manager), Best Deputy Director and Best District.

read
Department:
Rural, Environment and Agricultural Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

WHITE MONOPOLY CAPITAL: ITS IDEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEFICIENCY

By ***Luntu Sokutu***

A South African Transport and Allied Workers Union shop steward, Luntu Sokutu, was a member of the national committee of the South African Students' Congress when he was a student at the University of Cape Town.

Luntu Sokutu

In this critical assessment of white monopoly capital the author dismisses the use of the phrase as deficient and ideologically flawed. He contends that it does nothing to advance the national democratic revolution pronounced by the African National Congress.

A strange phenomenon has arisen within the national liberation movement, where some within our ranks seek to sow ideological confusion with the aim of distorting our historical and present reality. The consequence is that in the construction of revolutionary theory – which sees society as a dynamic, contradictory, and changing process – incorrect tactics meant to advance our strategic objective will be embraced. This will favour the parasitic network that seeks to use the African National Congress (ANC) as a direct route to looting the state.

"The selective description of the racial character of capital in terms of the ownership and control of the South African economy is a deliberate focus on one historical consequence of racial oppression.

This group of individuals understood three principles which the ~~neo-liberal~~ project grasped in order to advance their narrow agenda: weaken the capacity of the ANC as a national liberation movement and a centre of power and decision-making; fragment the Alliance; and redefine the content of our national democratic revolution (NDR).

There are glaring similarities between the 1996 'neoliberal project' and the rent-seeking parasitic network. The difference between the two are the methods employed. At the core of the methods used by the rent-seeking parasitic network is corporate capture of the organisation, through the use of money and patronage, in order to subvert or influence the democratic practices of the organisation.

This article will focus on the efforts of this organised network to distort the content of our NDR in order to advance

their narrow ends of looting the state. It will explain the concept of 'capital' as a productive force in South Africa, and how as a result of our colonial and apartheid past, it developed as a strategic opponent of the revolution. The article will then provide a critique on the concept itself – white monopoly capital – and illustrate, through explaining the content of our NDR, why white monopoly capital cannot be a principal opponent of the revolution. It will lastly conclude that the phrase 'white monopoly capital' is ideologically and historically deficient, and used by those who seek to sow ideological confusion in their efforts to distort the content of our NDR.

CAPITAL AS A PRODUCTIVE FORCE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Capital is a factor in the process of production in previous and present societies. As Karl Marx and Frederick Engels explained in the Communist Manifesto, "Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion". They go on to explain that it is therefore not only a personal but also a social power. Of course, in the process, capitalism reasserts its dominance in society, and in the context of an evolving and changing process of production, this classical condition of the motion of capital may alter, but this is not the point. The point is to explain the essence of capital whose character is defined fundamentally in relation to the mode of production, and to some extent the political order in each society.

In South Africa, capital as a productive force developed three main identities, namely: private foreign multinationals, local monopoly and oligopoly capital, and the non-monopoly sector. Local monopoly and oligopoly capital in South Africa is dominated by a white section of the population in relation to ownership and control. These three identities developed as a result of the historical mode of production (capitalism), and colonialism of a special type.

> **The term 'white' used in the concept white monopoly capital, is atypical and refers to a very small minority of whites in South Africa.**

In our characterisation of the South African situation as colonialism of a special type, we have always understood that capitalism in South Africa did not develop organically, but through colonial and imperialist control of, for instance, extraction of raw materials for processing and sale in the imperialist core. This dominance of foreign capital continues in our current economic situation.

A CRITIQUE OF THE CONCEPT OF WHITE MONOPOLY CAPITAL

The selective description of the racial character of capital in terms of the ownership and control of the South African economy is a deliberate focus on one historical consequence of racial oppression, and a disregard of the essence of South African capital which many analysts have called super-exploitation.

The monopoly character of our economy, particularly its concentration in a few white hands, is a legacy of colonialism and apartheid. Despite attempts to deracialise the economy through the narrow Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) programme and its successor programme, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE), the dominance of a white section in the economy remained unchanged.

However, the deliberate focus on racial dominance does not take into account the male dominant ownership patterns of the South African economy which are a result of patriarchal relations of power. In other words, it is canvassed by those who have no problem with the monopoly and oligopoly structure of capital as a productive force, but have a problem with who it is that occupies the boardroom, in this case a minority section of the white community. The use of the term 'white minority section' is deliberate. This term encapsulates the enormity of wealth, influence and power that only a fractional proportion of the white population holds.

The term 'white' used in the concept white monopoly capital, is atypical and refers to a very small minority of whites in South Africa. To ascribe the dominant ››

control and ownership of the economy to the entire white population is hardly accurate. The owners of wealth are largely drawn from the same fraction linked by family, current or past political affiliation or connections, church, school old boys networks, golf and country club memberships and so on.

The Oppenheimers and Ruperts are family dynasties; Naspers and Sanlam are Broederbond/National Party products. Both have little in common with Jan van de Merwe or John Smith who work as artisans at a mine or railways workshop, or Susie van der Walt or Joan Brown who are shop assistants at Hemingways Mall. Even whites who own/run their own businesses (small and medium), seldom enjoy monopoly status – they too are subservient to the monopolies. All these whites (those who are workers and those with some capital who nonetheless suffer at the hands of monopoly capital) objectively can benefit from a democratic initiative to break the monopoly character of capital.

Another problem is that the white monopoly capital concept tends to restrict analysis within South Africa's reality, history and borders. Proponents of white monopoly capital deliberately turn the focus away from the international character of monopoly capital, thus avoiding the encounter with globalisation and the neo-liberal paradigm. For example, the international listing/relocation of Old Mutual and Anglo-American; the domination of South Africa's steel industry by Arcelor-Mittal; the Australian-based global aluminium giant Billiton, and its favourable apartheid-era cut-price electricity agreements with Eskom are all brushed under the carpet.

These are some of the limitations of the concept for describing our reality, and it would therefore be a strategic and revolutionary error to base our

Proponents of white monopoly capital deliberately turn the focus away from the international character of monopoly capital.

theory on an inadequate concept such as white monopoly capital. White monopoly capital as a 'phenomenon' cannot be the strategic opponent of our revolution. Perhaps an important exercise to further illuminate this point is to remind ourselves about the content of our NDR; what is it that the NDR seeks to achieve?

CONTENT OF OUR NDR

In its Strategy and Tactics programme, the ANC has always articulated the objective of the NDR as the resolution of the three primary contradictions in South Africa: racial oppression, class-super exploitation, and patriarchal relations of power.

The 'N' in the NDR is the struggle to overcome national oppression, and ensure nation building and national sovereignty. It is not a struggle for cosmetic nation building, but a struggle to undo the racial injustices of our colonial and apartheid past, to create a united South Africa.

The dominance of transnational firms in the market threatens our national sovereignty. We have witnessed this through the vulnerability of our economy to international rating agencies and speculative investment camouflaged as investor confidence, which are opposed to state-led development.

The struggle to overcome national oppression is not merely about ensuring political and social rights, but also about addressing the socio-economic bondages of Black people in general, and Africans in particular.

The 'D' in the NDR is the struggle to overcome illegitimate minority rule through democratising key levers of the state and the economy, and the struggle to change patriarchal relations of power. The struggle to democratise the economy is to fight against the monopoly and oligopoly structure of the economy in all forms. It includes, for example, the transformation of the financial services sector through forms of state ownership, co-operative banks and financial institutions. It includes capacitating the public service to be able to deliver services to the people and the 'de-tenderisation' of the state.

White monopoly capital as a theoretical and strategic construct ignores the historical need to transform gender relations in the economy. It is a deliberate effort to focus on the racial character of monopoly capital in order to employ tactics (and consequently policies) that only seek to reverse the white dominance in the ownership structure of capital and do nothing about male dominance. It is not about addressing the preponderance of women workers in vulnerable occupations such as domestic and reproductive work and the small, medium and micro-sized businesses such as street vendors.

The 'R' in the NDR defines the character of our revolution, which remains the fundamental restructuring of society. This is not the objective of the promoters of white monopoly capital as a strategic enemy of the revolution, since they have no interest whatsoever in transforming the essence, ethos and values of the boardroom, but are rather seeking a seat at the dinner table.

When we portray white monopoly capital as the main adversary of the revolution, the result is that we may seek to replace what we perceive to be

the enemy and neglect the essence of that which needs to be transformed.

Apartheid and capitalism were mutually reinforcing as political and economic levers for dominance over, and super-exploitation of, the Black majority as cheap labour for profit maximisation. The intent and purpose were to oppress and exclude Blacks from political and economic participation. Therefore, the historical grievance against socio-economic exclusion remains outstanding in the democratic dispensation and a thorough transformation of the structural and systemic features to make the economy serve the poor majority remains the strategic objective.

CONCLUSION

Capital in the hands of private ownership, whether White, Indian, Chinese or African, exploits in order to maximise profits and reinforces the apartheid model of uneven development. Capital in the hands of the collective, or when it is democratised, is developmental, progressive and responds to the socio-economic problems faced by our society. It seeks to advance our NDR.

White monopoly capital is an historically and ideologically flawed concept. Historically, because it ignores the other categories of our national oppression, and ideologically because it presents a monolithic identity of capital, which we have shown to be composed of private, foreign capital (transnational corporations), local monopoly and oligopoly capital, and the non-monopoly sector.

White monopoly capital is not a coherent position on the current challenges of the NDR and class struggle in South Africa, nor is it applicable to SADC relations, to globalisation and internationalism, on Africa-China relations, or any of the questions of bi- and multi-lateralism such as reform of the UN, the World Bank, IMF and WTO, or on ecology and the environment. It instead narrows its focus to what seems like mere resentment of historically-derived white privilege over domestic capital.

It is a concept invoked by a rent-seeking parasitic network whose objective is to distort the content of our NDR in order to advance their agenda of looting the state. This network does so by forcing us to push out the white community from the ownership and control of the economy, and replace them with a 'new Black elite', with no real aim of transforming capital and the mode of production in which it thrives. Their agenda has nothing to do with the struggle to democratise the economy and change gender relations. There is nothing revolutionary or militant about their slogan which borders on backward racial chauvinism that the Morogoro conference dismissed.

"Capital in the hands of private ownership, whether white, Indian, Chinese, or African, exploits in order to maximise profits.

In his address titled 'The Weapon of Theory' Amilcar Cabral explained that "the development of a phenomenon in a movement, whatever its external appearance, depends mainly on its internal characteristics". He goes on to describe the ideological deficiency within national liberation movements, which he argues "is basically due to the ignorance of the historical reality which these movements claim to transform – and constitutes one of the greatest weaknesses of our struggle against imperialism, if not the greatest weakness of all."

The onus is therefore upon those who accept the NDR as the theory of our struggle, to defend its gains against those who wish to distort its content, deliberately and as a result of their ignorance of the historical reality of South Africa. Dismantling the monopoly character of the economy remains an urgent necessity, one which requires political will, as well as ideological and strategic consistency to implement. NA

The Albertina Sisulu Executive Leadership Programme in Health: Excellence, innovation and transformation

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The Albertina Sisulu Executive Leadership Programme in Health (ASELPH) represents a unique academic and health policy-focused partnership with the University of Pretoria (UP), the University of Fort Hare (UFH), the Harvard University School of Public Health (HSPH) and South Africa partners, in collaboration with the South African national and provincial departments of health. Formerly referred to as the SA Executive Leadership Programme in Health, the programme was launched in May 2013 by the South African Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, and renamed after struggle icon Albertina Sisulu, who was a nursing sister who worked for many years in hospitals in Gauteng Province.

ASELPH honours her as an educator, nurse, wife, mother, and highly respected leader in the anti-apartheid struggle who dedicated her life to building the health and wellbeing of all South Africans.

ASELPH works to strengthen health transformation in South Africa by building the skills, competencies and experience of senior health leaders and managers. The programme was originally conceptualised in 2002 by the then director-general of the National Department of Health (NDOH), with funding by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and later the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

In 2009, when the current Minister of Health was appointed, one of the first shortcomings he identified was the lack of skills and competencies among healthcare leaders at all levels. It was against this backdrop that the ASELPH programme was reintroduced.

From left: Mr John Meecham, Mr Dan Seekoe, Dr Patrick Maduna, Prof Eunice Seekoe and Prof Stephen Hendricks.

It strives to equip participants with a deeper understanding of the political and organisational context that must be addressed for effective public health policy formulation in South Africa and the cross-cutting issues that influence decision-making and implementation.

ASELPH specifically aims to strengthen three key components of health transformation in South Africa. These are service delivery improvements, human resource capacity development and executive level training.

ASELPH is designed to contribute to the goals of the Health Minister's Health Management Development Plan for South Africa, which focuses on developing capacity and a common understanding of policy and implementation among political leadership, health executives responsible for translating policy into action, and mid-level managers responsible for implementation.

THE OBJECTIVES OF ASELPH

The purpose of ASELPH is, firstly, to give expression to the first priority of the national and provincial departments of health to develop strategic leadership and management of the South African health system; secondly, to develop and unlock human resources and capacities of managers; and thirdly, to strengthen the health service delivery system.

The programme will respond to emerging initiatives in the South African health sector identified by NDOH, such as the National Health Insurance (NHI) initiative, primary healthcare re-engineering, including the 'Ideal Clinic' initiative, and the National Strategic Plan for HIV, STIs and TB 2017 – 2022. This will involve the targeted training of executive, district and hospital managers.

The programme also advances education and training of health executives who are responsible for the management of large public-health programmes, including the National Strategic Plan for HIV/ AIDS, STIs and TB. It also aims to build the required skilled high-level human resource competencies and experience among executive and senior national, provincial. district and other managers, as well as hospital chief executive officers.

THE SCOPE OF THE PROGRAMME

ASELPH covers a wide variety of academic and academic-related activities, which include:

(i) **Academic qualifications:** The University of Pretoria (UP), in consultation with the Council on Higher Education (CHE), has developed new modules for an existing postgraduate diploma in health-service management. This new academic qualification is called the Postgraduate Diploma in Health Services

Management – Executive Leadership (PG DHSM – EL). It is recommended by the faculty board of the Faculty of Health Sciences and approved by the UP senate. Two cohorts totalling 84 students graduated in 2014 and 2015 with PG DHSM – ELs.

The University of Fort Hare (UFH) offers a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree, which covers environmental health, executive leadership and hospital management. A Master of Science in Public Health, with a focus on Executive Leadership, which can lead to a PhD in executive leadership, is currently being developed at UP.

The duration of the PG DHSM – EL is 18 months to two years, while that of the MPH is two years full time. Both qualifications are completed through part-time studies by full-time public-health or private-healthcare professionals.

(ii) **Individual short courses leading to a qualification:** Each module in both the PG DHSM – EL and the MPH degrees are also offered as standalone courses. Credits can be banked towards a full qualification in either a PG DHSM – EL or MPH. The short courses/modules are particularly designed for heads of departments, deputy director-generals and chief directors in the health or other government departments, and other executive managers employed in the private sector who cannot afford to attend the full-time PG DHSM – EL or MPH degree.

(iii) **Faculty development:** The academic staff of both UP and UFH have undergone two-week courses at Harvard T.H Chen School of Public Health, with a focus on the Harvard case-study teaching method and pedagogical approaches for adult learning, which is the focus and brand mark of ASELPH.

(iv**) e-learning:** All modules/courses are offered as e-learning/blended-learning models.

(v) **Policy seminars:** The ASELPH programme facilitates seminars for health stakeholders on critical health-policy issues. Up to 200 participants attend. In August 2017, ASELPH, in collaboration with the NDOH, held a deliberation regarding Ward-Based Outreach Teams (WBOTs) and community health-worker policy issues. Policy seminars and roundtable discussions for 2018 focus on ethical leadership and are dedicated to Albertina Sisulu's Centenary celebration.

(vi) **Round-tables discussion:** These 'drill down' into specific policies. Deputy Director Generals and Corporate Directors of the NDOH are invited and the meeting is facilitated by an external expert. This policy was launched by the Minister of Health on 30 June 2017.

(vii) **Mentoring:** ASELPH emphasises experiential learning achieved through a formal mentoring programme based on a reflective, competency-based practice and critical learning theories.

(viii) **Applied research:** Collaborative research occurs in four focus areas, namely household surveys, health-facility studies, hospital quality and costing studies, and community health workers.

(x) **Case studies:** So far ten case studies have been developed by the faculty members.

ASELPH executive training activities also include individual courses on health policy transformation, health leadership skills, and organisational strategy. In addition, there are Fellowship programmes which have been developed in consultation with the Academy for Leadership and Management in Healthcare; and two-weeks executive leadership courses at Harvard University.

FUNDING

The ASELPH programme was funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, ELMA South Africa Foundation, and USAID for the first four years. Currently, USAID and ELMA South Africa Foundation fund the programme, with further financial support from the Health and Welfare Sector Education Training Authority (HWSETA) to cover the students' tuition. In addition, HWSETA recently indicated they will also fund a Centre of Excellence at UFH.

IMPACT

ASELPH increases South Africa's capacity to deliver high-quality, cost-efficient health services by training executive leaders, raising awareness and dialogue about key policy debates, and building the capacity of university faculty. ASELPH strives to meet the needs of the leaders and the front-line managers who drive health systems transformation in South Africa.

ASELPH has made remarkable achievements in its first year. It has delivered health-policy transformation and health leadership skills courses; held a successful policy seminar involving over 100 health leaders focusing on the NHI; and had a case-writing and case-teaching methodology workshop for 20 faculty members from UP and UFH.

UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF ASELPH

The ASELPH leadership team consists of various health professionals who previously held top executive positions in government and the private sector. The team has vast experience in health systems leadership development nationally, provincially, regionally (within the Southern African Development Community region) and internationally. There is also high-level involvement of health-sector leadership and management from the national and provincial ministries of health, guided by NHI platform service delivery development.

GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

ASELPH is governed by a steering committee, which is guided by a MOU signed between the five partners, namely UP, UFH, Harvard University T.H Chen School of Public Health, the NDOH and SAP, with representatives from other partners. In addition, there are independent health experts from the private sector and parastatals, funding organisations and the third generation family members representing the Sisulu family. The committee is chaired by the Deputy Director General and Chief Operating Officer of the NDOH.

THE WAY FORWARD

Ongoing engagement with provincial HODs and DDGs ensures synergy with workplace skills requirements, so that district managers and chief operating officers acquire the required skills. One of the more promising developments is the invitations accepted by provincial health departments heads to teach on the ASELPH programme. A new development is a plan to introduce increased levels of blended learning, which will include online and Skype sessions.

The students of each province have identified a provincial ASELPH co-ordinator who manages the communications between the province and the programme and liaises with the Fellows. The Fellows also have a Whatsapp group, and two class captains.

CONCLUSION

The ASELPH programme integrates the participant, the supervisor, the mentor and the head of the provincial department of health or the Director-General of the national department. Peer-learning and case-study pedagogies encourages experiential learning in a safe space for participants, which promotes active participation instead of passive learning. The applied-research dimension provides for relevant evidence-based research modalities, which provides information for decision-making and undergirds knowledge management.

Albertina Sisulu
Executive Leadership
Programme in Health
Excellence, Innovation, Transformation

Informal Cross-border Networks – the Building Blocks to Regional Integration in Africa

By ***Moses Ogutu***

The writer was a 2017 scholar of the Mandela Rhodes Foundation and studied for a Masters in International Relations at the University of Cape Town. He is an experienced development advisory and research consultant on Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific area. He writes on African business, development and leadership issues, and engages in youth empowerment and mentorship.

Moses Ogutu

The writer makes a strong case for informal cross-border networks to foster regional economic integration, through non-state actors that include community-based organisations, women's groups, farmers' cooperatives, informal groups and informal private sector associations.

He points to the success of the regional economic integration created between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore and argues this model should be adopted in Africa.

Where state-led regional integration has proven futile, is non-state led regional cooperation the solution to regional integration in Africa? The African Union's (AU's) Agenda 2063, "The Africa We Want," echoes the Pan-African call for African unity as a key element in the realisation of the African Renaissance. In Agenda 2063, Africans rededicate themselves to the enduring Pan African vision of "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena".

While Agenda 2063 recognises the critical role of Regional Economic Communities as building blocks for continental integration, initiatives for cooperation and integration at the regional level have largely been state-driven for political, economic and security reasons, resulting in the creation of intergovernmental institutions and organisations. While acknowledging the role of the state in foreign affairs, the essay argues that non-state led informal cross-border networks are significant players in the creation of "a citizen driven" integrated and prosperous Africa.

Informal networks of non-state actors such as informal traders connect communities that share common backgrounds, history and culture. Constant face-to-face interactions between these actors define relations in the networks and generate trust among them. The emerging trust creates stability and efficiency that constitutes self-reinforcing expectations (Sako and Helper, 1996). Where the networks traverse state boundaries they integrate the regional informal economies of the communities of the actors involved increasing the potential for regional integration (Nshimbi, 2015, pp. 537-560).

They create the need for regional institution-building as national governments (on each side of the

border) develop institutions that promote and facilitate continuous interaction between the networks.

For example, informal traders have strong cross-border links which operate and succeed where politician's efforts are hindered by a lack of political will. Governments should promote and encourage development of non-state led cross-border links between grassroots and informal networks as a bottom-up approach to regional integration rather than the conventional state-led top-down approach. The essay considers the example of the success of cross-border interactions between non-state actors in the Indonesia-Malaysia-Singapore growth triangle in Southeast Asia, and its application in the Zambia-Malawi-Mozambique growth triangle in Southern Africa.

REGIONAL COOPERATION, REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND THE MOVE TOWARDS REGIONALISM

There is a contention amongst integration theorists on the extent to which states are the masters of a process in which people cooperate across national and regional borders. The literature on regionalism distinguishes between regional cooperation and regional integration. State-led regional cooperation involves the exercise of political authority by the state in intergovernmental institutions to collectively solve problems related to economic, political or security issues. By contrast, regional integration entails the creation of supranational or regional institutions and the delegation of political authority to such institutions to make collectively binding decisions that may, for example, dismantle national barriers to market access or peacefully settle regional conflicts (Börzel, forthcoming). Regionalism is driven by material gains such as "reduced transaction costs, policy externalities, economies of scale, technological innovation and greater economic and political weight in international markets and institutions".

> **Governments should promote and encourage development of non-state led cross-border links between grassroots and informal networks as a bottom-up approach to regional integration.**

Regionalism surged as the Cold War ended in 1991, along with the geopolitical conflicts that characterised it (Börzel, forthcoming). Dominant theories of regional cooperation and integration depict states as the main drivers of regionalism. State-led theories emphasise member states and governments as the principal agents in regional integration, driving policy-making to protect geopolitical interests and economic concerns of their constituencies. They emphasise the building of formal regional institutions through cooperation between states. For example, regional trade and investment patterns lead to the design of formal regional institutions that foster market access liberalisation and create security communities.

In Africa, state-led regional integration is often treated with suspicion, particularly amongst political leaders. Examples include the East African community where both Uganda and Tanzania treat Kenya with suspicion or Southern Africa where distrust exists over South Africa's regional hegemony. However, while African states remain reluctant to delegate political authority to regional organisations, they have formalised decision-making procedures and set up regional institutions such as custom unions, free trade areas and dispute settlement mechanisms.

Contemporary theories such as New Regionalism and non-Western theories of regionalism highlight the role of non-state actors (Akokpari, 2005) and informal institutions in building regional entities. The concept of governance accords legitimacy to non-state actors as drivers of regional integration (Börzel, forthcoming). Defined as "institutionalized modes of coordination through which collectively binding decisions are adopted and implemented," (Scharf, 1996, pp 15-39) formally or informally, governance structures do not determine but rather promote specific modes of coordination. Governance does not prioritise formal over informal institutions, accords equal status to both state and non-state actors (Börzel, forthcoming), and provides a framework for the operation of both state and non-state actors involved in regional institution building, including sub-regional informal cross-border networks.

NON-STATE ACTORS, INFORMAL CROSS-BORDER TRADERS AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Besides the traditional state actors, trans-national associations such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and businesses are the most visible non-state actors (Higgott, R. 1999). However, broadly, non-state actors include all actors other than the state, including community-based organisations, women's groups, ››

farmers' cooperatives, informal groups like grassroots organisations and informal private sector associations as defined under the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP)-European Union (EU) partnership framework (ECDPM, 2003). Informal cross-border traders – small-scale quasi-professionals engaged in registered or unregistered economic activities that occur across national borders (based mainly on the popular economy) – are also informal non-state actors (Mwaniki, nd.).

Multinational corporations, terrorist groups, rights activists and cross-border drug trade networks could also pass for non-state actors. Cross-border non-state actors such as informal traders engage in regular face-to-face contact that nurtures interpersonal relationships. These interactions foster collective beliefs, coalitions, information-gathering, trust and development of informal rules of behaviour over a prolonged period. However, contrary to political processes where politicians come and go, with their political agendas for regional integration, grassroots non-state actors are permanently based in their locales and continue with their cross-border network and trust-building activities despite changes in government (Nshimbi, 2015).

Prior to the Berlin Conference of 1884, which introduced borders between African countries dividing them as colonial possessions, ethnically diverse African communities lived in and occupied regions that today encompass two or more national territories. The Maasai for example, are found in both Kenya and Tanzania. The Nilotic group to which the Maasai and many other communities in Kenya and Uganda belong has its origins in southern Sudan. Other examples are Bantu-speaking communities found in various regions of east and Southern Africa. These communities have formed cross-border networks and engage in cross-border trade and other communal activities such as grazing. It is common for the Maasai in Kenya to cross the border and graze their cattle in Tanzania. The shared histories and backgrounds are not only limited to individual communities but also between them and others, across borders (Nshimbi, 2015).

A CASE STUDY OF GROWTH TRIANGLES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Growth triangles refer to zones of economic cooperation that straddle national boundaries and exploit complementarities between geographically contiguous areas of different countries to gain a competitive edge in production for export (Ramos, 1995). While their effects may be limited to the triangle, their benefits are subsequently applied to national economies of the countries involved, thus offering the prospect for regional integration without loss of economic sovereignty (Giok-Ling, 1995, pp. 337-344). The Southeast Asian Growth Triangles achieved much greater success through initiatives that thrived on activities of non-state actors where the state's role was limited to the provision of a conducive environment, such as infrastructure and enabling legislation that promoted informal cross-border interactions. However, the application of the model in Southern Africa is yet to match the Southeast Asian example.

SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE INDONESIA–MALAYSIA–SINGAPORE GROWTH TRIANGLE (IMS – GT)

Despite political efforts to regionally integrate East Asia, integration owes more to the dynamism of grassroots cross-border traders and networks of non-state actors (Nshimbi, 2015). National governments' contribution to this process was the creation of policies that facilitated entrepreneurial activities and grassroots cross-border interactions. The first Growth Triangle is the Indonesia–Malaysia–Singapore Growth Triangle (IMS-GT) (Giok-Ling, 1995) which is both market-driven and based on state interventions aimed at winning political legitimacy (Nshimbi, 2015). They aim to create a conducive environment for manufacturing, capital flows and political and economic interdependencies which are some of the pillars of the integration policies of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members.

Singaporean First Deputy Minister Goh Chok Tong proposed the IMS-GT in 1989 as a "coherent, trans-state economic zone of complementary specialization" encompassing the Malaysian State of Johor and Indonesia's Riau Islands (Rodan, 1997, pp 148-78). The regions forming the triangle complement each other. For example, "Singapore's advanced economy, developed infrastructure, and skilled human and financial capital, balance its meager land and natural resources relative to Indonesia and Malaysia. On the other hand, Johor (Malaysia) and Riau (Indonesia) are richer in labor, land and water resources and provide locations for Singapore's land and labor-intensive industries... The differences in factor endowments and levels of economic development, coupled with the discrepancies in the prices of factors

The Southeast Asian Growth Triangles achieved much greater success through initiatives that thrived on activities of non-state actors.

and cost structures in IMS-GT enhance its integration" (Nshimbi, 2015).

In its first five years, the IMS-GT had a population of approximately six million people and attracted investment of about US$10 billion from the private sector (Nshimbi, 2015). While the IMS-GT was a government initiative, it is driven primarily by the private sector and grassroots non-state actors. The states of Malaysia and Indonesia participate in the initiative by supporting the development of key infrastructure, finance and the formulation of policies that support non-state actors' activities. As a sub-regional initiative, the IMS-GT promotes the exploitation of economies of scale and creates trade and employment. Furthermore, it defies political boundaries and succeeds where political ideologies which previously divided Malaysia and Indonesia have failed since the interaction of Singaporean and Malaysian non-state actors is based on diverse ethnic links and a common colonial heritage (Nshimbi, 2015). While exclusive to participating countries, the growth triangle benefited the ASEAN region and accelerated the formation of the ASEAN free trade area (Chan, 1994).

SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE ZAMBIA–MALAWI–MOZAMBIQUE GROWTH TRIANGLE (ZMM-GT)

Compared to other regions, Africa has the largest number of Regional Economic Communities whose progressive integration through policy harmonisation is expected to result in the continental integration envisioned in Agenda 2063. The question that arises, though, is how to link the macro-continental agendas and policies with the realities on the ground. What is the role of citizens engaged in grassroots informal cross-border activities in achieving the aspirations articulated in Agenda 2063?

The concept of growth triangles was first tested in Africa in the late 1990s by a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) official who was inspired by the success of the East Asian triangle (Nshimbi, 2015) as an alternative to the non-effective conventional integration processes. Its aims were to foster improvements in infrastructure and promote joint ventures in agriculture and agro-based industries, mining, transport and communication (African Development Bank, 2016). The triangle comprised the

> **Growth triangles refer to zones of economic cooperation that straddle national boundaries.**

marginal localities of Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique and was established mainly to combat poverty in the region. The three regional borders share cultures, languages, kinship and ethnic identities that predate their colonisation.

The region has been home to communities with similar cultures and ethnic backgrounds. At its formation, the ZMM-GT had a population of approximately nine million people and received a cash injection of $100 million from UNDP for loans to the private sector (Nshimbi, 2015). Like the IMS-GT, the ZMM countries complement each other. Nshibi says, "Zambia brings opportunities in fishing, forestry, timber, mining and tourism. Malawi brings tobacco and abundant water since most of the mineral resources in the Malawian part of ZMM-GT such as coal, gold, platinum and uranium are not (fully) exploited. Mozambique's Tete province currently contributes skills in animal husbandry amongst others. Tete's coal rich deposits are yet to be exploited too" (Nshimbi, 2015).

Cross-border activities in the Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique triangle existed prior to the establishment of the ZMM-GT. Informal cross-border traders in the region sourced their goods from these countries. However, survey findings show an expansion in the type of goods traded across ZMM-GT's borders (Nshimbi, 2015) indicating ››

that traders are sourcing their goods outside the triangle. Despite the slow progress of the ZMM-GT, informal contacts immensely strengthen regional integration in Southern Africa. However, less has been done to promote or account for informal cross-border trade making its economic contribution "invisible" outside formal economic records (Mwaniki, nd). Even though Article 2 of the SADC Protocol aims to improve the climate for domestic, cross-border and foreign investment (Mwaniki, nd), the existing environment discriminates against informal cross-border traders such as women who face gender-based discrimination (Mayisela, 2015), visa-related issues and corruption at border posts. Thus, various institutional reforms are necessary to create an enabling environment through activities that support informal cross-border trade and informal non-state actors.

CONCLUSION

Processes towards regional integration demand participation of both state and non-state actors including both formal and informal business communities. That non-state informal cross-border actors have the potential to enhance regional integration and succeed where political efforts have failed is evident in the Asian growth triangles. Regional and continental integration in Africa stands to benefit if states promote activities and cooperation between both formal and informal cross-border traders and networks. For example, where one community is found in more than two adjacent countries or relatively close borders, cultural communications and interactions should be encouraged between them and other communities as a way of enhancing regional cooperation and integration.

In Asia, ethnic Chinese businesses foster the regions development and integration by hosting Chinese businesses and cross-border cooperation between Chinese nationals. While policy initiatives are needed to encourage participation of non-state actors, care should be taken during policy reforms as some policies may conversely marginalise the very people who should benefit from them (Mwaniki, J. nd). Retroactive regulations such as complicated taxation processes may expose informal businesses to burdensome regulations (FAO, CUTS, 2017).

Regional and continental integration in Africa stands to benefit if states promote activities and cooperation between both formal and informal cross-border traders and networks.

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FREE MARKET FOUNDATION DISMISSES OXFAM INEQUALITY REPORT AS 'FLIMSY'

By ***Michael Nassen-Smith, Carilee Osborne and Rekang Jankie***

Michael Nassen-Smith is Deputy Director of the Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA); Carilee Osborne is Head of Research, IFAA and Rekang Jankie is Student and Youth Coordinator, IFAA.

Michael Smith

~~Regang~~ Jankie

In January 2018, Oxfam released its report on global inequality as the World Economic Forum gathered in Davos, Switzerland. In response, the Free Market Foundation (FMF) criticised Oxfam on several grounds, but essentially argued that those living in poverty stand to gain from the increasing number of billionaires. IFAA staff responded by publishing an article in the ***Daily Maverick*** *exposing the weakness of the FMF claims, and saying that Oxfam should be praised for continuously alerting the global public to the threat that rising inequality poses to social and political stability.*

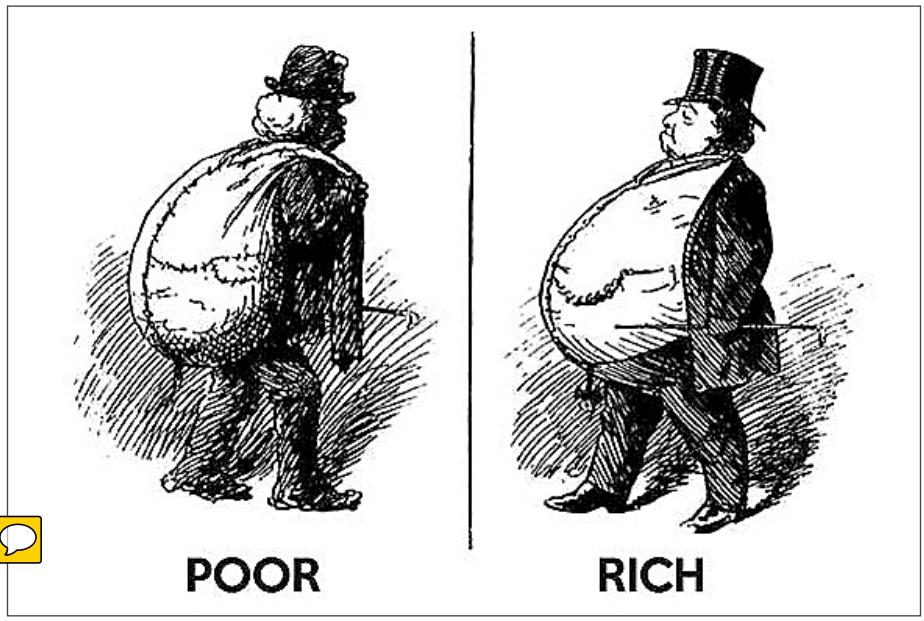
In the context of the World Economic Forum's annual meeting at Davos, Switzerland Oxfam released and presented its 2018 report on global inequality. In response to this, the Free Market Foundation (FMF) advanced a number of contestable claims relating to the impact of "free enterprise" on "the poor". These include the notion that those living in poverty stand to gain from the swelling of the ranks of billionaires. We believe that it is in the public interest to place the FMF's assertions under scrutiny and we thus evaluate them below:

> **. . . the wealth of modern Western economies is based largely on state initiative and the promotion of national industries through tariffs and subsidies.**

1. The FMF claim that the poor have been especially empowered by free enterprise.

This is a claim made repeatedly by the foundation and conservative economic commentators in South Africa. The FMF would have us believe that any form of state intervention will frustrate the aims of eradicating inequality and poverty. However, the historical record provides numerous examples to the contrary. One could refer to Brazil's Bolsa Familia programme, in which small amounts of cash are ››

transferred to the poor in return for keeping their children in school and attending preventive health care clinics, South Korea's developmental state and the thriving social democracies of Scandinavia. In addition, Ha-Joon Chang has argued persuasively that the wealth of modern Western economies is based largely on state initiative and the promotion of national industries through tariffs and subsidies. To this we could undoubtedly add lucrative state-backed colonial and imperial enterprises. Fortunately, in Africa, we are blessed with ample evidence that the structural reforms and liberalisation that the FMF would presumably support fail when implemented.



2. Increases in billionaire wealth is good for all.

The FMF does not dispute the swelling ranks of the billionaire class. Instead, it claims that the creation of billionaires is something for which the poor should be grateful. Such a view is particularly concerning given that it is now widely accepted that a belief in "trickle-down" theory is unsustainable. Even the International Monetary Fund has signalled the dangers of unequal growth, with Managing Director Christine Lagarde warning the World Economic Forum about this in 2013. There is indeed little evidence that the creation of billionaires translates into greater prosperity for the poor, particularly when wealth is predicated on inheritance transfers, cronyism, tax avoidance, the suppression of wages and deteriorating work conditions. Moreover, wealth created through entrepreneurial ingenuity and innovation does not necessarily translate into broad social benefit. For example, increasing automation places workers under threat of losing their jobs or, at best, limiting their already fragile bargaining powers. Recently, Forbes reported that Jeff Bezos, the owner of Amazon, made $2.8-billion in one day after his company introduced technology that eliminated the need for cashiers. While the business press lauds Bezos's entrepreneurial spirit, should we not consider the social impact of the job losses that result? While abstract undergraduate economics text books might assume perfect mobility of labour, in reality workers are unlikely to be able to shift work in time to stave off the effects of poverty. Moreover, as capital accumulation in general becomes less reliant on labour intensive industries, the opportunities for alternative work becomes scarcer.

> **The owner of Amazon, Jeff Bezos, made $2.8-billion in one day after his company introduced technology that eliminated the need for cashiers.**

3. 'It is perverse in the extreme for a self-described charity to call so explicitly for the reduction of wealth.

A charity should be concerned with the welfare of the poor, not the prosperity of the wealthy.' Nowhere in Oxfam's report is there a direct call for the reduction of wealth. Rather, Oxfam proposes a fairer distribution of wealth. The FMF sets up a false dichotomy between concern for the poor and prosperity of the wealthy. This is an attempt to dodge the substantive issue raised by Oxfam, namely, that a significant portion of wealth is being created unfairly and at the expense of the poor and working class. To ignore this relationship between the rich and the poor is at best an oversight and at worst purposeful intellectual dishonesty.

4. The US has spent a large amount of money on welfare and this has not eliminated poverty.

Therefore, we should not develop a comprehensive welfare system in South Africa. It is a strange choice to use the US as an example of a welfare state given the limited provision of healthcare, public higher education or social safety nets in that country. The use of nominal figures by the FMF obscures how little is spent on such provisions relative to GDP and

in comparison to other advanced industrial countries. A sound analysis of welfare states and their impact on poverty would involve comparing the relative social spending of the US and states in the OECD. In the US, public social expenditure is 19.3% of GDP with poverty levels at 16.8%. In comparison, the average OECD public social expenditure is 21% of GDP with an average poverty rate of 11.59%. The difference is far greater when one compares the poverty rates in the US with social democracies like Denmark (5.5%), Finland (6.3%), Norway (8.1%), Sweden (9.2%), France (8.1%) and to a lesser extent the UK (10.9%). These are all countries that have significantly higher public social spending than the US and have subsequently managed to achieve lower poverty rates. The FMF and its supporters might wish to look at the responses of many Norwegians to Donald Trump's query as to why the US was not encouraging more immigration from that country. Additionally, wages in the US are often so low that even those employed need to receive welfare cheques in order to survive, often while working double jobs or multiple shifts. For example, Walmart employees receive a total of $6.2-billion in welfare payments. Similarly, as a Bloomberg report shows,

Billionaire wealth has risen by an annual average of 13% since 2010 – six times faster than the wages of ordinary workers, which have risen by a yearly average of just 2%.

Amazon in Ohio receives a number of subsidies that are putting public services under strain. This is indicative of how the US state has to step in to account for market failures created in a liberalised economy where capital has such overwhelming power over labour. The Walton family, owners of Walmart, have a combined net worth of $130-billion, while Jeff Bezos is the wealthiest person in the world. It's clear that the mere existence of these wealthy people has not lifted many of their employees out of poverty.

5. 'Wealth cannot be condemned if it was created without force and in direct service to the poor.'

In the conditions of the market economy, one is compelled to sell one's labour in order to survive. If this compulsion is what the FMF means as "without force" then the phrase surely loses all meaning. As Professor of Sociology at New York University, Vivek Chibber, lays out in the Jacobin debate with Reason, "there is no choice in capitalism whether or not you can go to work". Without the provision of basic goods and services outside of the market, workers' "choice" hinges on survival, in which case the word holds meaning only in its most narrow sense. This claim also sidesteps Oxfam's report that as many as 40 million people still work under conditions of slavery, figures backed up by the International Labour Organisation. We have already disputed the claim that wealth has been created for the poor. However, it might be worthwhile to quote the following statistic to underscore the point: "Billionaire wealth has risen by an annual average of 13% since 2010 – six times faster than the wages of ordinary workers, which have risen by a yearly average of just 2%."

6. The increased immigration to Europe in recent years proves that 'the poor' do not want increased government in the form of welfare and instead want to live in countries that embrace the free market.

. . . wages in the US are often so low that even those employed need to receive welfare cheques in order to survive.

FMF president Leon Louw references the large numbers of immigrants entering Europe as proof that the poor are fleeing welfare states to those who embrace free market principles. This is patently false. The vast majority of refugees entering Europe come from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. These are countries that hardly subscribe to the social democratic vision that Oxfam advocates. On the other hand, the countries where refugees are fleeing include Norway, Sweden, Germany, the UK, France, all countries with long traditions of welfare provision and social democracy to varying degrees. Greece, where many refugees are currently living, has a radical leftist party in power. Describing a choice to flee civil war, terrorism and violence for relative safety as a choice between socialism and free-market is plainly dishonest. Overall, the FMF dismisses the Oxfam Inequality Report on flimsy grounds. Oxfam should be praised for continuously alerting the global public to the threat that rising inequality poses to social and political stability. In the most unequal society in the world, South Africans should pay attention to their message and not be distracted by baseless assertions propagated by those pretending to care for the poor.

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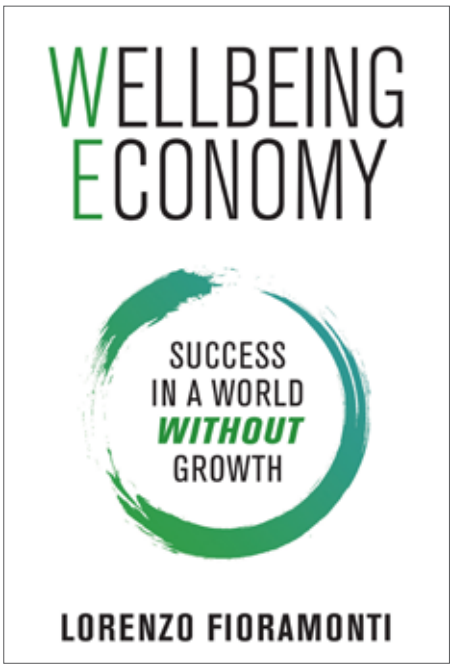


The Wellbeing Economy: Success in a World without Growth

Lorenzo Fioramonti

Pan Macmillan, 2017

Review by Carilee Osborne

Located within a global crisis characterised by extreme inequality, devastating climate change and hopelessness, *The Wellbeing Economy* picks up where Fioramonti's previous works, notably *GDP: Gross Domestic Problem*, leave off. As with that book, Fioramonti lays out a myriad of problems with mainstream economic dogma that posit growth as the basis for human flourishing. *The Wellbeing Economy*, however, goes beyond a mere criticism of GDP as a measure of development, introducing instead the idea of "wellbeing" as the proposed basis for fundamentally shifting the nature of the economy. Wellbeing is said to, "[connect] self-interest with social benefit. It appeals to our natural predisposition not only to thrive individually but also to care for others. It embeds us in those ecosystems without which we can't flourish, but that we have irrationally abandoned." (p. 32)

After focusing on the different areas where "wellbeing" can effect change (business, politics and society), the book outlines an alternative vision for what should underpin our economy in order to move beyond the myopia of growth-centred, trickle-down economics.

Fioramonti begins this task by impressing on us both the banality and potential of 'the economy'. Described as "nothing more than a system of rules...to organize society and distribute tasks and resources", changes to the economy are said to also have the potential to "profoundly reorganize the world, both politically and socially." (p. 32-33)

At the heart of the first part of the book is a compelling effort to show the inefficiencies of the growth regime and the "real" levels of profit by pointing to so-called externalities (such as environmental degradation) that are not currently accounted for when assessing economic performance. Replacing the (in)famous invisible hand of Adam Smith with an 'invisible foot', Fioramonti details the immense ecological and social footprint of corporations that undermine their claims to efficiency. With Donald Trump occupying the White House and the consequent abandonment of environmental regulations, statements such as "[for the growth] ideology, natural wealth has no value unless owned and exploited" are particularly pertinent. (p. 35)

> **...the book outlines an alternative vision for what should underpin our economy.**

Economics, however, is not his only target. He critiques both dominant accounting systems and legislation that allows for the growth paradigm to remain. While the basis of these critiques might seem academic, this is not a book merely for those steeped in social theory: technical jargon is limited, and studies are explained in a clear, accessible way. In fact, one criticism may be that the academically-minded might want more detail with regards to measurement and methodology.

While portraying a disturbing picture of our current crises, Fioramonti also emphasises the numerous innovations that allow us to push back against the individualism and reliance on big corporations that are features of the last 50 years. These innovations, however, should not be confused with the type that fails to recognise the political nature of problems: his is not the innovation that creates bulletproof backpacks for children in the US while ignoring the systemic roots of gun violence. Rather, the heart of these descriptions is the collapsing of the producer/consumer binary and the author uses case studies throughout the book to illustrate real examples of what is already being done in this area.

The book is a utopian vision and, while many of the proposals are common-sense, they perhaps sometimes underestimate the power of the capitalist structure and the internalised growth logic. This is most apparent in discussions of technologies like Uber, Airbnb or Bitcoin. The potential of these innovations is lauded while serious consideration of the way in which they have been co-opted is not adequately dealt with. Consider, for example, the role of Airbnb in pushing up housing prices in a city like Cape Town. Individual landlords buy up entire apartment blocks to rent out to tourists for lucrative returns, pushing local people further out of the city. This is not merely an enigma and any proposal for using these kinds of technologies needs to account for their potential co-optation into something that follows the same patterns of exploitation and accumulation as traditional industries.

As neoliberalism and growth-centred policies lead increasingly to unsustainable economies, not only do we need to challenge them, we need to imagine alternatives that allow us to begin to build societies based on people over profit. As with other left-wing messages in the Bernie Sanders/Jeremy Corbyn era, Fioramonti is telling us to take advantage of small openings; leverage available power; recognise the interrelated nature of the political, economic and social; and embrace the potential for technology that is harnessed with necessary legislative protections.

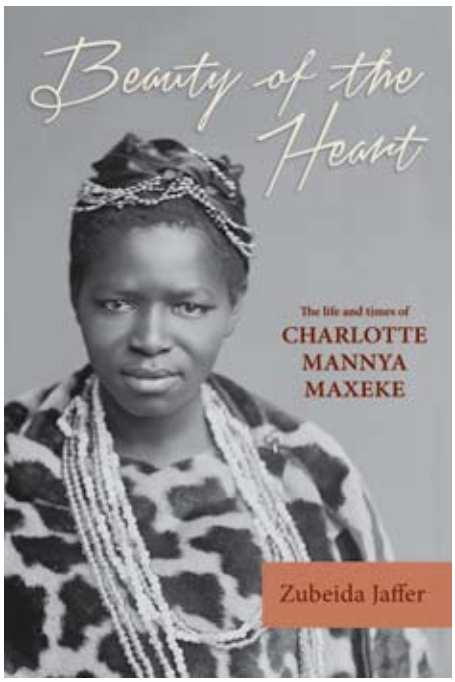
The book ends with a set of general principles where people can begin to effect change as well as a manifesto targeting South Africa specifically, where Fioramonti lives. These principles and the message of the book as a whole illustrate its true value: to lay bare the contradictions that are embedded in society, disrupt our internalised assumptions and inspire us to look at the world differently. NA

Beauty of the Heart: The Life and Times of Charlotte Mannya Maxeke

Zubeida Jaffer

Sun Press, 2016

Review by Claire-Anne Louise Lester



The life of Charlotte Mannya Maxeke tells the story of one of the most remarkable people in South African history and public life. In this biography, Jaffer weaves a narrative that traverses a great deal of history: from Maxeke's birth in Uitenhage, Eastern Cape in 1871 through her primary education at a mission school and her move to Kimberley when diamonds were discovered. Jaffer traces her travels abroad with the Jubilee Choir and her experience at Wilberforce University in America. We are introduced to Maxeke as part of a burgeoning black intelligentsia, but who is not bound to her class background and returns to South Africa to continue her work as a champion of human rights. She was South Africa's first African woman to obtain a university degree and became a key political figure in the global struggle against oppression, whatever form it took – racial, gender or cultural.

From her youth, Maxeke showed devotion to her Christian faith which was the fount of her strong moral convictions. But sources reveal how she wrestled with the contradictions of missionary work in South Africa in the context of settler colonialism, *de facto* separate development and the dispossession of indigenous people from their land.

Jaffer adeptly contextualises the narrative of Charlotte's experiences against the rapid industrialisation in the Cape. This is spurred by the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley and Jaffer sketches the changes in farming and the increasingly precarious situation of landless African people. Jaffer recounts how Kimberley was the first city in the world to install street lamps in 1882, and where the first stock exchange was created in 1883. We are shown how early capitalist accumulation became the centre of development, while human development suffered.

Charlotte and her sister moved to Kimberley during this time of dramatic change, where she taught at the Wesleyan school. It is in Kimberley

that she is introduced to an intellectual circle. In Jaffer's words, "They straddled the ongoing divide between their traditional way of living and adaptation to the way of life of their conquerers. This was to be a constant tension for Charlotte and her contemporaries as they evolved into the intellectual strata of South Africa" (p. 35). In many aspects of her life, Maxeke adopted many identities but never fully wedded herself to any one of them.

Drawing on interviews with Charlotte's sister, the book illustrates Charlotte's attempt to reconcile her unwavering belief in Christianity with the harsh reality she was witnessing, and her attraction to empiricism. She says, "Those Europeans who are wicked are the messengers of satan, sent to confuse us". When asked how she could tell which of the white people were really Christians or Satan's messengers, she responded, "By study" (p. 24).

She remained a Christian throughout her life, without ever conceiving the religion as something imposed on her by a foreign power. That she never undermined or devalued her traditional religious practices speaks volumes about the reverence she had for her African origins. In a speech delivered at the Women's Mite Conference of the AME church in South Africa in the 1930s she stated, "Why, mother, we were not Godless people when the missionaries came; we were worshipping God in our own way" (p. 147). She was, of course, referring to ancestor worship. Moreover, when delivering a speech at her alma mater she defended her local traditions saying, "Rather would I be at the mercy of a witchdoctor than under the misgovernment of an intemperate ruler" (p. 72). This is a portrait of an individual who accepted the secular state as an inevitable part of industrial life but approached each 'religion' with equal respect, using the yardstick of their potential to advance human well-being.

She grew up during a period marred by conflict between colonisers and indigenous inhabitants as widespread resistance to British settlement spread. Cetshwayo, the Zulu king, defeated the British at Isandlwana, "after wiping out an entire regiment of soldiers" (p. 8). Jaffer writes how this news would have travelled to young Charlotte, whose spirit of resistance would celebrate. For Charlotte, education was central to this resistance. Jaffer describes the transnational character of struggle against oppression and the defining role that education played in its alleviation.

Despite Charlotte's relatively privileged position as an educated woman, and having been able to travel to London to sing with her choir, she endured ongoing oppression and humiliation. Upon arriving in London for a series of performances, including one for the Queen, their host informed them that the choir's name would have to be changed from the Jubilee Choir (adapted from their meeting of the Orpheus McAdoo and his Jubilee singers) to "Kaffir Choir" (p. 47). It is narrated how, "Charlotte and the others objected vociferously to no avail" and they were especially humiliated by the word Kaffir as it echoed the Xhosa word *Kafula*, meaning "to spit on" (p. 47). Despite this horrible experience, Charlotte's firmness of conviction led her to excel in London, where she met renowned feminist Emily Pankhurst. In a remarkable feat, she published an article in the London *Review of Reviews*, where she implored the British public to treat people in Africa as they would in England and made a number of demands, including that the British "give our children free education".

Charlotte had the opportunity to attend Wilberforce University – the very first tertiary institution owned and run by African Americans. Her classmates were freed slaves or their children and she was taught by the likes of W.E.B. du Bois, who admired her greatly. She became steeped in intellectual appoaches to structural oppression (p. 64).

Upon her return to South Africa, Jaffer tells us of her rejection from political groups such as the South African Native Convention on account of her being a woman (p. 79), and how, in 1908, she established a school in Evaton through the AME Church. She often delivered speeches at churches, universities and other influential platforms, always with the aim of enhancing cross-racial relationships and the welfare of African people. "Let us try and make our Christianity practical," (p. 151) she said. From there she went on to found the Bantu Women's League (BWL) and was its first president.

The BWL was one of the first nation-wide political groups of South African women, and Charlotte linked it with other organisations including the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) and the Women's Enfranchisement Association of the Union (WEAU). The League opposed the imposition of pass laws: the constraints they placed on opportunity and the degradation of African traditional values. She worked tirelessly for the abolition of pass laws for both men and women. She is cited as saying, "How can men liberate women from the pass laws when they themselves are subjected to them? Let men and women cooperate against these pernicious laws…in the building up of a nation, women must lead." (p. 117)

Jaffer takes some creative license in reconstructing this story, as details of Charlotte's life, especially her early life, including her birth date, are simply not known. Nonetheless, she is able to bring narrative texture to a life that was rich in its own right and she uses Maxeke's life to tell a story of the impact that global structural constraints had on her life and the lives of African people. NA

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