



SPECIAL ISSUE

*Decolonizing African Studies:
Celebrating and rethinking 10 years
of GAP and 30 years of Afrika Focus*

AFRIKA FOCUS

Volume 31 – Nr. 2 – 2018

GUEST EDITOR: LUCE BEECKMANS

biannual - semestriel

AFRIKA FOCUS

Volume 31 – Nr. 2 – 2018

Periodical of the association AFRIKA BRUG & GAP

Périodique d'AFRIKA BRUG a.s.b.l. & GAP

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DECOLONIZING AFRICAN STUDIES: LOOKING INTO THE GAPs

Luce Beeckmans

Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, Ghent University, Belgium

This special issue of *Afrika Focus* brings together a selection of keynotes delivered at the international symposia of the Ghent Africa Platform (the so-called GAPSYSMs), as well as a number of the Mandela Lectures organised by the Ghent Africa Platform (GAP) (for an overview, see Table 1).¹ The motivation for compiling these papers was the 10th anniversary of GAP in 2017. The Africa Platform is one of the oldest UGent regional platforms, bringing together all relevant expertise at Ghent University concerning the African continent, and fostering academic collaboration with African universities. In 2017 we also celebrated the 30th anniversary of the scientific journal *Afrika Focus*, which is closely linked to, but predates GAP by more than 20 years. As this special issue aims to give an insight into GAP's scientific activities over the past decade, former and current (vice-) presidents of GAP were invited to write an article: respectively Marleen Temmerman & Karel Arnaout and Patrick Van Damme & Johan Lagae, who was replaced by Kristien Michiels in 2018. They were asked to contribute papers in which they reflect on the past 10 years of GAP, departing from their own research interests. In addition, we invited the Congolese photographer Sammy Baloji, who participated in GAPSYSM 4 (*[Un]disciplined encounters*), to develop a visual essay together with Filip De Boeck, making the special issue indeed something special.

At the symbolic 10th GAPSYSM (*Celebrating partnership with Africa*), held in 2016, the South African scholar Premesh Lalu gave a thought-provoking keynote lecture, which opens this special issue. Lalu's keynote is a convincing plea to decolonize African Studies following a new pathway, 'one that will give to Europe an escape from the inheritance of Eurocentrism as it will give to Africa its place in a planetary library' (p.20). When I started my work as guest editor in 2017 by contacting the potential contributors to this special

1 Whereas the academic GAPSYSMs are organised annually on one or two days at Ghent University (with the exception of GAPSYSM 4, which took place in Brussels), the public Mandela Lecture is a yearly evening event. At some of the GAPSYSMs we also had 'Annual Distinguished Lectures on Africa' (ADLAs) and these too were taken into consideration for publication in this special issue.

GAPSYMS (in Ghent, December, unless stated otherwise)

GAPSYM 1 | 2007

Heritage and/as reproduction in Africa. Outcomes and limits

GAPSYM 2 | 2008

Mobilities in Africa – Africa in mobility

GAPSYM3 | 2009

Gendering research in/on Africa

GAPSYM 4 | 2010, Brussels

[un]disciplined encounters: science as terrain of postcolonial interaction between Africa and Europe
— past and future

GAPSYM 5 | 2011

(r)Urban Africa: multidisciplinary approaches to the African city

GAPSYM 6 | 2012

Africa: (post-) development?

GAPSYM 7 | 2013

Africa and Food: challenges, risks and opportunities

GAPSYM 8 | 2014

Colonial memories at present: decolonizing Belgium?

GAPSYM 9 | 2015

Trading places: The role of trade with Africa

GAPSYM 10 | 2016

Celebrating partnership with Africa: Demonstrating the value of international collaboration on teaching and research

GAPSYM 11 | 2017

Health in Africa - an interdisciplinary approach

GAPSYM 12 | 2018 | September

GAP hosts Tropentag 2018

Mandela Lectures (in Ghent, November)

Mandela Lecture 1 | 2014

Lecture by Prof. Brian O'Connell: Global challenges for universities in a North-South context

Mandela Lecture 2 | 2015

Lecture by Prof. Iain Low: Space and transformation. Architecture in an age of radical transformation

Mandela Lecture 3 | 2016

Albie Sachs in conversation with Eva Brems

Mandela Lecture 4 | 2017

Tom Lanoye in conversation with Antjie Krog about the role of Nelson Mandela in South Africa and the world today

Mandela Lecture 5 | 2018

Lecture by Zelda La Grange: Nelson Mandela - the legacy

Table 1: Overview of GAPSYMS and Mandela Lectures.

issue, Lalu's keynote was given to them as an invitation to be self-reflexive about their work when (re-)writing their keynote talk article. Yet, Lalu's keynote also provides a good background for reflecting on (the production process of) this special issue, and more generally on GAP's scientific activities in the last 10 years. The following words of Lalu are especially inspirational in this respect: 'In pursuing new relations of research across hemispheres, we may need to rearticulate not only what is absent from our discourse, but rather the latent content that remains stubbornly unseen in what we see' (p.22).

I have been involved in GAP since GAPSVM2 (*Mobilities in Africa – Africa in mobility*) in 2008. At that time, I participated with a poster presentation. This first presentation evolved into a lengthy association that has given me quite a good insider perspective. But even so, diving into the GAP archive from the last 10 years to compile this special issue has been particularly enlightening, but of course the intention was not to establish a complete genealogy of GAP. The outcome of my fairly intense efforts to track down keynote speakers and convince them to publish their texts, considering the fact that it was even for them often difficult to retrace their own papers – or sometimes even remember they had even been at a GAP symposium, is well summarized in the table of contents of this special issue. There is much to learn from this table of contents, but also from what is *not* in it, to refer back to Lalu's keynote, both when it comes to the merits and gaps of GAP. In the following I will discuss this in more detail.

If we consider the table of contents, we see that this special issue presents an engaging collection of texts from a wide array of disciplinary fields on topics such as (urban) development, African culture, African diaspora, health care and agriculture. This clearly represents the wide variety of topics GAP has been tackling at its events, and this from very interdisciplinary perspectives. I believe GAP can be proud of having hosted so many interesting and influential scholars over the last ten years, as well as being presided over by a team of committed and prominent academics. We are extremely delighted to have their contributions in this special issue, which is in fact also a book publication, something the special cover reveals. Two of the keynotes are not represented here by their keynote talk as such, but by a review of their work, as they either lacked the time to revise their keynote, or because it had been published already elsewhere.

Some contributors, amongst whom the two authors of the reviews, responded well to my call to keep the decolonisation debate in mind during their writing and did an outstanding job in being self-reflexive about their work and its position within African Studies. Other scholars replied that their research was 'more orientated towards the future', or that their research area 'has never been a colony'. This demonstrates that 'decolonisation' has not yet become a generally understood and well-established concept within the broader field of African Studies, particularly not in certain parts of the world and in certain scientific domains – again stressing the importance of universality and interdisciplinarity when it comes to our attempt to 'decolonize' the field.²

2 An informative reading list on 'decolonisation' can be found here: <https://theconversation.com/want-to-understand-the-decolonisation-debate-heres-your-reading-list-51279>. A (non-exhaustive) list of interesting African-authored academic studies on Africa can be consulted here: <http://democracyinafrica.org/decolonising-the-university-the-african-politics-reading-list/>

| | Authors | Sex author | Nationality author | Research area | Involvement |
|----|-----------------------------------|------------|----------------------|---------------|---|
| 1 | Luce Beeckmans | Female | Belgium | / | Guest editor |
| 2 | Premesh Lalu | Male | South Africa | South Africa | Keynote GAPSVM 10 |
| 3 | Ray Bush | Male | United Kingdom | / | Keynote GAPSVM 6 |
| 4 | James R. Brennan | Male | USA | Tanzania | Keynote GAPSVM 5 |
| 5 | Albie Sachs | Male | South Africa | South Africa | Mandela Lecture 3 |
| 6 | Iain Low | Male | South Africa | South Africa | Mandela Lecture 1 |
| 7 | Johan Lagae & Jacob Sabakinu | Male | Belgium/ DR Congo | DR Congo | Vice-president GAP |
| 8 | Marleen Temmerman | Female | Belgium | Kenya | President GAP |
| 9 | Patrick Van Damme | Male | Belgium | / | President GAP, Keynote GAPSVM 9 |
| 10 | Tesfaalem G. Asfaha <i>et al.</i> | Male | Ethiopia/ Belgium | Ethiopia | Keynote GAPSVM 10 |
| 11 | Karel Arnaut | Male | Belgium | / | Vice-president GAP, Keynote GAPSVM 4 |
| 12 | Lye Mudaba Yoka | Male | DR Congo | DR Congo | GAPSVM 4 |
| 13 | Patrick Mudekereza | Male | DR Congo | DR Congo | GAPSVM 4 |
| 14 | Sammy Baloji & Filip De Boeck | Male | DR Congo | DR Congo | GAPSVM 4 |
| 15 | Simon De Nys-Ketels | Male | Belgium | / | Keynote GAPSVM 11 |
| 16 | Gillian Matthys | Female | Belgium | DR Congo | Keynote GAPSVM 8 |

/ = no single country focus

Table 2: Interpreting this special issue of Afrika Focus.

It is precisely within this decolonizing spirit that there must be some room for critical remarks, even in this anniversary issue (for an overview, see Table 2). Firstly, it becomes very clear from the table of contents that women are severely underrepresented in this special issue. Out of 16 contributions, only 3 stem from a female author, namely this editorial, one of the reviews and the article from the former GAP president Marleen Temmerman. Indeed, looking back at all the GAPSVM programmes, GAP has had almost no female keynotes over the last 10 years. To complicate the matter even further, I could not find anyone from GAPSVM 3 (*Gendering research in/on Africa*) available to contribute to this issue. Considering the fact that a significant number of women are active within African Studies, I believe it is our task, if we ever want to break the glass ceiling in academia, to more actively engage them, this includes as keynote speakers on our GAPSVMs or as Mandela Lecturers.

Secondly, half of the contributors to this special issue are African. This in itself is an accomplishment, considering the fact that it was particularly difficult to retrace the African keynotes of the GAPSVMs: their email-addresses no longer functioned or they could not be found on the web. Sometimes I lost track of them after an initial contact and felt compelled to use my network to bring them back into the project (mostly via *old school* telephone contact). My endeavours were, however, not always very fruitful. In order to have

enough African voices included in this issue – which is the essence of what ‘decolonisation’ truly heralds – I decided to contact a number of African participants to the GAPSYSMs who were not keynotes as such (especially those working in the cultural sphere, a prime area of African empowerment). Yet, compared to how easy it was to get in touch with the non-African keynotes, I can only conclude that there is still a sharp divide to overcome in terms of researchers’ visibility and approachability. Moreover, it is important to note that in this special issue we have contributions from African scholars from only three (out of 54) African countries: Ethiopia, DR Congo (a former Belgian colony, hence a strong post-colonial link) and South Africa (a country with a specific status within the continent also on an academic level). Hence, GAP is reaching only a very small range of nationalities, and the ones that we reach are very dependent on personal networks of the members of the board of GAP. Consequently, in some ways decolonization still has to start and certainly when it comes to involving scholars from Africa at our symposia and in our publications. More than ever, certainly in terms of accessibility, it seems time to finally put our ideas into practice and organize a GAPSYM on African soil. Meanwhile, more funding to cover travel costs for Africans to come to Ghent is necessary, as well as more encouragement and guidance for Africans to publish in *Afrika Focus*, taking into consideration the uneven access to academic resources.

Thirdly, the African countries or regions on which the articles, apart from the more general ones, focus, seem fairly representative of the areas where UGent researchers, and so GAP, are working: East Africa, with a prime focus on Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania; Central Africa with a prime focus on DR Congo; and South Africa, hence only five countries. It is difficult therefore not to notice that West Africa is completely missing from this special issue. More generally, I observed that French contributions are rare at the GAP symposia, with the possible exception of the successful special edition of GAPSYM 4 in Brussels. This is another working point, as French speaking areas in Africa seem doubly neglected in the Anglo-Saxon and Euro-American dominated academic world. Precisely because of this, and perhaps as opposed to current developments in academia, I would make a plea to keep the journal of *Afrika Focus* bilingual in the future, and possibly also add a French website for the submission of papers.

It is of course not entirely clear to what extent the above observations are representative for all the GAPSYSMs and Mandela Lectures, let alone for the entire functioning of GAP or the complete *Afrika Focus* archive from the last 30 years – this was not the objective of my exercise. Yet, it is obvious that there is still much work ahead of us to ‘decolonize African Studies’, even within our own platform – even though it has always been the prime mission of GAP to criticize stubborn and longstanding stereotypes about the African continent. I strongly believe that some of the articles in this special issue will elicit a deeper sense of awareness in that sense. Moreover, I hope that my recommendations will be an inspiration to draw from in the future while rethinking GAP. It is only by continuously questioning the ways ‘we define, distribute, and also deny, knowledge’ through our own research, that we will be able to break with the legacies of exclusion and oppression (in-

stead of reinforcing them often unconsciously).³ It is also only in this way that ‘decolonisation’ will not become another façade for continuing what we already have been doing for decades, for instance within the framework of development cooperation (instead of fully-fledged international collaboration on equal grounds and without paternalistic motives). Ultimately, the fundamental question ‘For whom do we research Africa and for what purpose?’ always deserves legitimate answers.⁴

By now it has become evident that this is not a special issue replete in self-praise, which is well reflected in the title ‘Decolonizing African Studies: celebrating and rethinking 10 years of GAP’. Indeed, self-glorification has never been the spirit of GAP. Rather it is one of critical (self-)reflection with the aim of (scientific) betterment.

Finally, this is also the place to sincerely thank everyone who has, in one way or another, contributed to GAP in the past and those who will in the future. In particular we have to thank the GAP coordinators Annelies Verdoolaege and Dominique Godfroid. GAP would simply not exist without their driving force. In fact, as has often been the case during the GAP events, these two (female) persons are quite invisible in this special issue. Also here we might seek to decolonise the minds a little more, in particular because their commitment is far-reaching and transformative. An example of their behind-the-scenes engagement is their well appreciated involvement in the International Students Conference organised at Ghent University in November 2018. It is at this kind of occasion that we can see a new generation of self-confident Africans who, perhaps steered by the #RhodesMustFall campaign in South Africa, will no longer tolerate the structural inequalities deeply embedded in the academic system, and in the production of knowledge more generally, both in Africa and in the West. A special thanks furthermore goes to David Chan for tirelessly proof-reading our texts over the last decade and to Filip Erkens for taking care of the lay-out and design of our journal.

Thanks to all of you and please enjoy this very special edition of Afrika Focus.

3 For some interesting (academic) initiatives in that sense, see: ‘Decolonizing the Academy Conference’, University of Edinburgh, Centre of African Studies & Global Development Academy, 2016; The Conference ‘African Mobilities – Reshaping narratives and practices of circulation and exchange’, The Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden, 19-21 September 2018; the call for paper proposals on ‘decolonizing curricula’ for the African Studies Association Conference, forthcoming in November 2018; the call for papers ‘Decolonizing the Academy’ for the special issue of *Critical African Studies* (forthcoming); the recently published special issue ‘Decolonizing African Studies’, *African Studies Review*, vol. 61 no. 3, September 2018, pp. 1-7.

4 The two citations in this paragraph are derived from the conference abstract of the ‘Decolonizing the Academy Conference’, University of Edinburgh, Centre of African Studies & Global Development Academy, 2016: <http://imaf.cnrs.fr/LMG/pdf/decolonizing-the-academy-2016-call-for-papers2.pdf>.

THINKING ACROSS HEMISPHERES: FURTHER NOTES ON OVERSIGHTS AND BLIND SPOTS IN DISCIPLINARY AFRICAN STUDIES¹

Premesh Lalu

Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape, South Africa

In the midst of ever-hardening nationalist sentiment across the world, the humanities may need to recall its long history of thinking across hemispheres. In such balkanised times, we may have to rethink the work that a hermeneutics of suspicion performs for a critical humanities as well as how Africa is bound to particular configurations of area studies that emerge out of the geopolitical distributions of knowledge during the Cold War. To the extent that we might develop a history of a critical humanities across hemispheres, this paper asks what it might mean to return to a concept of freedom formed through a sustained effort at reckoning with the worldliness specific to the anti-colonial struggles in Africa. There, a critical humanities may discover the sources of a creative work in which Africa is not merely bound to the binary of blind spots and oversights, but functions as that supplement which gives itself over to a liveable future.

KEYWORDS: COLD WAR, DEVELOPMENT, AFRICAN STUDIES, AESTHETIC EDUCATION, AREA STUDIES, CRITICAL THEORY, ENLIGHTENMENT

A recent report on research collaboration between the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and Ghent University (GU) provides a commendable account of achievements across a range of research initiatives in the humanities and natural sciences. However, a brief reference to criticisms about the partnership project linking UWC and Ghent is cause for caution, in part, because it has consequences for how we think about the ways in which suspicion inaugurates aspects of the work of criticism in humanistic inquiry. The report noted that the north-south exchange was marred by the way that:

antimonian, suspicious and atomistic aspect of Freedom Struggle culture, necessary for defiance and keeping secrets in times of conflict, showed internally in a dynamic resentment of regulation from some and a tendency to pursue sectional interests rather than co-operation. Some Arts Departments were deeply suspicious of the programme and held wrongly that priorities were dictated by the donors.²

1 This essay builds on an earlier inquiry and lecture delivered read at the 10th Symposium of the Ghent Africa Programme, Ghent University, 2016. See Premesh Lalu, "Breaking the Mold of Disciplinary Area Studies," *Africa Today* Vol.63, no. 2, December 2016.

2 Stan Ridge (et.al), "The Multilingual African City in Transition: Semiotics of Negotiating Change," in Chris

The connection between how “suspicion” of the freedom struggles of the twentieth century in Africa infiltrates academic attitudes may in fact serve a more pertinent task of realigning theoretical and critical models across hemispheres in the wake of the Cold War. By extension, and somewhat tautologically, the GU-UWC report invites us to grasp precisely how the very idea of critique must be suspected of sliding back into the sectarianism of freedom struggles in Africa. Yet, suspicion has a more complicated genealogy than *Building a Better Society* admits to. For example, Paul Ricoeur’s discernment of a hermeneutics of suspicion assigns the sources of suspicion to the critical spirit in the nineteenth century Europe.³ Largely attributed to Marx, Freud and Nietzsche, the hermeneutics of suspicion sought to unmask the lies and illusions of consciousness. Recently, Rita Felski’s post-criticism has directed our attention to the proximity with which suspicion and critique operated in the Euro-American episteme, albeit with disappointingly little reflection on how colonialism figures in such relations.⁴ Perhaps, what is foreclosed in Felski’s exposition of the endpoints of criticism is the way in which Africa, and indeed the postcolonial world more generally, is connected to a world picture only through the inaugural work of critique. While a fuller account of the relationship between suspicion and critique threaded through the colonial world is beyond the scope of this essay, the GU-UWC report nevertheless draws us toward an aspect of that relationship that belongs to the inheritance of Area Studies on which I wish to focus. In particular, a form of suspicion that underwrites the inauguration of criticism in the study of Africa is frequently faced with the uncertainty about whether such criticism should recall the blind spots or the oversights in the constitution of Africa as an object of knowledge.

In the aftermaths of colonialism and the suspicion wrought by Eurocentrism, the spirit of critique that once was a pervasive feature of nineteenth-century Europe may benefit from rephrasing. Perhaps, it is prescient to subject the growing suspicion across hemispheric divides to the same critical spirit prevalent in nineteenth century Europe. Framed as a question, we might ask how we exceed centuries old suspicions across hemispheres in the midst of a accretion of suspicion brought about by five decades of Area Studies during the Cold War? How do we plot our way out of the breakdown in the hermeneutics of suspicion in order to extend critique rather than surrendering to the suspicion from which critique draws its initial inspiration? Or more bluntly, how do we make a critical practice out of the suspicion that underwrites research relations between Africa and Europe in our times?

The actual report of the GU-UWC collaboration is not my specific concern here. Mine is an effort that attends to how the charge of suspicion that accretes in standpoints might be reoriented towards a more productive critical function in the project of knowledge across hemispheres. I am of course referring to how we are to hear the word “suspicion” that appears to mark research relations across hemispheres since the advent of slavery

Tapscott (et.al) *Dynamics of Building a Better Society* (Cape Town: University of the Western Cape, 2014).

3 Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, Denis Savage transl. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

4 Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015).

and colonialism from the sixteenth century to the present.

At a very general level, the trope of suspicion takes two forms. The first lends itself to the problem of the blind spot in the Euro-American episteme. The second results from the justification sought in the claim about oversight. It is the combination of the two, I will suggest in what follows, that ultimately underwrites the problem of suspicion in the study of Africa. Briefly put, the blind spot refers to ways in which knowledge sometimes glosses over regional specificities and particularities, and political and social constellations, not to mention forms of subjection or its effects. In more precise Derridian terms, the blind spot calls forth a supplement by which the immediacy of natural presence is foreclosed.⁵ If, by extension, Africa functioned as Europe's supplement, the blind spot threatened the fulfillment of Europe's natural presence.

The blind spot however does not amount to an oversight. In the case of the oversight, the object is misrecognized; it is seen, but simultaneously not seen. Let us imagine Althusser reading over the shoulder of Marx who in turn is reading in earshot of earlier economists to help clarify the distinction. The blind spot, we might say, tallies with Marx and Althusser's criticism of earlier economists not seeing given economic facts. In other words, the blind spot refers to that which is not seen in the object as such. The oversight by contrast, is not to see what one sees; the oversight no longer concerns the object itself. For Althusser, "the oversight is an oversight that concerns vision: non-vision is therefore inside vision, it is a form of vision and hence enjoys a necessary relationship with vision."⁶ If we abide by this distinction in Marx and later, Althusser, then knowledge of Africa is a process in which it is possible not to see what one is looking at.

In reading the report on the GU - UWC exchange, I would argue that it conflates and confuses blind spot and oversight as the operative ocular mode that defined the attitude of some UWC colleagues in the broader partnership. In other words, the sense of suspicion resides in a point of irreducibility: Africa is that which prohibits Europe from arriving at the immediacy of its natural presence or viewing Africa is not seeing what one is looking at. I want to dwell on this problem, in part because I believe that turning suspicion into something that exceeds an inherited notion of a hermeneutics of suspicion in the global research community should be an effort worthy of pursuit in these balkanized and virulent nationalist times. It is critical in a moment when the fissures produced by centuries of colonialism, imperialism, capitalism and neoliberalism threaten the very worldliness of the university as institution.

Accounting for such a perceptual shift from blind spot to oversight is of course a labour that has been ongoing for decades, if not centuries. What interests me is less the shift in perspective, important as that may be, than the way the very nature of suspicion remains in tact in the midst of that shift when Africa is the object of knowledge. At the heart of what I wish to draw attention to is whether it is also possible that scholarship may be imbued with a dose of healthy suspicion, a suspicion of oversight located in vision (read

5 Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, Alan Bass transl. (London: Routledge, 1978).

6 Louis Althusser, *Reading Capital* Ben Brewster tranl. (London: New Left Books, 1970) 21.

Africa) rather than the blind spot located in the natural self-presencing (read Europe). In a conjuncture, when the world is undergoing a re-balkanization and a return to the premises of race war and rabid nationalism, might we discover a healthy suspicion through which we may constitute new relationships of knowledge across hemispheres. I will argue that for such a discussion to unfold, we need firstly to break out of the mould of disciplinary area studies where the question of suspicion settled in the late twentieth century. Attempts to grasp the consequences of blind spots and oversights in the Euro-American episteme have been a major concern of postcolonial theory and criticism for the past three decades. Two waves in this critique are discernable. The first relates to the proliferation of the problematic of development and underdevelopment that asks us to attend to the blind spots in the critique of imperialism, while the second invites us to tackle the oversights that inevitably result in unhealthy forms of suspicion. I propose to begin with a discussion on a postcolonial response to the geopolitics of area studies, before outlining some conditions for restoring an intellectual community across hemispheres that takes as its point of departure the Enlightenment promise of Europe and the syncretic promise of the postcolonial world.

Let us turn to the problem of area studies where suspicion became a hardened sensibility of disciplinary reason at the height of the Cold War, and where the problems of blind spots and oversights were depleted in developing new critical models for the study of Africa. At the outset of an edited volume on *Intellectuals and African Development*, the question is posed about what went wrong in sustaining an obvious link between knowledge and the developmental needs of a postcolonial society in the immediate aftermath of independence.⁷ The call for self-reflection perhaps anticipates a further question about how to account for the effects of area studies on scholarship in Africa in the era of independence and development. Much of this reflection has, of course, been occasioned by the work of scholars initially educated in African universities but who later relocated to the North American academy. Many have saliently argued about the perils of proceeding without significant and substantial overhauls to prevailing orthodoxies derived from area studies constituted in the Euro-American academy. Perhaps one way to think about the anxieties produced by area studies for scholars of African studies relates to the manner in which the consolidation of institutions of higher learning in the West after the Second World War was buoyed by knowledge from elsewhere. Dipesh Chakrabarty, in his musings on American area studies in South Asia, identifies the asymmetry between knowledge and institution as a hangover of an older connection between liberal education and empire.⁸ He suggests that what made these Eurocentric assumptions invisible was in part the fact that area studies were still a matter of studying foreign cultures. The question here is how a critical attitude can be harnessed from within this scene of estrangement to

7 Bjorn Beckman and Gbemisola Adeoti, eds., *Intellectuals and African Development: Pretension and Resistance in African Politics* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2006).

8 Jackie Assayag and Veronique Beni, eds., *At Home in Diaspora: South Asian Scholars and the West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 56. See also, Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Notes toward a Conversation Between Area Studies and Diasporic Studies," *Public Culture* 10 (3) 1998.

articulate another perspective on the worldliness of knowledge that the late Edward Said once encouraged. Thinking about the inheritance of area studies after Said's *Orientalism* (1978) or Valentine Mudimbe's *Invention of Africa* (1988) is what now pressures a generation towards recharging the effective history of postcolonial criticism.

If area studies produced anxiety about being in the world among scholars writing on Africa, then we might add that its consequences are considerably multiplied in the context of Africa. Rather than simply function as a receptacle of knowledge produced in the US academy, the promise of trickle-down modernity is a reason for specific attention on how best to proceed. This reflection is possible, not at the expense of the northern academy, but in relation to it, and beyond its preordained scripts of area studies formed at the height of the Cold War. It might require a reorientation, if not an overhaul of area studies, or a breaking out of its disciplinary mould and political function.

How did area studies come to be seen at the institutional site of the university in Africa, if at all? What have its been its oversights and blind spots, and what have been the consequence of such oversights and blind spots for African scholars and institutions? Rather than simply affirm the reorientation of area studies, I call attention to what it is that area studies may have foreclosed, rendering it prohibitive, rather than generative, for the academy located outside the West – what, in its oversights, may have augmented the question, “what went wrong?” and more pertinently, “what is the way out?” This is not another effort at trumping area studies in the Euro-American academies for their ideological, imperial or colonial attachments, but an effort to ask what it might mean to recast them, from the elsewhere of *The Other Heading*, towards institutional forms, aesthetic education, and questions of technology. Might these questions pressure thought at the limit of the geopolitics in which the modular form of area studies was first conceived? In other words, how can a review of area studies change Euro-American attitudes, rather than affirm the rising tide of racial presuppositions about the rest of the world currently taking hold in both Europe and America? If the Cold War implications of area studies are less of a concern in what I offer, it is to the extent that African studies as a specific field of area studies had made common course with the civil rights movements in the United States, and opened the face of area studies to the anticolonial nationalist and independence struggles in Africa.⁹ That, however, is where the energies of area studies appear to have dissipated, at least as it made common cause with a nationalist moment in the constitution of independent African states.

The consequences of area studies in Africa are difficult to gauge in any definitive sense. Several scholars point to moments of great importance, as in the cohering of intellectuals in the Centre for African Studies, initiated by Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana in the wake of independence.¹⁰ Others point to their relative absence in the formation of intellectual

9 This is not to deny the contests over African studies that filtered through the African Studies Association in the 1960s, and the ways in which a specifically identitarian politics functioned as an imprint on the institutional shape of African universities.

10 Jean Allman, “Kwame Nkrumah, African Studies and the Production of Knowledge in the Black Star of Africa”, *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 46 (2013): 181–203.

traditions as in southern Africa.¹¹ Yet others point to their surreptitious effects in determining the questions and perspectives that define the study of Africa.¹² At the very least, these questions and perspectives were themselves efforts at grasping the constraints of Cold War narratives, charged with the desire for alternative visions of the world. This is possibly the implication of the division of labor that Thandika Mkandawire and Paul Zeleza call into question in their respective works of area studies in the United States.

Beyond the criticism of the effects of area studies in the United States looms a larger question: how do we come to anticipate the form of disciplinary reason that area studies constituted for African knowledge projects and institutions? The question now comes to us forcefully, especially as the institutional mechanisms of higher education in Africa have become susceptible to a consultancy culture, which, according to Mahmood Mamdani, truncates the academic structure towards serving the interests of development agencies.¹³ One possible reading of this drift towards a consultancy culture, beyond the lack of funding commitment by African states for higher education, or a capacious notion of neoliberalism, rests with the way African studies programs such as the Title VI grants in the United States generally bypassed institutional mechanisms in Africa. The consequence is that African universities were increasingly placed in competition with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for funding resources, rather than being viewed as co-constitutors in the knowledge project. Today, many NGOs have mostly displaced the institutional site of the university as an extension of Euro-American interests. Bypassing the traumatized university, area studies programs now forget that their earlier attachments may have resulted in answering, in part, what precisely went wrong.

As a specific form of disciplinary reason, area studies, especially in the United States, tended to bypass the question of building institutions of higher learning in Africa. By disciplinary reason, I mean specifically a knowledge project set against what is both knowable and still to be known. Disciplinary reason is free of risk, holding both subject and object in place by blocking the flow of desire. Such disciplinary alignments between the “Global North” and “Global South” functioned to thwart the creative act or work required in the formation of durable institutions of knowledge in Africa. While the Rockefeller, Ford, Mellon and a few other foundations required institutional development as a basis for making grants, most North American programs originating at higher education institutions tended to bypass African institutions. African institutions were increasingly pressured to secure greater access to much needed resources through consultancies. If a longer genealogy of area studies is undertaken, we might find that its formation reaches beyond the Cold War into the age of empire, and the protocols established in the age of empire of knowing as a basis of governing.

Area studies arguably tended to see African institutions as a continuation of modular

11 Brian Raftopolous, “Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies: The Early Context of Sam Moyo’s Intellectual Development”, *Agrarian South Journal* (forthcoming).

12 Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, ed., *The Study of Africa*, Vol. 1: *Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Encounters* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2006), and *The Study of Africa*, Vol. 2: *Global and Transnational Engagements* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2007).

13 Mahmood Mamdani, *Scholars in the Marketplace* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2007).

forms of disciplinary knowledge established in the West. The rise of schools in Ghana, Ibadan, Makerere, and Dar es Salaam had a direct connection to the metropolitan models of higher education.¹⁴ The rigid approach to the idea of the university inhibited experimentation with new forms of pedagogy and research. The onset of African independence was accompanied by a recharged confidence among newly formed states, resulting in a proliferation of higher education institutions across the continent. Several of these attended to the development priorities of newly independent states. Those that rose to prominence were integrally involved in a critique of the limits of independence in a political economy that proved resilient to the paradigms of African development. Area studies, it seems, remained aloof from this shift that defined institutional emergence in Africa. That was not all to which area studies appeared to be aloof. Neglect of an account of institutional form meant that the possibilities of suturing links between an aesthetic realm beyond the university were deferred. This had detrimental consequences for the project of building institutions of higher learning. It inhibited a self-styled post-independence university from drawing on aesthetic resources to break the hold of the instrumentality of colonial reason in the formation of the university in Africa. Area studies, with its geopolitical priorities, failed to appreciate the potential of an aesthetic realm to nurture a new concept of independence – one that exceeded the limits of scripts of development. A result of this unfortunate disconnect was that arts, music, film and theater education always lagged behind statist demands for a technologically overdetermined understanding of modernization. The flourish of literature, music, art, performance and film in the wake of independence seemed to be completely obscured as interventions in the making of an African modernity or political subject. Most were jettisoned to a life outside the university, where perhaps, fortuitously, the artistic practices flourished. At the institutional site of the university in Africa, the once-thriving attention to the creative disciplines in Ghana and Dakar in the 1960s, for example, appear gradually to have been displaced by privileging social sciences in area studies programs in the 1980s.¹⁵ The modality of area studies that defined relations between the Euro-American academy and Africa arguably resulted in a breakup of epistemic duration. This breakup gave to African independence a poetics and temporality that enabled its intellectuals to work on unraveling the event of colonialism. Area studies carved up the epistemic field, perpetuated and compelled disciplinary reason at the expense of finding a concept of the humanities that would affect the emergence of institutions of higher learning in Africa, and perhaps cut short an opportunity to debate the priorities and shortcomings of liberalism conceived in a Euro-American episteme. Rather than finding the potential for an anti-disciplinary provocation in Africa that would give to the humanities its most sustainable resource, Africa was reduced to a case study, a research site, and more recently, a destination for humanitarian, development aid and study abroad. Each, in turn, has replenished the disaster that awaits the epistemic revival of African scholarship, either by acting as

14 See Carol Sicherman, *Becoming and African University* (Trenton, USA: African Research and Publications, 2005).

15 For a comparative example of the privileging of social science in area studies programs, see Tim Mitchell, "The Middle East in the Past and Future of Social Science", *UCIAS Series 3* (2003): 1–32.

a gatekeeper of what is acceptable disciplinary knowledge of Africa or by evacuating the space of deep conceptual thought and aesthetic education with an empirical imperative. If nationalism failed to come into its own because it was always seemingly belated in the story of the nation, area studies seem to have nailed that sentiment to the proverbial mast of knowledge and geopolitics by thwarting desire and undoing aesthetic education. But this script is already coming apart in the United States, where scholars today transgress disciplinary boundaries readily and freely, experiment endlessly, and shift directions effortlessly, while their African counterparts are pressured by demands for more case studies. Area studies for Africa function less as a narrative of the Cold War than as a disciplinary prescription that binds scholars on the continent to the vicissitudes of an institutional apparatus stripped of a desire for the crafting of postcolonial freedom. The study of Africa is cast in the mold of area studies in part because we come after the geopolitics that defined the Cold War, and in relation to which the project of knowledge and of emancipation was attenuated. Any further deconstruction of what is already coming apart requires a process of learning how we are to preserve a healthy attitude towards knowledge produced in Africa. Such a perspective is now available in sections of the American academy following the significant cultural and political debates surrounding the discipline of comparative literature, itself a product of the Cold War program of area studies.¹⁶ African studies in both the United States and Africa may need to take a leaf from the book of learning to learn how to reorient its potential toward what Achille Mbembe recently called a planetary library.

If the developmentalism of area studies does not exhaust the possibilities of establishing a research community, how might we imagine a new research relation across hemispheres? The idea of a reconstituted world picture may be useful point of departure through which to conceive of the stakes in this new relationship. The call for a reconstituted world picture is not to be mistaken for a call for an inclusive library, although that would not be an entirely unreasonable expectation. To remain at the level of probing representativeness is to merely call attention to the blind spot in Euro-American discourses, and to come to terms with the impossibility of fulfilling this ambition. However, under prevailing conditions of mass migrations and the threat of the resurgence of race war, the idea of a world picture might set to work on the question posed by Bernard Stiegler in *Decadence of Industrial Democracies: Can we conceive of a Europe that is not Eurocentric?*¹⁷ And by extension, what aspects of Africa remains unseen that may yet enable the question of a non-Eurocentric Europe in all its permutations?

A reorientation of the question demands a shift in the terrain on which we might set to work. The first shift relates to a formation of biopolitics as a resolution to the problem of race war that transplants the category of race to the outer reaches of the colony where it festers as an open wound. This while it produces a normalized power of pastoral power in Europe, even when through colonialism, power experiments with many of the

16 Gayatri Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

17 Bernard Stiegler, *The Decadence of Industrial Democracies* Daniel Ross and Suzanne Arnold transl. (London: Polity Press, 2011).

debilitating precepts in the colonial world. The second shift relates to the tendency to separate the human from its technological potential, such that the history of technology can only ever be imagined as instrumental, and European. The rise of fascism and the critique of technological overdeterminism by scholars such as Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno are reminiscent of this worry with the instrumentalisation of technology, which when transported to Africa, underwrites the post-independence script of modernization.¹⁸ A third shift in terrain must address itself to how the long twentieth century produced a condition that in Africa emblematically set aesthetics apart from politics and education. Taken together, Africa was not only left out of the planetary library, but its repositioning in the world often rendered it a recipient of some of the worst experiments in European knowledge formations. Might this have been behind the pithy but devastating formulation echoed by Fanon when he pleads to “leave this Europe where they endlessly talk about man, yet murder men everywhere they find them.”¹⁹

Unsurprisingly, this concern with an inheritance of knowledge in Europe, folded into the geopolitics of the Cold War and its excessive conditions of war and technological overdetermination, is now symptomatically expressed in the desire and demand for a decolonisation of knowledge. Two cautions need highlighting. First, the demand for decolonisation, especially in South Africa, seems increasingly to veer towards the problem of the blind spot, of the texts that have been omitted from curricula, and of the larger Pan African debates that have shaped resistance to a colonial inheritance and nationalist shortcomings in addressing this colonial inheritance. Two, there is a demand for a change of the institutional form of the university in Africa. Both may be mistaken for seeking a supplement to the natural presence of a master signifier. The intensification of student struggles in South Africa appears to reflect a demand for a corrective to the dispensation of the university. Unlike earlier programmes of decolonisation in immediate aftermath of independence elsewhere in Africa, the current demand for decolonisation in South African runs two discrepant propositions together: on the one hand there is a demand for content transformation, while on the other a demand for a change in the form of the academy.

The conflation is producing a condition of impasse in which the opportunity to enable the content to exceed the form is jettisoned. In other words, one can only rework the institutional space of the university if its content exceeds its form. To run content and form together is to evacuate the scene of aesthetics and style that are fundamental to the question of knowledge and its performance. The result of conflating content and form in an argument about decolonisation ignores the perils of the pitfall of nationalism that Fanon once warned about when he argued that you can never make colonialism blush for shame by spreading out little-known cultural treasures under its eyes.²⁰

As a symptom, the conflation is specifically decipherable when one considers that the

18 Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Edmund Jephcott transl. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

19 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* Constance Farrington transl. (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1963).

20 Fanon, 179-80.

subject of the postcolony has been kept in its place, as a subject indelibly marked by its disindividuation, making the routes of exit and escape increasingly precarious and difficult to imagine and enact. Rather than avoiding the pitfalls of nationalism, we seem to have been dropped into the pit latrine of history. If this comes across as extreme, think only of the way human waste has denoted the signature texture of the protests amongst students in South Africa who recently dumped human excrement on the statue of Cecil John Rhodes. At the same time, the symbolic and structural conditions of an inherited past will not deliver us from the *aporia* in which the postcolonial subject appears to be trapped.

We need another pathway, another escape route, but one that will give to Europe an escape from the inheritance of Eurocentrism as it will give to Africa its place in a planetary library. As presumptuous as that may sound to the European ear, the sentiment is not specifically original. Recall here that very provocative passage from Derrida's *The Other Heading*:

'But beyond our [Europe's] heading, it is necessary to recall ourselves not only to the other heading, but especially to the heading of the other, but also perhaps to the other of the heading, that is to say, to a relation of identity with the other that no longer obeys the form, the sign, or the logic of the heading, nor even of the anti-heading – of beheading and decapitation.'²¹

I am drawn to this formulation in part because it recalls the syncretic nature of the world that generations of postcolonial theorists have struggled to come to terms with, despite colonial difference. Whether in the Marxism of CLR James who once asked us to think of ourselves in the West but not of the West, or Edward Said who asked us to contemplate the world from the exilic position of a specular border intellectual, we have precedents to pursue the desire for *The Other Heading*. It is a sentiment that Lisa Lowe recently articulated in her *Intimacy of Four Continents*, especially as she retraces the features of globalization in the growing interconnectedness of the world across discordant encounters with modernity.²²

But I am also drawn to the excerpt from Derrida because of a shared interest in the theme of decapitation, not least as we both hear in that script the pithy Foucauldian injunction that we have still to cut off the King's head.²³ What Foucault means here is that the shift from power as property to power as effect remains incomplete, or that the content of power does not exceed the form of the sovereign power. Stated differently, we might deduce from the metaphor of the king's head the problem that beset the exercise of power in which the revolution of the nineteenth century remained incomplete. Beyond that demand for decapitation, of rendering power as effect rather than as property of the

21 Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* Pascal-Anne Bault and Michael B. Naas transl. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992) 15.

22 Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

23 See for example Jacques Ranciere, *The Names of History* Hassan Melhey transl. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

sovereign, the spectre of incomplete revolutions haunt both Europe and Africa. Amidst the ruins of the quest for revolution the question of the attitude towards the dead bedevils the very productivity of thought.

Writing in the 1840s at the time of the Eighteenth Brumaire, Marx would demand this new attitude towards the dead. He writes in the midst of the turmoil of the Eighteenth Brumaire,

‘The social revolution of the nineteenth century cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself before it has stripped off all superstition in regard to the past. Earlier revolutions required recollections of past world history in order to drug themselves concerning their own content. In order to arrive at its own content the revolution of the nineteenth century must let the dead bury the dead. There the phrase went beyond the content; here the content goes beyond the phrase.’²⁴

Marx was determined to show that the modern revolution would seek its inspiration by way of its own content. In fact, it would have to define the very content upon which the revolution would come to rest. But Europe in the 1930s reawakened the dead with the rise of fascism, leaving in their wake a landscape littered with and haunted by mangled bodies. In a technologically overdetermined moment, Europe would discover the content did not really surpass the phrase, and that the angel of history would have to look upon the ruins with its back towards the future, rather than simply derive inspiration from the poetry of the future. In a world marked by despair and pending catastrophe, Benjamin would revisit the philosophy of history as a discourse that would be with us into the future. The moment between the great wars would leave a scar on the European landscape and psyche, and alongside it, the entire world would be beholden to the spectre not of revolution, but death. Beheading and decapitation will prove inadequate metaphors for the shape of modern power. Sovereign power was dangled before the Whig concept of history and progress and in spectacular fashion, a mode of biopower with its pastoral overtures and proprietary rights to power couched in overly nationalist sentiment became the order of the day. In Africa we have come to know this story of an incomplete revolution as one of a bifurcated state and bifurcated political subject, torn between the indecisions about citizenship and subjecthood. And lest we forget, the resolution that was sought for Europe was often worked out in experiments conducted in the far reaches of empire, which for all intents and purposes, became a laboratory for modernity.

It was this irresolution, or to use a word that would be preferable, the aporia that Derrida sort to gesture towards in *The Other Heading*. And what if this Europe, the Europe that was not the one that Fanon asks us to forget, were this, Derrida asks:

‘The opening onto history for which the changing of the heading, the relation to the other heading or to the other of the heading, is experienced as always possible? An opening and a non-exclusion for which Europe would in some way be responsible?’

24 Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* Daniel De Leon transl. (Chicago, Charles H. Kerr, 1913).

For which Europe would be, in a constitutive way, this very responsibility? As if the very concept of responsibility were responsible, right up to its emancipation, for a European birth certificate?²⁵

It is to this gesture, rather than an attitude to the dead, that postcolonial theorists were directing us. To use Gayatri Spivak's formulation the critique of postcolonial reason amounted to an effort to *ab-use* the enlightenment, to learn to use it from below.²⁶ Postcolonialism was not an effort to delink from Europe, but to realize Europe's failure to grasp the content of its revolution that it may exceed the phrase. Postcolonialism functioned less as a strategy of difference than as a supplement to and trace of Europe's incomplete modernity and concept of revolution.

But the beheading of the king is not a story of Europe's alone. Some years ago, I was taken up with the case of the alleged beheading of a Xhosa king and the efforts of a healer/diviner to retrieve the skull of the king at the height of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.²⁷ In this moment when history could neither provide the evidence nor the narrative for reconciling past and present, let alone Europe and Africa, the story of the killing of Hintsá in 1834, at the time of the aborigines commission in Britain and the end of the Atlantic Slave Trade invited us to consider what it meant to write a history after apartheid. Rather than call for an alternative history, the Deaths of Hintsá asks what it might mean to stay with the problem bequeathed from the nineteenth century, but to do so in a way that rearranges the terms colonialism, apartheid and post-apartheid and postcolonial freedom, so that we might find a way to attend to the thought of that which remained incomplete in the very revolutions of the nineteenth century. Between the prospect of living with the dead and thinking ahead, I drew inspiration from another pithy statement, this time by Roland Barthes in his study of Michelet. Barthes writes, citing Michelet, that "history always teaches how we die, never how we live."²⁸ Perhaps, death lies in the persistence of suspicion, which when the product of oversights and blind spots, gives us the intrigue of the Cold War rather than the poetry of the future. In pursuing new relations of research across hemispheres, we may need to rearticulate not only what is absent from our discourse, but rather the latent content that remains stubbornly unseen in what we see. The name of that gesture is postcolonialism, and the condition for it is a practice of postapartheid freedom. But that I shall leave as a story for another time and *The Other Heading*.

25 Derrida, *The Other Heading* 30.

26 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalisation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

27 Premesh Lalú, *The Deaths of Hintsá: Postapartheid South Africa and the Shapes of Recurring Pasts* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2009).

28 Roland Barthes, Michelet Richard Howard transl. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 104.

AFRICA: A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CONTINUED CRISIS

Ray Bush

School of Politics and International Studies, University of Leeds, United Kingdom

This article deepens critique of the Africa rising trope and the policies promoted by neo liberals to promote development on the continent. It revisits the economic growth literature and it shows how the weakly formulated views about African growth are merely self serving of limited, mostly western, investment interests that remain centred on extractive economies rather than helping to promote sustainable structural transformation with added value that can be retained in Africa. There have always been periods of economic growth in Africa but opportunities for this to be sustained do not lie with greater integration with the world economy. Instead they lie with, among other things, local political and economic struggles in Africa for greater democratic control of capital accumulation.

KEYWORDS: AFRICA; POVERTY; UNDERDEVELOPMENT; INDUSTRIALISATION

Introduction

This article develops the argument of my Annual Distinguished Lecture delivered at the 6th Ghent Africa Platform Symposium (GAPSYM6) at Ghent University on 7 December 2012. That was subsequently published (Bush 2013) and the themes that I raised then are more pertinent than ever. The conditions of Africa's dependence on mining and extractives, for instance, escalating debt, being undermined by disadvantageous trade regimes and the continent's continued need to deal with the deleterious consequences of financialisation and the absence of effective industrial strategies have all intensified. Western policy towards Africa, the consequences of existing globalisation, persistently promotes what elsewhere in relation to development policy and practice has been called an elite subject – subordinate object relationship (Selwyn 2016). Donor and international financial institution (IFI) relations with African governments are epitomised by the hegemony of an 'anti-poverty consensus'. That involves a doublespeak: donors and IFIs promote a development mantra that growth promotes the route to poverty reduction and so too does greater incorporation into the world economy (Selwyn 2017,2). Evidence that I assemble here, however, indicates the opposite. I highlight how Africa's (uneven) incorporation into the world economy continues to impoverish the majority of Africans. This is an argument that has been made in relation to the Africa rising debate (see among others Taylor 2016). While reinforcing the critical debate about the persistently spurious argument that Africa is rising, I also indicate that there is worker and peasant opposition to donors and the IFIs, albeit that it may be partial and uneven. I stress the need for an historical

understanding of African underdevelopment and the need for a context for understanding the ways in which radical African interventions are made within and from outside Africa. One of my critiques of existing policy-making about Africa, and from within the continent, is that it fails to unpack the *dynamics* of uneven development on the continent. In 2012 I was struck by some of the comments I received from the well informed audience in Ghent and a more detailed dialogue I had with a young participant. The audience responses were along the continuum of on the one hand, ‘of course Africa is rising’, ‘just look at the continental growth rates’ and why was I such a curmudgeon? On the other hand were the engaged observers who clearly knew not only the literature that I referred to but had empirical experience in Africa: they concurred with my analysis. The thoughts of the young activist who engaged with me were similar to the latter perspective; they already had African work experience and were angered and irritated by the imagery, and presented economic data, that Africa was progressing at a rapid pace. They were also critical of the idea that there was a singular path to development, and while Africa was on this path it was still a long way behind Europe and the US. But this activist had another line of interrogation which I had to stop and think about. How had it been possible to convince my peers over time for me to receive the title and rank of full professor despite my radical Marxist analysis? Moreover, wasn’t it simply fantastic that the University of Ghent had been courageous to invite me and give a critical platform about African development, or the lack of it?

This conversation was important, not to glory in self-righteousness but to help reflect the struggles of radical Africanist scholarship, battles in Africa by activists, workers and peasants to promote alternatives to neo-liberal hegemony. It is often easier to cite examples of working class resistance to IFI and African government market led reforms. Egypt, Burkina Faso, and Tunisia are among the most recent and pressing examples (Beinin 2016; Chouli 2015). But Egypt and Tunisia also highlight the significance of rural resistance and organisation where peasant struggles over dispossession, land and irrigation access as well as merchant profiteering highlight activist battles for economic as well as political alternatives (Ayeb and Bush 2014). But the challenge I am addressing is not only to assemble more data on examples of Africa’s impoverishment, yet another critique of the Africa rising debate or to highlight working class and peasant resistance. All that remains important as the tropes about the benefits of existing globalisation remain. But I also want to highlight the role of the western academic activist, what we might understand by a radical Africanist perspective in understanding the contemporary period and how difficult it is to promote alternative ideas in the world of academic publishing. A radical Africanist position is best introduced by referring to the editorial in the first issue of the *Review of African Political Economy* (1974). That journal began its life;

‘with the express intent of providing a counterweight to that mass of literature on Africa which holds: that Africa’s continuing chronic poverty is primarily an internal problem and not a product of her colonial history and her present dependence; that the successful attraction of foreign capital and the consequent production within the confines of the international market will bring development; and that the major

role in achieving development must be played by western-educated, ‘modernising’ elites who will bring progress to the ‘backward’ masses’ (ROAPE 1974, 1)

The journal did not offer then, nor has it done so subsequently, a particular dogmatic line. It nevertheless recognised that ‘Ultimately the specific answers will emerge from the actual struggles of the African people, on the continent and throughout the world’ (ROAPE 1974, 2). While no blueprint was offered, the radical Africanist position is broadly Marxist. Analyses conducted by radical Africanists are aimed at promoting socialism: they is anti capitalist (Amin 2017). The approach is to explore changing and different patterns of production that hold the key to societal relationships, to analyse changing relations of production and the ‘role of state power in reproducing them in order to identify the emerging contradictions’ (ROAPE 1974: 2). Social relationships and especially class relations help explain the particular form that capitalism takes in Africa and the ways in which working class, peasant and other forms of struggle emerge to challenge established patterns of power and authority (for similar radical analyse see also www.Pambazuka.org and www.ROAPE.net).

For too long the work of radical Africanists has been characterised as just not academic enough and not fit for submission to the audit culture that has taken hold of Higher Education, certainly in the UK. University School research directors have become only interested in outputs perceived to be placed in ‘world leading journals’ where there is less likely to be a critique of the status quo, and thus also of government and policy- maker funding opportunities. That is particularly so in the discipline of economics where there is an overwhelming pressure for academics to fit their work into the dominant trends in academic disciplines, not least as a vehicle to secure research funding (this argument is developed further in Bush 2018 forthcoming, see also Collini, 2016; 2018).

The academic pressure restricting radical Africanist perspectives can impact the ways in which economic success and failure is characterised in Africa. My positionality has been honed over more than 35 years of engagement with African political economy and the obstacles placed in the way of critical scholarship. My relative independence from neo liberal sponsorship would not have been possible without engaged activity with the journal *Review of African Political Economy*. ROAPE has recently reinvigorated its outreach with Africa with a series of interventions that have been driven in particular by the promotion of radical Africanist analysis of contemporary dynamics of imperialism in Africa and working class and peasant resistance to it (Bush *et al.* 2018). My conversation with the young participant at Ghent reminded me of the many strictures of the late Lionel Cliffe, who among many things was a founder editor of ROAPE:

‘For individuals, old and young, who earn their living in academia: consciously or not we are making choices about our work agenda and our approach. Let’s seek to make it our choice and not one forced upon us by institutional pressures and intellectual fashions. Let’s examine our ‘vocation’ and be prepared to rebel’ (2012, 222).

The continuous theme that underpins this article is the task to understand and counter the impact of capitalism in Africa. There remains the overwhelming external domination of the continent and the context remains a history of underdevelopment and local classes

of exploitation. My argument is that the current condition of African economies does not come from not being fully signed up to globalisation, thus opening itself further to pressures from the global financial and industrial corporates. It is in fact, contact with the global north that has consistently undermined, underdeveloped and impoverished the continent, albeit in an uneven way.

The hyped optimism of African development has once more waned. The outbreak of peace continues to be challenged by realities on the ground in DRC but also Libya, Egypt's Sinai, Mali, Western Niger and South Sudan. Although the over-optimistic rhetoric of 'Africa rising: the hopeful continent' (*The Economist* 3 Dec 2011) contrasts with the previously over-pessimistic 'hopeless continent' (*The Economist*, 13 May 2000) it is unclear how the voice of international business would describe Africa in 2018. Recent western commentary about Africa and the West's relationship with it was reinvigorated by the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair's Commission for Africa. Publication of the report in March 2005 coincided with Blair's chairmanship of the G8. The influential report was described as 'a coherent package for Africa' (CFA 2005:13 *emphasis in original*). The report helped set the scene for debates about Africa and the west and many academics with the IFIs supported a neo liberal characterisation of the continent's ills (Collier 2007; World Bank 2000; Moyo 2010; Sachs 2011 and for critique Harrison 2005; Lawrence 2010). Western politicians and IFIs focused on a new start for the continent as development became measured by a burgeoning middle class as an 'African Awakening' was heralded, although it is not always clear from what the continent was waking. UN's Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has talked repeatedly about 'Unleashing Africa's Potential as a pole of Global Growth' (2012: 59) but in early 2017 the UN noted 'Commodity prices crash hits Africa' (Ighobor 2017,30). This headline reminded commentators that once again historically high levels of growth were not sustainable and did not represent economic diversification where value added was retained in Africa

We seem a long way from the view that the continent can be a source for global growth (Severino & Ray 2012). Ex World Banker Jean-Michel Severino and erstwhile French Foreign Affairs Ministry economist Olivier Ray asserted the need not to look back in the 'rear view mirror' but forward with 'telescopes' to understand African development. They argued the importance of understanding Africa's complexity and not to see the continent as a 'newcomer at the feast of common prosperity'...'its headlong feverish rush to development can make its swarming youth one of the engines of world growth' (2012:265). The mention of Africa's youth is important. Two out of three Africans are under the age of 25. Reference to their 'swarming' is inappropriate, but it is a demographic that can influence and may shape policy if it can organise itself and mobilise without repression, to express discontent with hunger, unemployment and lack of opportunity.

The debate about African development and not looking back at the continent's history to help explain contemporary opportunity is crass. It implies that a sense of history roots analysis in the past only. Paul Collier for example, enthusiastically endorses Severino and Ray's *Africa's Moment*, lamenting, 'we need to get to know Africa again' (2012:2). And in doing so, instead of constantly recalling the horrors caused by colonial interventions of

the slave trade, European genocide and imperialism we should focus on governance and the frailties of African leaders. This is an appealing message to Europeans who would rather forget their African atrocities than locate contemporary underdevelopment within an important historical context.

The consequences of the historically uneven incorporation of Africa into the world economy are important to grasp in all their devastating gravity. A detailed historical narrative is not necessary to indicate how contemporary dynamics of transformation and the hype that Africa can grasp the 21st century obscures debate about exploitation and inequality that is a product of western entanglement as well as local class actors seeking to promote restrictive notions of 'development'. Views of development manufactured in the global north tend to dominate African policy discourse but a crude fossil fuel path to development in Africa would commit all of us to collective suicide (Klein 2015; Moore, 2015). We need to look back and forward to understand African development challenges and the necessity to promote a radical structural transformation. Our vision needs to be shaped by understanding mechanisms of surplus extraction and the externalisation of the continent to see why and how debates about Africa's 'moment' have been recurrent and persistent and how they are also flawed.

There is a caveat to what follows, and this is the extent to which we can generalise about a continent of 54 countries. There are broad issues that help shape a general picture. Africa is the second largest continent and the second most populous. It covers 20 per cent of the Earth's landmass with 1.2 billion people, that is, almost 17% of the world's population. I stress common features such as the continent's structural location within the world economy, export commodity dependence and similarities regarding de-industrialisation, unemployment and agricultural stagnation.

We can now review some of the optimism regarding African development and set it against long standing structural obstacles. In doing this I reflect on what development has come to represent and speculate where there may be political spaces for alternative and active resistance to mainstream policy and discourse about the continent which sees more capitalism as means of development, and poverty reduction. The optimism about potential for African growth and development quickly fades when confronted by the systemic features of post WW2 capitalism and the patterns of globalisation that followed the internationalisation of capital in the 1950s and 1960s.

The optimism

The heady optimistic days at the start of the 21st century led the Economic Commission for Africa to strongly suggest 'that Africa is likely to make the twenty-first century its own' (ECA, 2012:1). This matched World Bank rhetoric in 2000 that Africa could 'claim' the century (World Bank, 2000) as growth opportunities for investors were noted even by the more reserved Kofi Annan, Chair of the Africa Progress Panel (www.africaproggress-panel.org) who declared that while there is a long way to go 'Africa is on its way to becoming a preferred investment destination, a potential pole of global growth, and a place of immense innovation and creativity' (Annan, 2012a:3).

Key measures for the continent's success were the gross domestic product (GDP) figures. Between 2002 and 2008 GDP on the continent grew by an average of 5.6 per cent. This meant Africa was the second fastest growing continent, at least for some of the time, behind Asia. And seven of the fastest growing economies in 2011 were African (ECA 2012:11-14). The ECA asserted that many of these fast growing economies were not dependent upon oil and gas and 70 per cent of the people living in these economies were in countries that averaged economic growth rates over 4% for the last ten years. 'Development' was equated with economic growth with little analysis or reflection on either the veracity of the data or how GDP growth can translate into people's improved wellbeing and social justice.

The global capitalist crisis in 2008 impacted continental growth rates that slowed by 2011. The IMF reported in 2016 that growth had fallen to 3.5 % for Sub Saharan Africa the lowest level for 15 years. Further falls were expected and a 'policy reset' was recommended to African governments as expectations from high oil rents needed lowering to avoid a fiscal crisis and deepening deficits. African economies could not withstand change in the external environment (IMF 2016). The roller coaster world of growth was helped by debt relief and increases in aid to Africa from 2004 but this source of financing was tempered after 2008 (OECD 2016). Between 1999-2008, the proportion of Africans living on less than \$1.25 a day fell from 58 per cent to 48 per cent – in effect, nine million people taken out of poverty according to the World Bank 2005-2008 (APR, 2012:16). And while many of the MDGs were not met, social indicators improved: fewer children were dying before their 5th birthday and more were in school (APR 2012: 17)

The explanations for these improvements and the optimism for Africa's claims on the 21st century had lain with western generosity to erase debts, many of which were odious and toxic. The rescheduling of payments ensured that finance continued to lubricate the world system without threat of defaults (Ndikumana & Boyce, 2001). Central too was the generosity of donors with increased aid, although Global Alliances for Vaccines and Immunisations and increased access to anti-retrovirals, for example was driven less by western largesse and more by resistance movements of those with HIV/AIDs and African governments prepared to challenge the global dominance of pharmaceutical companies (Epstein, 2007). Access to anti-retrovirals grew from less than 14 per cent in 2005 to 43 per cent in 2008 (CAR, 2010:3).

Interpreting optimism

Closer inspection of the growth and development indicators suggests the need for a more cautious approach to understand the contemporary and persistent African crisis of capital accumulation and structural transformation.

Continental growth that had been trumpeted to have reached 4.7% in 2010 was well below the proposed necessary sustained growth of 7% seen by the Africa Commission 2005 and World Bank as necessary for poverty to be significantly (and permanently) reduced (Africa Commission 2005: chapter 7). In fact by 2017 projected growth was just 2.4% up slightly from a dismal 1.3% in 2016. In typically anodyne language the World Bank noted,

‘The outlook for the region remains challenging with economic growth remaining well below the pre-crisis average’ (World Bank 2017 n.p.). The World Bank also noted slow growth in per capita income, which fell in 2016/17 and was inadequate to reduce poverty. African economies remain the least diversified in the world and the 2010 update from the Commission for Africa noted that 80 per cent of all African exports come from oil, minerals and agricultural goods (CFA, 2010:10). Only 12 per cent of growth comes from the agricultural sector, which accounted for 60 per cent of the workforce and is a clear indication of poor labour productivity. Conceding the difficulty of generalising growth and of the need for diversification the ECA tempered its upbeat assessment of continental political economy by noting:

‘The last decade’s impressive growth must be examined in a proper context if Africa is to become a global growth pole, for the fact remains that the sources of Africa’s growth have changed very little over the years: agriculture and natural resources remain the main drivers, and Africa has diversified its economies in little meaningful way’ (ECA, 2012:1).

The structural imbalance in African economies that is seldom examined is that they are mostly characterised by a continuing overdependence upon rent rather than productive (manufacturing) growth. Capital intensive growth in labour surplus economies is a recurrent feature of underdevelopment. The failure to diversify economic growth away from hydro carbons increases vulnerability to the vagaries of the international market; failure of retained earnings; value added that accrues outside of the continent and the failure to break down enclave development. Thus inward investment made in parts of Africa, mostly in minerals and hydrocarbons, is used as evidence of the continent’s grasp of the 21st century. Investment does not ‘trickle down’, but instead leaps over territorial boundaries. This makes it very difficult for state policy to intervene and harness any gains from the investment as it goes to limited spatial areas of extractives, minerals or agricultural wealth for export (Ferguson, 2007). Africa, moreover, still has only 3.4 per cent of the world’s share of foreign direct investment US\$59 billion in 2016 a 1.4% fall compared with 2008 (UN 2017: 45). In 2016 FDI flows to Africa fell by 3% compared with the 2015 figure, from \$USD61 billion to \$USD59 billion in 2016 (UN 2017: 46). The continuing significant issue is that just 5 countries, Angola, Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana and Ethiopia account for 57% of Africa’s DFI flows (UN, 2010; 2016).

We should also note that at the macro-economic level GDP of SSA was just \$1.5 trillion in 2016 with South Africa and Nigeria accounting for more than half of the continent’s GDP (UN 2017: 44). In comparison, in 2016 France’s GDP was \$2.4 trillion, Germany’s \$3.4 trillion and Belgium \$466 billion (www.Countryeconomy.com). In fact the output of the City of London is more than 25% of the size of the entire Nigerian economy whose GDP was \$405 billion in 2016.

Africa has received just 35 per cent of the promised increase in ODA made at the 31st G8 Summit at Gleneagles 6-8 July 2005. But in 2018 there is a new unfolding African debt crisis. Debt relief mechanisms, The Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative 1996 and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative 2005 were hailed for reducing the debt burden for

the poorest countries. The continent's external debt of about \$US443 billion in 2013 is described as manageable (UNCTAD 2016). However, something very disturbing and not surprising has happened: a rapid increase in external and local debt. UNCTAD has noted with alarm:

'While Africa's current external debt ratios currently appear manageable, their rapid growth in several countries is a concern and requires action if a recurrence of the Africa debt crisis of the later 1980s and the 1990s is to be avoided' (UNCTAD 2016: 2). Africa's external debt stock grew rapidly by 10.2% per annum 2011-2013 from 7.8% 2006-2009. The increase was indiscriminate. Eight heavily indebted and 13 non-heavily indebted countries felt it acutely. Increased debt reflects enlarged (temporary) sources of funding from the BRIC economies (Brazil, Russia, India and China) but like the debt crisis of the 1980s the risks linked to this relate to borrowing against the promise of sustained high commodity prices. These are not guaranteed and borrowing costs have spiralled. In addition African governments have borrowed increasingly from private lenders (UN 2016: 3). This has crucially been at non-concessional rates, with loans that are more difficult to renegotiate and governments have entered Eurobond markets to try and secure funding for investment. The crisis is exacerbated by increases in private Africa debt (Elliott 2018). If this requires a public bailout it will add to an already intense fiscal crisis of the stressed African state (UNCTAD 2016).

The contradiction here, among others, is that the UN declared 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals noted that African development needed \$600 billion – \$1.2 trillion financing per annum. This is at a time of not simply the familiar donor fatigue and commitments not matched by delivery. These funding needs are relegated behind western focus on climate change, disaster prevention and management, securitisation of development and the continued war on terror. They have also fallen behind the EU's panicked rush to prevent an inflow of economic migrants and asylum seekers from Africa and the Near East (Global Health Advocates 2018) African governments have not always prioritised development financing needs. The self declared transition to middle income status for some, such as Ghana for instance has not been matched by changes in real income and wellbeing improvements for Ghanaians. It has, however, led to falls in multilateral funding, fiscal deficits, depreciation of the *cedi* (local currency) and inflation (ECA 2018 forthcoming). And we now know much more clearly the ways in which African government national accounting has managed to construct a fictional middle income status as well as why figures for African growth and GDP accounting are so flawed (Jerven 2015).

The Africa Progress Report may be the most reflective of commentaries from the array of international agencies and IFIs that offer accounts of Africa's potential for development. Persistent inequality has been critiqued as 'ethically indefensible...economically inefficient and politically destabilising' (Africa Progress Report 2012,2). The Progress Report has noted that almost 400 million Africans struggle on less than \$1.25 a day and that despite economic growth the continent accounts for a rising share of world poverty – up from 21 per cent in 1999 to 29 per cent in 2008 (2012,16). Africa is the continent

with the highest proportion of children in extreme poverty, 49%, and the number of poor Africans rose from 288 million in 1990 to 389 million in 2012 (Beegle *et al.* 2016). The poorest 20 per cent in Sub Saharan Africa moreover, typically receive 6 per cent or less of national income and the poorest 40 per cent in most cases receive less than 15 per cent (Africa Progress Report 2012). An issue that is seldom explicitly examined in the IFI documents on African development is the relation between growth and inequality. International agencies do not explore the idea of poverty and inequality in relational terms other than to assert that growth will trickle down. The empirical evidence, some of which I have assembled in this article, is that in contrast there has been increased dispossession and abjection of the poor and the cascading up of wealth at the expense of the poor (Bond 2006; Bond and George 2003; Bracking 2016).

Inequality was a key driver of the revolutionary uprising in Egypt in January 2011. Yet Egypt had experienced sustained per capita economic growth of more than 3 per cent over 10 years (Achcar 2013) – growth figures that most developing countries desire. However, more than 50 per cent of Egyptians lived on less than \$2 a day – up to 80 per cent in the countryside: how do we explain that Egypt developed in GDP terms but in terms of improved livelihoods Egyptians did not? (REF, 2004; REF, 2012).

The IFIs have tried to disguise the persistent structural levels of poverty and inequality in Africa by asserting that there has been the growth of an African middle class. This has been defined as those who live on an income of more than \$10 a day. The hope that a middle class will boost African development is fraught with definitional difficulties and an ideological over-reliance that this newly emerging class will have resources and incentives to invest in the provision of public goods rather consumer durable commodities bought with valuable and scarce foreign exchange (cf Kharas 2011 and Melber 2017). According to the Brookings Institute, membership of the global middle class is defined in the range of earning \$10-\$100 a day. Using these figures Africa accounts for 2 per cent of the world middle class population and 1 per cent of its purchasing power (APR 2012:17). Empirically there has simply not been investment from a middle class, old or new to boost development that reduces inequality. While there is evidence for growth it has seldom been translated into development, a lessening of poverty and inequality and investment in the production of wealth that is sustainable and can be used, among other things to produce a sustainable industrial strategy (Lawrence 2018)

The optimistic interpretation of Africa's development trajectory simply does not add up. The MDGs were not met, although a positive spin was placed on them. Granted there are more women in African parliaments, improved maternal and infant mortality and because of advocacy pressure on the continent there has been improved treatment for people with HIV. But there continues to be immense inequality in the provision and access to social services, health and education, employment especially for women and young people and for economies unable to deal effectively with shocks such as Ebola (UNECA 2015).

Structural transformation and African underdevelopment

At the heart of the debates in the donor communities and the IFIs is a continuous strand of modernisation, to more fully integrate parts of the continent into the world economy – namely the minerals and hydrocarbon producing economies and to ensure that Africans in the continent remain there, and do not try to come to Europe (European Union 2018a; 2018b and the critique *inter alia* Global Health Advocates 2018). The strategy for the mineral producers is simple: at best promote an agenda of transparency and openness for good governance and engagement with civil society actors like Publish What You Pay, Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative and so on. The strategy for ‘development’ elsewhere on the continent, for smaller land locked economies, is the provision of development assistance that provides for bare life (Duffield 2007) and or securitisation as in the Sahel with AFRICOM and anxiety and intervention against pastoralist mobilisation in Mali, Kenya and elsewhere (Keenan 2009; Cross, 2013).

Donors have been unable to move from agendas of charity and good conscience and where they may have done so it is to promote a securitisation agenda on the continent. As Rita Abrahamsen has noted in detailing the context in which this agenda emerged, ‘More than any other part of the globe, Africa has in the post-Cold War period been associated with conflict, insecurity and human rights atrocities’ There was first Robert Kaplan’s (1994) vision of Africa as a nightmare of ethnic violence and state collapse and then, after September 11 2001 (9/11) destruction of the twin towers in New York, Africa was viewed as a continent with ‘ungoverned spaces’ that enabled terrorists to hide while they plotted the demise of Western civilisation (Abrahamsen 2013: 1; see also World Bank 2011 and Duffield 2001). This in part is a strategy to prevent African migrants reaching European shores as with fortress Europe elaborated in FRONTEX, the EU’s ‘border management’ strategy, while simultaneously talking about the importance of development in Africa (Cross, 2013). The rhetoric recommended a strategy for African development that is one of western modernity and industrial growth, yet this is absent in practice and under existing global dynamics and local management it is impossible. The continent fails the targets for development where they are consistently western driven and constructed. An over-reliance on Chinese or Indian investment to provide an alternative and sustainable strategy for growth, in terms of being more labour intensive, using local resources for local value added, regional connectivity and generating local effective demand is nowhere yet evident. An exception may be the case of Ethiopia but even there the manufacturing share of GDP remains stubbornly low (UNDP n.d.; World Bank 2015).

The contemporary language of the IFIs is to use the term ‘structural transformation’. For the ECA it means ‘unleashing Africa’s potential as a pole of global growth’ with a strategy of political leadership, national (sic) development and mobilisation of a middle class for private sector investment (ECA, 2012:2). What has emerged is a narrative that celebrates growth since 2000 and was based on improved governance and economic management, reduced levels of corruption and growth in new service sectors. But as we have seen when scrutinising the economic data, at a time of great optimism there remain structural and persistent crises. And where there is an assumption that the market and a middle class

can drive growth it is not evident where and how this will happen. The World Bank (2017) affirms an interpretation of structural transformation that has actually led to deindustrialisation on the continent, service sector growth that has not reduced job precariousness and low productivity, and an agricultural sector that remains underdeveloped despite the fact that it is still the largest employer (REF 2018). In contrast we might investigate structural transformation to mean an industrially-centred transformation, broadly defined this is where there is, among other things, a greater use of local resources and retained value added from production in an attempt to reverse the continent's outward facing structure and dependence on the deleterious impact of foreign capital.

Africa's underdevelopment was set in motion by informal colonial transformation from the 14th century (Amin 1972). It has been exacerbated by the immeasurable damage resulting from neo-liberal reforms after the early 1970s. As Giovanni Arrighi (2002) noted in exploring Africa's tragedy, the continent grew, often more quickly than elsewhere and in a sustained way after WW2. Driven by high expectations and state managed economies (although not always without managerial difficulties); the 1960s witnessed an emphasis on infrastructural growth and investment in productive industries. Import substitution industrialisation was seen as acceptable and official development assistance or AID to offset inadequate local savings could be used to boost economic growth and cope with foreign exchange shortages.

In the international economic crisis of the 1970s, however, Africa was simply less well equipped to deal with global transformations. As Arrighi again noted, 'some countries or regions have the power to make the world market work to their advantage, while others do not, and have to bear the cost' (Arrighi: 2002: 16). This may be seen to lie in good or bad luck that has 'deep roots in a particular historical heritage that positions a country or a region favourably or unfavourably in relation to structural and conjunctural processes within the world system'. Africa's tragedy, if that is an appropriate word, lies in its 'pre-colonial and colonial heritage which has gravely handicapped the region in the intensely competitive global environment engendered by the US response to the crisis of the 1970s (Arrighi, 2002:16).

The damage done to Africa and by African leaders who colluded with structural adjustment in the 1980s continues to be felt. The lost development decade was marked by dramatic increases in unemployment and the destruction of health and welfare provision. African infrastructure and wellbeing was destroyed, and states that had the temerity to seek independent trajectories for development were disciplined. Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah's dictum of seeking first the political kingdom now rang hollow. He had been ousted from power by a US backed coup in 1966 and after Patrice Lumumba's assassination in 1961, Zaire became a haven for anti-communism and terrorist interventions in southern Africa (Nkrumah 1976; Reyntjens 2009). More and more it seemed the answers to the 'central historical question' (Rosenberg, 2006 in Brown & Hanlin 2013: 5) as Eric Hobsbawm called the development challenge, were peddled by the west. Eduardo Galeano noted development became the 'promise of politicians, and justification of technocrats, the illusion of the outcast' (1997:214).

Something fundamental happened in the 1980s and it continued. It was no longer possible to see ‘development conceived of as a project for change undertaken collectively by the population of a single, medium-sized country, acting through the state’ (Leys, 1996:41). The 1980s see the erosion of controls of capital, expansion of financial markets where not only African states had difficulty setting their own exchange rates and with this there was the loss of control over fiscal policy and state spending (Leys, 1996:42). Per capita growth rates in SSA fell as deregulation emerged. The period of national liberation, from WW2 to the defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam in 1975, was characterised by the Chinese Communist party as ‘countries want Independence, Nations want Liberation and People want Revolution’ (Shivji 2003: 109). In southern and Lusophone Africa especially, but elsewhere too where there had not been armed struggle, there had seen a sense of direction and purpose to establish a new liberatory post colonial politics. There was widespread optimism and hope in Africa for development with social justice and there were strong illustrations of critical support and engagement with progressive movements (Chutel 2016; ROAPE 1976). In Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser had expanded his vision to control the commanding heights of the economy to drive industrial growth, promote land reform and alleviate rural poverty. But beginning in the 80s there was an onslaught on the possibility of a locally constructed and meaningful development strategy. To cite Colin Leys again, ‘It is hardly too much to say that by the end of the 1980s the only development policy that was officially approved was not having one –leaving it to the market to allocate resources, not the state (Leys, 1996:42; see also Bracking & Harrison 2003; Bracking 2003).

Catching up with the west, if it had ever been possible was certainly not feasible. The context of changed international neo-liberal circumstances, of structural adjustment, demands by IFIs and donors to reduce state intervention as a strategy to improve market efficiency, undermined what capacity existed locally to deal with turbulent international demands (Meager 2003; Biel 2003). Failure to comply generated widespread criticism of Africa. The critique of African states by the IFIs and donors ultimately offered an account of Africa as the child, who needed constant help or, alternatively as a renegade ‘failed’ state that needed protection from itself (Ayers 2006). This protection might be offered by new forms of ‘trusteeship’ or intervention (Collier, 2008) necessary to get African states back on track. The trusteeship of surplus peoples has perhaps been a continuous feature of post WW2 (Cowen and Shenton (1996). President Truman’s January 1949 speech indicated the need to help the least fortunate members of the human race and that somewhat self serving aid mentality has continued as the fear of global inequality especially post 9/11 is seen to have aggravated southern dissent with the western way of life. Development in Africa, as we indicate further below, has become securitised as the focus of the IFIs and donors may now be to maintain minimal living standards in a context of humanitarian and development rhetoric (Duffield, 2007; Arendt, 1958; Bauman, 2004; Evans, 2013). Binyavanga Wainaina (2005; 2012) captured the persistent view of Africa as child and mysterious ‘other’. Paternalism and religiosity he argued is cover for Africa’s continued subjugation and the power of the west to shape development agendas but it does not do

so without resistance. Much of the mainstream literature and accounts that have promoted the Africa rising trope exclude analytical stock taking of the consequences of Africa's historical past. This may account for why the continent's development difficulties have been explained in terms of poor state capacity – something that was undermined anyway by western SAP policy in the 1980s (Campbell 2011). It also helps explain why the strategies offered to the continent's leaders inevitably involves further incorporation into existing globalisation rather than any possible alternative routes. And it explains the pathologising of politics in Africa by western commentators and IFIs that persist with narratives about weak states, tribalism and the politics of ethnicity (inter alia, Collier; Bayart 1989; Chabal and Daloz 1999; for the anti-dote, Allen 1995 and Szeftel 1998; Gruffydd Jones 2008; Bracking 2016).

Capitalist exploitation and resistance

We can now return to the structural impediments that prevent African growth becoming more equal and sustainable. We can also look at the ways in which struggles in the continent have challenged impoverishment and uneven growth. By doing this we can indicate how the political spaces that may be opening up might provide a context for development and social transformation with justice and greater equity at its core.

There is little connectivity between the IFI desires to demonstrate how well the continent is progressing, by focussing on improved macro economic GDP indicators, and the complaints raised by the Economic Commission for Africa about illicit financial flows from Africa. As chair of a UN committee that investigated illicit flows from Africa, erstwhile SA President Thabo Mbeki noted, the bulk of multinational corporate company earnings of \$1.5 trillion in Africa each year are transferred out of the continent. These transfers avoid taxation, drain African economies of crucial liquidity and hard currency and accelerate income inequalities (ECA 2012a:np, Bracking 2016).

Multinational Corporations (MNCs) control about 60 per cent of world trade, about \$40 trillion dollars, and Mbeki's committee noted that perhaps as much as \$22 billion is transferred out of Africa illicitly each year – a significant proportion of the continent's debt and development assistance. In this context corporate social responsibility seems a long way from delivering the potential for development as the major banks are implicated in these transfers as are the big mining and oil and gas companies.

There thus seems to be collusion between some local African elites, special foreign interests and a 'wilful blindness of Western financial institutions and governments' (Ndikumana & Boyce, 2012:2). In 2010 a number of African leaders were implicated in illicit wealth creation, including the presidents of Republic of Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. All of these leaders were accused of embezzling public money. Each was in charge of running oil economies where the per capita incomes were some of the highest on the continent but where poverty and inequality was some of the greatest (Global Witness 2009).

Capital flight is a major block to sustainable development in Africa. Capital flight takes the form of direct embezzlement by politicians or fraud and under-invoicing of oil ex-

ports and over-invoicing of imports. The IMF estimates that \$4 billion of Angola's oil wealth in 2002 was unaccounted for – \$71 billion went 'missing' in the period 1985-2008 and there are similarly staggering figures for Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Sudan (Ndikumana and Boyce, 2012:4). Although the volume of capital flight may be greater from Asia the outflows from SSA 2005-2014 average between 7.5% and 11.6% of the region's total trade. One estimate is that for every dollar of external borrowing 60 cents exits the continent as capital flight (Boyce 2015, n.p.).

It is not only capital flight that has enabled African elites closely tied to some states and mineral economies to benefit from globalisation. The development experience of the 1980s and the new modes of accumulation that it spawned helped promote a new growing class of very rich African entrepreneurs. These have emerged from strong links with global capitalism in real estate promoting high end consumerism, and new consumer markets that are very visible in Accra and Luanda, Nairobi and Johannesburg. Africa's growth figures are shaped by commodity price rises and bourgeois consumption patterns, not by productive investment in local revenue generation.

The new African class of entrepreneurs in whom so much is invested by the IFIs has provided cover for the failures of de-industrialisation and the redefinition of structural transformation used by the IMF. Africa's share of manufacturing in economic output fell from more than 12% to about 11% between 1980-2013. Several different UN agencies have repeatedly sounded the alarm about the continent's crisis of manufacturing. In 2012 UNCTAD noted 'The declining share of manufacturing in Africa's output is of concern because historically manufacturing has been the main engine of high, rapid and sustained economic growth' (UNCTAD, 2012: 2-3). And twice more recently the ECA (2016) and UNIDO (2016) have lamented the failure of structural transformation that embraces the delivery of policy and practice that boost sustainable manufacturing. UNIDO notes how without manufacturing and industrialisation more generally Africa will not meet the SDGs by 2030; that inclusive and sustainable industrial development boosts employment, sustainable livelihoods, innovation and skills and in so doing also provides revenue for social and infrastructural development (UNIDO 2016, 1). We have noted, however, how the absence of growth in manufacturing undermines job creation, improved service provision and meeting youth expectations for work and improved lifestyles. The IFI response has repeatedly been that Africa continues as a raw material exporter (for western and Chinese needs) while offering some mediation of 'dependency' with profitable transnational corporate telecom development and financialisation of activities like banking and real estate. But this is precisely the 'development' resting on continued speculation of African markets that has helped create Africa's recent post 2008 phase of impoverishment and deindustrialisation. Commodity booms have not led to industrialisation yet we know that:

'Rarely has a country evolved from poor to rich without sustained structural transformation from an agrarian or resource-based economy towards an industrial or service-based economy' (UNIDO 2016,1).

It is this transformation that enables wealth creation on the back of improved economic integration and productivity. In contrast IFI driven structural transformation has un-

dermined state intervention, beginning in the 1980s, and has destroyed the provision of public goods. The IFIs continue to utter the ideological mantra and practice that private investment promotes growth. However, as I have indicated, with ‘no industrial policies or financial institutions to underwrite industrialisation, African economies have not been able to enhance the interface between raw material production and manufacturing’ (Mkandawire, 2014, 176). This critique of the IFIs and especially the continued stagnation of manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP is overwhelmingly obvious and the figures for Africa are the worst for any part of the world (Taylor, 2016).

There are several illustrations I might use to offer a sustained critique of the status quo and everyday resistance to Africa’s persistent underdevelopment. Space will only allow me to mention one set of dynamics where the issue of the plunder of Africa’s resources is met by a combined challenge from communities affected by mining and by a pan African initiative to both constrain mining companies and to promote local industrial development.

Mining companies might be seen as outriders for imperialism (REF 2010). It is still too early to make a definitive judgement about the impact of Chinese mining companies in Africa. Extractives remain a small proportion of global FDI yet it has a disproportionate economic and political influence on African development and economies. This is because of the importance of minerals in manufacturing and industry more generally as well as to the military (Willett 2009; Reno 1996; Watts 2007; Obi 2010). Mining companies are at the forefront of accumulation by dispossession in Africa. In doing so they promote a crude mantra of modernisation theory and promote the asymmetrical relationships that permeate mine areas, establish hierarchical relationships of power and exercise violent, intimidating control from mining enclaves. Enclaves are the result of FDI that does not permeate beyond the spatial location of extractive locations. They are the source of capital intensive production in the context of labour surplus. The mining enclave is organised for large scale production and there is frequent intimidation of local inhabitants by mine operations and by mine security that stops local residents from entering mine areas.

Two general types of violence prevail in mining enclaves in West Africa: a political violence where global corporates can bypass government decision making and consultation and a more familiar coercive violence where mines are cordoned off, policed and locals who enter get attacked. Where enclaves are fenced off, local communities are denied access to forestry resources and hunting, and all too frequently subject to the toxic waste that pollutes local water sources (Ochieng et al. 2010; Owusu-Koranteng and Owusu Koranteng 2017). In such circumstances a more complex set of relationships may emerge that goes beyond my twofold characterisation of violence. A more nuanced problematisation of the ‘economies of violence’ is evident in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for example. In eastern DRC rebel groups have engaged in a range of activities that go beyond, but can sometimes still be linked to, minerals. Conflict has been associated with military groups controlling land rather than minerals (Vlassenroot and Huggins 2005). Military groups gain access to taxing local communities, controlling border posts in areas where the formal state is ineffective or colluding with militias. Local militias have

also gained from looting, trading in hemp and charcoal and stealing livestock collecting roadblock taxes and taxing local agricultural producers (Laudati 2013: 33, 35).

The enclave is in many ways a metaphor for broader, persistent and systemic exploitation in Africa. It was most violently witnessed in South Africa in August 2012 at Marikana's platinum mine run by LONMIN where 47 miners were gunned down by police in response to a strike over pay and conditions (Marinovich et al, 29 January 2013). The main characteristics of an enclave relate to the violence and human rights abuses but also the ways in which expatriate labour accompanies the mining investment – as if to guard over it. The essential observation is that the enclave is a mechanism to promote the externalisation of the African economy (Ferguson 2007). It provides a way to extract resources and profits and in so doing provides an example where local government decision making is frustrated. Local planning mechanisms, guarantees of employment, access to tax revenue, and support initiatives for local African entrepreneurs to benefit from mining in the enclave are susceptible global market fluctuations in commodity prices. This does not mean that there may not be some local beneficiaries of the enclave. It does mean however, that the promises made by the mining companies and their representatives that communities can and will benefit from mining are false (*Mine various issues*) The enclave does not add to the expansion of the local and domestic market savings ratio and growth of a local bourgeoisie: it provides a block to each of these (Mhone, 2001).

In West and Central Africa there has been collusion between African states and mines operating in the enclaves. That has suggested compliance with the rhetoric that FDI will drive growth. 'Kick backs' can also accrue with rentier politics (Global Witness, 2012). Yet there has also been opposition and resistance to mines, mining and extractive social relations. While there may be some variance depending on the historical patterns of mining activity, the scale, role and extent of foreign national and local government engagement, resistance has emerged from two main areas. This observation is based on mining in west and central Africa but it is also evident in southern Africa. There may be different experiences elsewhere on the continent where there has been heightened violence or militarisation of links between mining companies, communities and the state. Indeed the state can be problematised as the arena in which several different economic actors compete for power to deliver policy and declared mining policy outcomes. Resistance has first been centred in communities themselves and may be characterised as reflecting the 'quiet encroachment of the ordinary' (Bayat, 2009). Writing about urban unrest in the Middle East, long before the 2011 Arab uprisings Bayat explored:

'non collective direct actions of individuals and families to acquire basic necessities (land, shelter, urban collective consumption, informal jobs, business opportunities) in a quiet, unassuming fashion' (Bayat, 2000:iv).

These actions are not just a defensive coping strategy regarding land loss and challenges to livelihoods. Community and other localised struggles can also advance the livelihoods of ordinary people, and these sometimes fleeting struggles may occur without obvious leadership and formal organisation. In Bolivia for example, struggles against water charging and the nationalisation of gas emerged from social movements that drew on

the ‘strength from their embeddedness in daily life’ (Spronk & Jeffery, 2007). In many parts of Africa, struggles waged by artisanal small scale miners (ASM) over land access and control of equipment and inputs for mining might contribute to everyday resistance to owners of land and capital.

There may be more than 10 million such miners in Africa, and 1.1 million in Ghana (an additional 4.4 million dependents) where they are known as *galamsey*. Most of the discussion about the *galamsey* centres on their legal status and the extent to which they degrade the environment (Hentschel *et al.*, 2003). ASM may be seen to be a strategy not just of survival and livelihoods, and there are complicated relations between miners and funders, land owners and communities – exacerbated in recent years by a large influx of miners from China (Crawford and Botchwey 2018). These have been middlemen and financiers, companies as well as labourers who were often miners in China and who are now mining in Ghana and elsewhere in West Africa. ASM may also be seen as a strategy that confronts commodification of land resulting from mine concessions and enclave development (Bush 2009). ASM can be seen as a social (and political) response to the internationalisation of capital and its deleterious consequences that have abjected communities affected by mining.

Running alongside the ASM debate that has mostly focussed on its deleterious environmental impact and lawlessness (Bush 2009) is the African Union’s Mining Vision initiative (African Union 2009; 2011). This mining policy and strategy document is an example of a locally generated African initiative and one that is intended to be operationalised by African governments. It was developed to promote a resource based development and structural transformation of the continent. It has been an important attempt to promote an independent transformation of mining discourse to implement a pan African policy that challenges decades of underdevelopment by mining companies (African Union 2016). At the heart of the AU policy is the desire to maximise revenue from extractives for an industrial agenda. Mining is used as leverage for structural transformation. The Vision aims to promote the ‘equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources to underpin broad-based sustainable growth and socio-economic development’ (African Union, 2009:4). In doing so the AU has put back on the AU policy agenda the need to revisit the historical underperformance of government access to revenue from local resources. The AU has also declared the need to re-examine the debate about the relationship between regulation and control of mines that was very much part of the nationalist 1970s agenda (Andreasson 2015).

Crucial for the AU is an understanding of Africa’s past, of underdevelopment and reference to the much maligned 1980 Lagos Plan of Action that among other things highlighted the exploitative nature of colonial transformation, western corporate dominance and the challenges to African state capacity (OAU 1979). The AU vision may be an attempt to think outside of the ‘mining box’ – to counter the consequences of capital intensive extractives and to avoid the recurrent development failures of the extractives enclave. It was an attempt to resurrect, an agenda, albeit in a different global environment from the 1970s, that will accrue greater benefits for host countries and mining communities. At-

tempts have been made to reduce old impediments to developing a pan African policy. In 2013 an African Minerals Development Centre was established to coordinate actors like UNECA, the African Development Bank and UNDP (<https://www.uneca.org/amdc>). This Centre may help improve the speed with which pan African decisions can be made and there has certainly been a shift since the Mining Vision in 2009 to begin to focus on possible national as well as regional mining initiatives that can better reward and retain local value added for domestic development initiatives. For example, the new AMV African Minerals Governance Framework (ECA 2017) was designed to deepen commitment to implement the AMV, to accelerate an alignment of mining laws and policy and to improve sharing of good practice in the ways in which African states work alongside stakeholders like the mining companies (ECA 2017,v-vi). The AU initiative has begun to shift the ground and issues for debate. It is a debate that has been partly shaped by the discourse of neo extractivism in Latin America (Burchart & Dietz 2014; Veltmeyer 2016; Veltmeyer and Petras 2014). It has sought to restore a central role for the state, for example, and improve governance, transparency and accountability of firms and state institutions (Greenspan 2014) and action.

The AMV deals with contentious issues. There is likely to be many conflicts. These will be within and between African states regarding the development and implementation of policy. Those conflicts will be intense if there is a real attempt to try and increase control of national resources for local development limiting mining company activity. And this will be intense too if MNCs try and pick off different states to play them off against each other for competitive advantage, among other things. The structural dependence of Africa mineral economies continues and it will be difficult to develop alternatives where the primary source of revenue is mining. For the moment too there is no nation state champion (Graham 2015) that can drive the AMV agenda of sustainable more equitable development based on extractives. The AMV has nevertheless set an agenda to avoid the persistent race to the bottom and to do so with a goal of promoting structural transformation to gain benefits from value added locally with higher volume of locally sourced inputs, infrastructure and gains from beneficiation. Hence there has been the development of national mining visions that promote policy to scale up local development through greater retention and improved local content (ECA 2018 forthcoming; Cosby and Ramdoo 2018).

Conclusion

I have among other things highlighted that the debate about Afro optimism and pessimism, Africa rising and falling is a popularised discussion that has tended to ignore the need to grasp the structural processes underpinning headline economic growth figures. The 'scramble for Africa' continues. I have indicated the importance of going beyond headline figures bandied around by the IFIs, and apologists for global capitalism to interrogate what is currently a dominant vision of structural transformation of African economies. IFI policy created a structurally transformed Africa that has impoverished agriculture, restricted industrial growth and promoted the extractive sectors for the benefits

of MNCs and the domestic economic and political interests around international rather than national market growth.

The challenge, as this article has begun to map out, is to assemble analysis and action to construct and build a radical transformation of Africa. There have been examples of radical agendas in recent years, Burkina Faso, Egypt and Tunisia, to name just three, all of which have failed to deliver on early expectations. Future activism and engagement for radical transformation will explore class and social movements that struggle to defy injustice and help construct alternatives to the IFI, donor and government policy that has so ensnared and undermined the well being of the majority of Africans.

I have indicated hope in the AMV as a vehicle that might be used with pressure from below to promote sustainable and more equitable development in Africa. It is timely given the passing in August 2018 of Samir Amin. He made repeated calls in his life as a committed Marxist activist in Africa for socialist transformation that autocentred development was possible. By this he meant the possibility of delinking, not autarky, from the imperatives of globalisation. He argued for 'sovereign popular projects' where delinking from the world economy would help create local economic rationality with a 'national foundation and a popular content, independent of the criteria of economic rationality that emerges from the domination of the law of capitalist value that operates on a world scale' (Amin 1987: 436; 2013; 2017). Promoting this would ultimately help stimulate sustainable and equitable development in Africa led by peasants and the working class.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Peter Lawrence and Yao Graham for their time and commitment.

Thanks for comments from an anonymous reviewer.

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THE RENTS OF THE DEAD: GROWTH AND ENTROPY IN AFRICAN CITIES

James R. Brennan

Department of History, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

This article considers recent literature on contemporary urbanization in Africa that is united in its 'post-normative' orientation toward its subject, firmly discarding the 'expectations' of modernization that so deeply shaped twentieth-century research on African cities. Best typified by the work of urban anthropologists such as Abdoumalq Simone, this scholarship instead focuses on the 'vernacularization' of urban structures and strategies in Africa. While such work has developed a host of new insights into the idiosyncratic nature of African urbanization, it has largely eschewed any comparative analysis of enduring economic strategies that lie at the heart of the massive growth of African cities. By focusing on the longer-term historical role of such processes – namely urban rents and urban price regulations – this article suggests that a more comparative framework can be generated for the study of urban Africa that still accounts for and partially explains the otherwise seemingly hyper-local and idiosyncratic forms of urban livelihoods and strategies. It also briefly reflects on notable trends in the five years since its original publication in 2013.

KEYWORDS: URBAN HISTORY, URBANIZATION, CONSUMPTION, RENT, PRICE CONTROLS

Prologue

Looking back five years since the publication of this article, two things seem most relevant.¹ First, the continued rise in centrally-located urban land values, driven by varying combinations of demand and speculative investment, has locked in an architectural form skyscraper urbanism across several dozen African cities. This commercial fortification more sharply divides 'urban' from 'peri-urban' landscapes, which had been previously articulated in a much more gradualist manner. Second, the social resilience of the African necropolis in close proximity to such transformed urban spaces, typically taking the form of Christian and Muslim cemeteries, marks a rich site of social and economic contestation over local community claims to ownership and memory in the face of capital-intensive and often speculation-driven urban transformation, and mark some of continent's most highly-pressurized transition zones between the urban and peri-urban. In Dar es Salaam, Muslim cemeteries in particular, owned by various forms of community – such as a single family (Tambaza in Upanga), an ethnic community (Manyema in Ilala), and the wider Sunni *umma* (the Muslim cemetery in Kisutu) – has created diverse forms of community mobilization to protect urban land holdings, which have all come under speculative ga-

1 "Rents and entitlements: reassessing Africa's urban pasts and futures." *Afrika Focus* 26.1 (2013). 37-49.

zes over the past decade because of their superior central locations. Rent-seeking urban landlords, who in a city such as Dar es Salaam have historically played the leading role in urban property development, will increasingly need to mediate historical community claims, grounded most powerfully in the urban necropolis, with the opportunities and demands of large-scale investors for multi-storied building sites, in order to retain their economic and social position in the African cities of the near future.

Introduction

Where are we today in the study of African cities? The normative ‘dualist’ view – that African cities represent a separate realm of ‘modern’ urban life surrounded by ‘traditional’ countryside – long stood at the center of colonial urban ethnography, and proved remarkably persistent in the decades that followed colonial rule. But its grip did eventually slacken and give way to what might be termed a ‘post-normative’ view of African cities, in which urbanization is something other than what its planners, leaders, or theorists had intended it to be. This post-normative approach defined the most vital work in the field, such as James Ferguson’s *Expectations of Modernity*, which memorably criticizes the evolutionary view of urbanization, and turns our attention to the role of style, how urban individuals adopt elements of either ‘localist’ or ‘cosmopolitan’ styles even amid the failure of the urban economy to deliver on its promises.² Several elements of Ferguson’s picture, built from his late-1980s fieldwork, however already seem curiously dated. Global copper prices took off in 2004 and have largely remained at decades-level highs ever since. This, combined with enormous Chinese investment in Zambia’s mines, have together created new orientations around what it means to be ‘cosmopolitan’, as well as creating novel forms of oppositionist and xenophobic politics. In short, Zambia’s copperbelt cannot simply stand either as a straightforward example of evolutionary urbanization, or as an exhibit of post-modern and post-industrial ‘disconnect’, as it had during the booming 1960s and moribund 1990s, respectively. Whether or not Africa’s much-vaunted ‘cheetahs’ of the 2000s will continue to match optimists’ expectations of interconnected economic growth and improved governance over the coming years as they have over the past decade³, there is little question that urban centers will be a moving target for urban analysts, who will seek to keep pace through the rapid and experimental adoption of new methodological and theoretical frameworks.

If the spirit of Ferguson’s copperbelt is marked by regional nostalgia and global disconnection, much of the current post-normative literature on urban Africa focuses instead on an impossibly open-ended present and future of deeply diverse locales. This is particularly pronounced in ethnographic research of what Jane Guyer has recently termed ‘Describing Urban “No Man’s Land” in Africa’, in which cities are characterized as ‘elu-

2 James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

3 The most rigorous account of this view is Steven Radelet, *Emerging Africa: how 17 countries are leading the way* (Washington DC: Center for Global Development, 2010).

sive, invisible, yet to come'.⁴ Her characterization of the research, from which these three terms originate – the books of Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe, Filip de Boeck and Marie-Françoise Plissart, and Abdoumalig Simone, respectively – can be summarized thusly: '[i]n the ether of the invisible, what circulates are symbols and expressions; what emanates from bodies is sexual tension, aesthetic sensibility and physical vulnerability ... what bears down oppressively is constraint and neglect of all kinds. In brief, what strikes the perceptive mind is precisely what burst out of the conventional forms and has not yet taken a newly conventionalized shape'.⁵ This is emphatically not a story of long temporal swings in global markets and transnational ideologies. It is instead an approach marked by intimate empathy, and the ethnographer's subject is often ephemerality, disjuncture, and possibility. Such ethnographic realism is not, as Guyer argues, 'in the service of systemics (as in modernism), nor of extricating divergent contending discourses (as in post-modernism) but is crafted better to "grasp the native's point of view", and to document the "imponderability of actual life" within incongruence'. The message of this approach is that older, more conventional methods of ethnography – and by extension, methods of social science, history, linguistics, *et cetera* – cannot cope with the incongruity, because they cannot anticipate the heterogeneity and unconventional nature of African cities, both past and present. These are important insights. For Guyer's part, she highlights, and indeed endorses, the eclectic, episodic, ethereal, and idiosyncratic method of these authors, who use a format that 'privileges the impression and the impressiveness of things, as experienced by different participants, in different places, from different angles and with different interests'.⁶

But such approaches also reveal limitations. Simone's *For the City Yet to Come*, for example, begins with a brief but reliable guide to the general retreat of formal state participation in African cities since the 1970s, but in its wake posits no continent-wide generalizations but rather four distinct 'notions'. These 'notions' constitute 'provisional, highly fluid, yet coordinated and collective actions', which arise alongside the proliferation of 'decentralized local authorities, small-scale enterprises, community associations, and civil society organizations'.⁷ These 'notions' are also Simone's descriptors of the four cities of Dakar, Pretoria, Douala, and Jidda – or 'The Informal', 'The Invisible', 'The Spectral', and 'Movement'. Their purpose is to convey how processes of urban operation in contemporary Africa work, and are meant to serve 'as ways of bringing the city into some kind of focus and for leveraging access to the effects of urban forces and practices otherwise not easy to apprehend', as an alternative to 'the concentration on analytical languages that attempt to account for urban life through a specific delineation of social identities, sectors, and

4 Jane I. Guyer, 'Describing Urban 'No Man's Land' in Africa', *Africa* 83 (2011), 474-92.

5 Guyer, 475. The works are Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe (eds.), *Johannesburg: the elusive metropolis* (Johannesburg and Durham NC: Witwatersrand University Press and Duke University Press, 2008); Filip de Boeck and Marie-Françoise Plissart, *Kinshasa: tales of the invisible city* (Tervuren and Ludion: Royam Museum of Central Africa and Vlaams Architectuureeninstituut Vai, 2004); and Abdoumalig Simone, *For the City Yet to Come: changing African life in four cities* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

6 Guyer, 484.

7 Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*, 13.

institutions.⁸ This is an appealing approach, seeking to divine emic categories of urbanization rather than imposing etic ones. But this is also wholly interpretive and seemingly impervious to deployment for comparative purpose, particularly when Simone's core message is the capacity of African cities 'to generate new and largely ephemeral forms of social collaboration'.⁹

My point here is not at all to abandon locally specific urban ethnography in preference for a comparative, typology-bound approach to African urban studies. The work of Anthony O'Connor is excellent, but the effect of six African city types – 'indigenous', 'Islamic', 'colonial', 'European', 'dual', and 'hybrid'¹⁰ – has been to turn our focus onto what fits and does not fit, rather than to illuminate important comparative and contrastive trends in forms of African urbanization. Moreover, typologies based on space or function implicitly reflect the biases of the urban planner. The story of Africa's urbanization, particularly over the past few decades, is the comparative impotence or even irrelevance of urban planning, and the emergence of unanticipated heterogeneity. Richard Grant summarizes what might be fairly termed the operating academic consensus on how best to understand Africa's urban environment – as 'truncated modernization: the evolving city is fragmented, chaotic, and spatially messy'.¹¹ Yet dissolving or otherwise transcending the old dualism of 'tradition' versus 'modernity' and embracing heterogeneity is not enough. We should turn our attention especially to comparative elements of economic strategy in Africa's urban past and present, which include the host of idiosyncratic urban modes of livelihood and unexpected forms of associational life so well mapped out by Simone and others. Simone's plea that we understand urbanization in Africa as a type of vernacularization, in which a form of shared spatial subaltern language, or 'spectral urbanism', is characterized by creative reconnections of resources, objects and bodies de-territorialized from earlier signifying regimes, is a vital one.¹² This also raises important questions about the formation of political power in such inchoate and unpredictable spaces. Laurent Fourchard has urged historians of African cities to analyze 'the multiple, ambivalent, and non-linear city/state relationships on the continent' as a way of moving beyond normative visions of the state, while 'facilitating the interrogation of this relatively unexplored issue in the analysis of state formation in Africa'.¹³ Posing conventional questions of economic and political comparison within an acknowledged post-normative light that accepts wildly heterogeneous forms of African urban life can yield much analytical and interpretive profit.

8 *Ibid.*, 13-14.

9 *Ibid.*, 214.

10 Anthony O'Connor, *The African City* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1983), 9-12.

11 Richard Grant, *Globalizing City: The Urban and Economic Transformation of Accra, Ghana* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 7.

12 Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*, especially 92-117.

13 Laurent Fourchard, 'Between World History and State Formation: New Perspectives on Africa's Cities', *Journal of African History* 52 (2011), 227.

Furthermore, post-normative frameworks could also benefit from the earnest quest for social justice that animates the work of urban geographers such as Garth Myers, who argues that '[t]he challenges for African urban studies no longer lie simply or solely with paying more theoretical attention to the marginalized informal, invisible, spectral, ne-cropolitan or ordinary settings across the cities of the continent – important as this may be'. Myers instead argues for a useable, activist scholarship that lies 'equally in *practice*, in then attempting to articulate how such urbanization processes might contribute to efforts to improve the quality of life for the inhabitants of these places'.¹⁴ All cities in this view are both global and the product of local politics. So it is in this appreciative but critical understanding of the post-normative spirit of contemporary African urban studies that I offer a somewhat different focus, one that is more material than ethereal, where prices matter as much as values. After an overview of the role played by 'demand' in African urbanization, this article examines in more detail the role of income strategies (rents) and spatial benefits (entitlements) that others have identified, and that I found particularly crucial in the case of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. In this, one can see the improvisations of urban actors working within less visible but no less enduring (and certainly non-ephemeral) economic structures of African urban life.

Demands for the city

A lingering sense of abstemious virtue has seemed to inform both the academic and public imagination that cities were inherently unproductive places, and that Africans were ill-served by pursuing urban lives in which luxury and consumption formed a significant part of the economic landscape. The haunting juxtaposition of enormous wealth alongside dire poverty often tends to entrench this view across the political spectrum, firming the convictions of colonial-era administrators, rural African gerontocrats, development enthusiasts, and anti-capitalist leftists alike, that cities are sites of impoverishment and immiseration. The most prominent recent case of this latter group is Mike Davis' account, *Planet of Slums*, which connects an utterly dystopian view of 'Third World' urbanization with a stinging condemnation of neo-liberal policies. Davis certainly does not advocate a return to rural bliss, but his ceaseless and rather lurid emphasis on all that is squalid, diseased, and wretched about slum life raises some rather basic questions about the relationship between urbanization and poverty.¹⁵ Such a portrait requires sharpening and correction, both through entertaining ideological challenge and pursuing greater analytical rigor. Davis portrays the swelling of 'Third World' slums as an inescapable penitentiary for the urban-bound poor. Yet the presence of poverty in cities across the globe might alternatively be said to reflect urban strength as much as urban weakness. As the libertarian-minded urban economist Edward Glaeser has argued, '[c]ities aren't full of poor people because cities make people poor, but because cities attract poor people with

14 Garth Myers, *African Cities: Alternative Visions of Urban Theory and Practice* (London: Zed Books, 2011), 14.

15 Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006).

the prospect of improving their lot in life'.¹⁶ People flock to African cities in general not out of coercion – unless coercion is defined so broadly as to lose any precision to account for a spatial component – or out of madness or mistaken beliefs. They flock to urban areas, Glaeser explains, 'because cities offer advantages they couldn't find in their previous homes'. The deep wish that people remain in agricultural isolation has been shared by a politically motley bunch – colonial officials, anti-colonial liberationist figures such as Julius Nyerere, and contemporary preservationists across large swathes of the West today. Glaeser concludes that, by offering far more possibilities in connecting capital-less workers with capital-rich employers, 'cities, not farms, will save the developing world'.¹⁷ Yet Glaeser's own Pollyanish views on 'Third World' urbanism might also be effectively challenged on Glaeser's own ground of economics. A recent study by the World Bank, for example, surprisingly demonstrates some African countries to be the exception to the larger global trend that shows a positive correlation between the movement of people to cities and the growth in wealth. This study instead shows that in a number of sub-Saharan African cases, there is either a negative correlation (Liberia, Zimbabwe) or basically neutral correlation (Cameroon, Nigeria, Kenya) between urbanization and GDP growth, perhaps because micro-entrepreneurial work carries with it such low earnings and does not necessarily lead to net job creation and productivity growth.¹⁸ Furthermore, libertarian optimism might seem wide of the mark when set aside the recent work of Deborah Potts, who argues that Africa is currently undergoing a parallel 'de-urbanization' that accompanies, and in some areas outpaces, the wider trend of urbanization. According to aggregate United Nations data, Africa's urbanization in whole – whether to first-order or second-order cities – continues to grow, and is not reversing. But Potts raises important questions by offering analytical distinctions among the population of urban-dwellers that must be considered when generalizing about 'urbanization'. She argues that there are four groups of people in cities today, 'willing stayers, reluctant stayers, willing leavers, and reluctant leavers'. When urban living standards decline severely, there is an under-studied push and movement of peoples back to rural areas. Potts concludes that 'often mobility has remained high, or even increased, but the net movement into large towns has decreased as circulation has increased'.¹⁹ Whether or not African cities can be generalized as primarily sites of superior economic realization or impoverishment, the reasons why individuals and groups choose to move to, to stay in, and to leave cities remain vital. Thus, an earlier scholarly generation's concerns with the causes of urbanization, though undoubtedly overshadowed by a subsequent generation's concerns with urbanization's effects, should draw our attention to the question of realizing desire within a spatial framework.

16 Edward Glaeser, *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier* (New York: Penguin, 2011), 70.

17 Glaeser, 75.

18 *World Development 2013: Jobs* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2012), 52-54.

19 Deborah Potts, 'Making a Livelihood in (and Beyond) the African City: The Experience of Zimbabwe', *Africa 81* (4) 2011: 602.

My book, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania*, argues that the city is best understood primarily as a site of consumption.²⁰ Labor loomed large as a worry for colonial administrators, but their first worry was to secure urban control through regulating the price and access to basic consumer needs – food, clothing, and housing – to manage the population of Dar es Salaam, which swelled during the 1940s. State management of urban consumer goods became the platform upon which the city’s racial politics – that pitted African and Indian claims on the city against one another – grew to form the basis of nationalist politics. People came to cities such as Dar es Salaam not only to make money but also to generate social capital, which in turn opened up new possibilities for the creation of political power. It was in Dar es Salaam where the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) was not only formed in 1954, but came to politically dominate the city in 1955, providing a platform for territory-wide political domination over the next few years that would lead directly to independence in 1961. Urban space thus provided propitious postwar political connections that were wholly unintended by either European administrators or African immigrants.

This unintended nature of cities, which results from the uncoordinated desires and demands of individuals, furnishes its most vital and exciting characteristics. Yet these characteristics might not be quite as ephemeral or locally unique as observers like Simone suggest. The urban pursuit of desire has created a host of mixed ‘externalities’, the impact that a person’s actions have on another person that does not come about through a voluntary transaction. This includes both positive externalities that attracts people to cities, such as the economic opportunities for comparatively high wages and enormous opportunities in the realms of education and culture, as well as negative externalities such as general urban pollution, dire sanitation, high rents (as viewed by renters), and endless traffic, which together has formed the trade-offs that individuals weighed when deciding to whether to come, stay, or leave. Such externalities, economists point out, have never been effectively ‘priced’ to more efficiently manage the costs and benefits of these externalities, perhaps most noticeably today in the continent’s rapidly spiraling difficulties with urban traffic congestion. As Glaeser argues, when people drive, they do not ‘usually consider the costs – the lost time – we impose on every other driver. We don’t consider the congestion we create, and as a result, we overuse the highways’.²¹ Congestion charges seem a considerable distance in the future as a practical way for African governments manage the hopelessly congested roads of Dar es Salaam, Lagos, Kinshasa, *et cetera*, particularly as the enormous power of institutional interests – be it the imported automobile sales businesses in Dar es Salaam, or the Nigeria Truck Owners Association lobby in Lagos – have far more incentive and muscle to maintain the status quo than do the overlapping, confused, and underfunded state authorities formally charged with maintaining a workable urban roads network.²² In short, students of African cities

20 James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012), particularly chapter 3.

21 Glaeser, 158.

22 On Nigeria, see Joshua Hammer, ‘World’s Worst Traffic Jam: How a 40-mile trip to Lagos took 12 hours’, *The*

should consider taking up, if not the terminology of economics, at least its spirit – here, consideration of the vital roles played by tradeoffs and externalities – when generalizing about the decisions and strategies of actors, and the creation of new structures that both empower and limit the realization of actors’ desires.

Rents and entitlements

The Marxist heritage is particularly strong in studies of African urban history. Colonial African cities in particular have often been cast broadly in terms of material conflict between colonial states and their unruly African subjects.²³ At its best – such as in the studies of Mombasa carried out by Frederick Cooper – the subtle questions of coercion and resistance are located in the struggle over production itself, and how such struggles are at the center of debates over wages, terms of urban work, and larger questions of citizenship and belonging in colonial cities.²⁴ More recent works that take up the spirit of Marxist protest to investigate urban immiseration – again, Mike Davis’ *Planet of Slums* stands out because of its visibility – have taken the international economy and international capitalist institutions such as the International Monetary Fund to task. Such authors have in turn lost some of the rigor that typified earlier Marxist studies, which had earlier posed sweeping questions to be answered by specific methodological prescriptions – namely by examining closely how production actually works, with enormous comparative utility. Yet more recent authors readily acknowledge the central role of rents and ‘landlordism’ in the formation of urban space, something which the previous generation of Marxists had often tended to ignore or minimize. Mike Davis, for example, correctly stresses the significance of landlordism, describing it as ‘the principle way in which urban poor people can monetize their equity (formal or informal),’ but then quickly moralizes an analytical retreat by concluding that they do so ‘often in an exploitative relationship to even poorer people.’²⁵ His *Planet of Slums* is a tale driven by its villains – Nairobi’s slums are portrayed as ‘vast rent plantations owned by politicians and the upper middle class’²⁶, even though Davis’ main source for this generalization carefully cautions that ‘while some of these landlords are well-off, it would be a mistake to underestimate the number of the urban poor who depend solely on this sector for a livelihood’.²⁷ Martin Murray employs similarly dualistic and dramatic terminologies

Atlantic, July/August 2012.

- 23 For a good reminder of the strengths of this approach, see Bill Freund, *The African City: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- 24 Frederick Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters: Plantation Labor and Agriculture in Zanzibar and Coastal Kenya, 1890-1925* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); and *idem.*, *On the African Waterfront: Urban Disorder and the Transformation of Work in Colonial Mombasa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).
- 25 Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006), 42.
- 26 Davis, 87. For a similarly dualistic view of Nairobi’s most renowned ‘slum’ of Kibera, see Robert Neuwirth, *Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters, a New Urban World* (London: Routledge, 2005), 67-99. For an important corrective that takes seriously the role of patronage, economic differentiation and ethnicity among Kibera landlords and tenants, see Johan de Smedt, ‘No Raila, No Peace! Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots’, *African Affairs* 108 (2009), 581-598.
- 27 Philip Amis, ‘Commercialized Rental Housing in Nairobi, Kenya’, in Carl V. Patton (ed.), *Spontaneous Shelter: International Perspectives and Prospects* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 249.

of the powerful and the oppressed to portray post-apartheid Johannesburg, a city where the critical rent-seeking actors are '[u]nscrupulous slumlords' who 'took advantage of the pent-up demand for accommodation in the inner city by demanding high rents, encouraging the subdivision of residential units so as to maximize occupancy' and thereby allow 'properties to fall into an irretrievable state of disrepair'.²⁸ Such dualistic visions of urban rents as primarily a process of immiseration generated by the powerful extracting from the weak, while presenting a welcome shift in focus to the rent-seeking economies that define street-level urban life, however obscure the finely grained nature of such chains of rent-seeking within and among the urban poor, as well as the range of motivations that generates such activity, the most resilient of which is the quest for economic security. Among the more arresting features of contemporary African urbanization are its skyrocketing property values and utterly opaque urban land markets. The urban geographer Richard Grant sensibly asks, 'How is it that individuals buy property when traditional land law does not permit land sales? How can individuals pay between US\$25,000 and US\$300,000 for houses when Ghana's per capital income is around US\$400 and mortgages are scarce?' Echoing the anti-neoliberal dualism of Davis, Grant finds his answer outside of Africa, in the new 'transnationalism' of post-1990s liberalization, which unleashed a wave of wealthy 'transmigrants' who upended Accra's real estate market by fueling the demand for expensive gated enclaves. Such a revolution stands in strong contrast to what Grant purports to be the more innocent pre-liberalization era in Accra, when homes 'served as a public good and entailed significant obligations and attachments.'²⁹ The scale of Accra's urban land market was undoubtedly more limited, yet this view, a sort of urban 'Merrie Africa' of rent-free family compound living³⁰, ignores that urban land speculation and rent-seeking strategies were core dynamics of the African cities long before the 1990s. A century earlier, in 1890s Accra, local chiefs had responded to the colonial abrogation of their judicial and taxation powers by becoming urban land brokers; by the 1910s, they fiercely competed with lineage heads and private individuals 'to establish control or outright ownership over land', in turn generating 'a kaleidoscope of legal struggles'.³¹ Further north in colonial Kumasi, Sara Berry has demonstrated how commoners, chiefs, and colonial officials alike struggled to control the mightily profitable business of urban land allocation. Colonial formalizing of 'customary' urban land principles did little to discourage land commercialization in practice; indeed a bustling urban mortgage market had already taken root by the 1930s.³² Tom McCaskie notes that suburban Kumasi's land boom which followed the Second World War created an anar-

28 Martin J. Murray, *City of Extremes: The Spatial Politics of Johannesburg* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 143.

29 Grant, 17, 45.

30 Simone similarly generalizes that '[i]n most of Africa, land persists in being viewed largely as a public good', though is more helpful in stressing the willful opacity that characterizes urban land transactions. Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*, 192 & 207-208.

31 John Parker, *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* (Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 2000), 146, 198 (quotation at 198).

32 Sara S. Berry, *Chiefs Know Their Boundaries: Essays on Property, Power, and the Past in Asante, 1896-1996* (Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 2001), 64-73.

chic playing field that bedeviled urban planners and enriched rent-seeking speculators:

‘The housing sector was overtaken by rental sub-lettings on a huge scale as those individuals with clear title to plots sought to optimize their returns. Indeed, rental payments from tenants to landlords living in the same dwelling swiftly became a major source of revenue in Ayigya’s booming building economy.’

Traditional forms of tenure for urban homes in Ghana, therefore, were hardly expressions of an anti-capitalist ethos that would secure the ‘public good’ of universal, family-compound based housing, but rather proved remarkably adaptable to fierce commercial competition over increasingly scarce and valuable land. Token payments to traditional authorities, such as customary ‘drink money’ paid to the *Asantehene* to secure urban plot titles, were now reassessed to reflect going market rates.³³ Such chiefly rent-seeking underscores Berry’s larger insight that property, both in Asante and more generally in sub-Saharan Africa, is better understood as a social process rather than a set of initial conditions.³⁴ These social processes involve the mobilization of local histories and secret knowledge to navigate competing and overlapping authorities. Within these social processes, opacity in urban land ownership serves as an effective and resilient tool for seeking and negotiating rents, constantly reproducing the very conditions bemoaned by transparency reformers who vainly seek a singular discursive and administrative register. Pluralistic land ownership patterns across much of colonial urban Africa thus result from the overlapping rent-seeking strategies of chiefs, lineages, state authorities (often multiple), and speculative investors.³⁵ In *Taifa*, I examine the formative role of urban rents, as well as the strategy of rent-seeking and the formation of a landlord strategy in shaping the physical structure and political debates of colonial and early postcolonial Dar es Salaam. The most diffuse and accessible strategy of capital accumulation in cities such as Dar es Salaam has been and continues to be the accumulation of rents. Dar es Salaam’s high rents for rooms and houses were not only indicators of urban immiseration for those on the economic margins, though that cannot be denied; they were also powerful evidence of successful strategies of capital accumulation by landlords of varying means and all colors. The work of landlords who set out to capture these expensive rents did considerably more to determine the physical shape of colonial and particularly postcolonial urban growth than did the works of colonial urban planners. The built environment of Dar es Salaam’s older neighborhoods like Kariakoo, Ilala, and Magomeni, and in particular that of its more recent and more distant neighborhoods such as Tabata, Segerea, Ubungo, and Mbagala, cannot be remotely understood with reference to urban plans and regulations alone. Whether or not landlords are most profitably understood as a class, or as a coherent strategy, their role in shaping Africa’s physical and economic landscape – which

33 T. C. McCaskie, *Asante Identities: History and Modernity in an African Village 1850-1950* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 215.

34 Berry, xxii.

35 For an excellent overview of urban property markets in Africa, see Carole Rakodi, ‘Residential property markets in African cities’, in Carole Rakodi (ed.), *The Urban Challenge in Africa: Growth and Management of its Large Cities* (Tokyo: The United Nations University Press, 1997), 371-410.

are far too often credited to urban planners – remains the most fundamental lacuna in the study of African cities generally. My story is one about rent-seeking, and this also means attending to the historical role of the original ‘rent-seekers’, the urban ‘first-comers’ – in Dar es Salaam, this meant the ethnic Zaramo and Shomvi – whose social, legal, and spiritual claims over the city similarly shaped the environment of colonial and postcolonial urban growth.³⁶ The most neglected element of how these ‘first-comers’ shape urban environments is the role played by the ‘invisible’ actors in shaping the urban landscape of the living. Largely invisible to colonial and postcolonial legal regimes, spiritual land markers such as graveyards, grave sites, and spirit shrines were principal points of local orientation among Shomvi and their tenants in Dar es Salaam. Land rents are thus importantly necropolitan phenomena. In poorly titled and surveyed areas, rent payments were the most reliable indicators of successful land claims, and Shomvi often collected *ubani* land rent. Literally meaning ‘incense’, *ubani* was commonly used in Muslim prayers as well as *mizimu* (spirits) propitiations carried out through the intercession of long-term residents. Shomvi in the 1990s collected *ubani* in the form of gifts or payment, the payer knowing that it would not be used to purchase incense, but instead serve as the newcomer’s sacrament to a successful first-comer claim.³⁷ Its origins lay in an earlier time when the significance of land rents was more symbolic and tributary than financial. Such spiritual land markers remain an important reference point in court cases and social mental geographies across the continent. Indeed, it is at points where the dead no longer anchor claims of the living, when death occurs outside of any viable kinship network, as De Boeck and Plissart observe in Kinshasa, that death has ‘therefore lost its capacity for placement’, and therefore marks a serious and fundamental transformation in Africa’s urban cityscapes.³⁸ From the grave guardian to the international property speculator, the principle of rent generation through exploiting land scarcity with legal-historical claims has created and sustained Africa’s most consequential urban group, the landlord.

Finally, let us return to another debate from the era of normative approaches, the question of rural development. The most influential liberal criticism of African’s rural production problems of the 1970s and 1980s was made by Robert Bates, who argued that postcolonial Africa was cursed with an urban bias in its economic policies – the unfair pricing of goods and services that flow between rural and urban areas.³⁹ In my own work, I locate the origin of this set of policies for Tanzanian in the wartime urban colonial state of the 1940s, which was a regulatory state that extended basic minimum guarantees of food and clothing in return for visible full employment. Urban space grew within this regulatory texture of price and mobility controls, with several long-ranging effects, including what development economists would come to term ‘urban bias’. Around 1939,

36 See Brennan, *Taiifa*, especially chapter 2.

37 See especially Geoffrey Ross Owens, ‘The Shomvi: A Precursor to Global Ethnoscapes and Indigenization in Precolonial East Africa’, *Ethnohistory* 53 (2006), 730-731.

38 De Boeck and Plissart, *Kinshasa*, 134.

39 The classic statement of this view is Michael Lipton, *Why Poor People Stay Poor: A Study of Urban Bias in World Development* (London: Temple Smith, 1977).

Dar es Salaam's rate of population growth leaped from its inter-war pace of two percent to around eight percent, which would remain so for decades after independence in 1961. The state responded by creating what I have termed 'urban entitlement', a set of spatially-defined legal rights to minimum necessities through the state regulation of market transactions, represented by the creation of a new bundle of spatially defined entitlements for legal urban residents – universal food and clothing rations, rent controls, and employment-based government housing.⁴⁰ In particular, by guaranteeing food access, the colonial government's rationing scheme of 1943 gave immediate material meaning to urban space. Both before and after the war, there was never a neat separation between rural and urban – rural ties were retained by most residents of Dar es Salaam for reasons to do with security, welfare, affective relations, and opportunities in petty trade and in agriculture. What changed was the universal and abstract nature of entitlement, symbolized in official prices and ration coupons, and effectively mediated through identity categories of race, rather than through interpersonal relations of patronage that had loomed large in the decades before the Second World War. Although controlled prices were not cheap and quality was often abysmal, comprehensive rationing entrenched a basic level of urban food security that had no rural counterpart. And this was certainly not limited to urban East Africa. Ayodeji Olukoju has shown that wartime Lagos was similarly a city overwhelmed by scarcity and inflation, in which rations and other regulations were attempts to secure urban political security in the face of unrest against dreadful living conditions and merchant and landlord profiteering.⁴¹

Postcolonial policies continued to effectively subsidize urban living through the regulatory framework that constitutes urban entitlement.⁴² Tanzania in this sense represented a textbook case of 'urban bias', in which currency overvaluation and low commodity pricing raised urban living standards, encouraged urban migration, and discouraged export-oriented rural production. In other words, urban entitlement – those regulations established during the war that effectively subsidized, however modestly, food and other commodities not similarly guaranteed in rural areas – continued to be part of what attracted urban immigrants to Dar es Salaam and other cities across much of Africa after independence. Yet in terms of specific urban policies and stated national goals, Tanzania paradoxically represents one of Africa's most anti-urban postcolonial states. Ujamaa rhetoric and policy alike stressed that the nation's primary activity was agriculture and implied that cities themselves, particularly Dar es Salaam, were parasites benefitting from the larger nation's agricultural sweat. What had changed was not ultimately 'pro-urban' policies, but instead the quite public and performative nature of what it now meant to be a productive urban denizen. In the 1960s and 1970s, one had to be seen performing the tasks of a citizen (in Swahili, *mwananchi*) in front of one's fellow nationalists, namely by combating exploitation (in Swahili, *unyonyaji*), particularly when the nation's rural

40 Brennan, *Taifa*, chapter 3. What follows comes from this chapter.

41 Ayodeji Olukoju, 'The Cost of Living in Lagos 1914-45', in David M. Anderson and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Africa's Urban Past* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), 134-140.

42 Brennan, *Taifa*, chapter 5. Again, what follows comes from this chapter

work was being left undone. National citizenship ideals in postcolonial Tanzania concerned public performance at least as much as they did legal status. Because cities were primarily sites of consumption that generated unwholesome divisions of labor, the ideal urban citizen was also someone who held urban life in contempt. A sharp anti-urban populism thrived in Dar es Salaam amid mass urban migration, juxtaposing associations of rural African virtue with urban non-African indulgence. Urban nodes of racial density embodied in the image of Indians closely clustered in commercial shops and high-rise residences should yield to an Africanized landscape of evenly distributed, low-density *ujamaa* villages.

Urban entitlement marks an important material basis for life in East Africa, and no doubt farther afield. African city life, even in places where the state is quite weak, is nonetheless a site of far greater potential challenge to political authority over Africa's twentieth century than have been its rural areas.⁴³ The policy legacy of this challenge remains one of regulatory placation of urban space, in which food, clothing, and (in certain cases for key actors) housing have been largely more affordable and more accessible, even as anti-urban sensibilities continue their work of self-flagellation long after independence.

Conclusion

Since the 1990s, Africanist academics have largely abandoned employing normative frameworks to understand the constantly transforming environments of African cities. Modernization theory is well and truly dead as an Africanist method and theory, if not as a historical concern, or theoretical orientation of other contemporary actors. Similarly, Marxist approaches, even the most subtle and powerful framings demonstrated in the earlier work of Frederick Cooper, receive admiration but not employment. Instead, the current literature is dominated by the broad claims of anti-liberalization critics on the one hand, for whom Africa is largely interchangeable with other regions of the world's urban immiseration sites, like South Asia and Latin America. On the other hand looms the far richer but also far more idiosyncratic work of urban ethnographers, most prominently Abdou Maliq Simone. This latter work has highlighted the unformed and subjective nature that characterizes so much of urban life, not just in Africa but everywhere. There is no question that we no longer have good reason to expect uni-linear modernity to shape African cities, as Simone and others have decidedly demonstrated. Yet by eschewing normative thought, Africanists have also eschewed comparative models and suggestive typologies that allow for comparison *between* cities in order to make generalizations that may or may not hold within regions of Africa, or within Africa more broadly. There are realities that importantly connect people within cities, and cities with countrysides, and cities with other cities, which are firmly objective and material, shaped by the legacies of colonial and early postcolonial policies, patterns of urban rent gathering, and broad trends in urban-bound movements. In particular, natural and invented forms of scarcity – from urban housing, to quality education and health care, to space for commu-

43 For a subtle study of this phenomenon, see Danielle Resnick, 'Opposition Parties and the Urban Poor in African Democracies', *Comparative Political Studies* 45 (2012): 1351-1378.

ting and transportation – are primed to sharpen and shape future urban desires, inspire new and ever-more creative strategies of rent-seeking, and form the basis for the urban shapes of Africa’s future. For the African city yet to come is one that is already here, and one that draws upon the material strategies and claims long pioneered by landlords, renters, consumers and middlemen since the last century and before.

NEW DILEMMAS AND NEW DIRECTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA AFTER APARTHEID

Interview with Albie Sachs

Interview by Stefaan Anrys

(first published in Dutch in MO* Magazine on 14 October 2016)

Translation by David Chan

On 3 October 2016, Sachs, who collects honorary doctorates and other titles as if they were panini stickers, visited Ghent University for the third Mandela Lecture organised by the Africa Platform of the Ghent University Association, and moderated by Prof. Eva Brems. This interview was conducted on that occasion.

‘Since the attempt on my life, I see everything as rose-tinted’, laughs the man who survived an attack, abolished the death penalty and was close to the ANC leadership. ‘If I were to become pessimistic about South Africa, people would really get scared, they’d say: Oh, even Albie doesn’t like it anymore’ (laughs).

In 1988 Albie Sachs was viciously attacked, losing his right arm and the sight of one eye. He was living in exile in Mozambique at the time, as South Africa suffered under the Apartheid regime. Sachs was one of the prominent freedom fighters, but survived the assassination attempt and eventually became an important member of the ANC, one of the many authors of the Constitution of the new South Africa. He was also invited by Mandela to sit on the Constitutional Court, which abolished the death penalty and forced Parliament to legalise LGBT marriage.

In Ghent, the now 81-year-old freedom fighter nuances the pessimistic news coming out of South Africa. ‘A lot is going wrong in South Africa. But what gives me hope is that people can speak their minds. Our democracy works. Our institutions work, and not just the courts and tribunals. Recently we had elections, and they were free and fair. And yes, the ANC lost the elections. But that is in fact the best evidence that our democracy works.’

The conviction of President Jacob Zuma

Jacob Zuma, the president of South Africa, had his private estate in Nkandla renovated, in part using taxpayers’ money, much to the annoyance of citizens, the opposition and now also the judiciary. Like his predecessor Thabo Mbeki, JZ was often at odds with the law. Albie Sachs: ‘Just like Thabo Mbeki, who is a good friend of mine by the way, Jacob Zuma has had a hard time with the justice system, although he eventually accepts the decisions made. Mbeki was also often unhappy with decisions of the Constitutional Court, but he

did accept that our rulings were binding and acted accordingly. As a judge, I have never experienced pressure from the executive or received any threats. However, a general political statement has been made; we were once called counter-revolutionaries by the general secretary of the ANC, but he has not stirred the issue since.

Sometimes as a sitting judge you can feel very lonely. Nowadays, however, courts are popular in South Africa. This has a lot to do with Nkandla, the private home of president Jacob Zuma. A president may use taxpayers' money for security upgrades to his house, but some projects were simply not justifiable. His swimming pool was supposedly intended for extinguishing fires. So why are there blue tiles on the bottom? He also had a chicken run built at public expense, arguing that if someone broke in, the chickens' clucking would sound the alarm. Needless to say no justification was offered for the amphitheatre. Our Public Protector eventually decided that the president should pay back a reasonable sum to the government. The parliament, however, dominated as it was by his party, the ANC, set up a committee that recognised the ruling as serious, but came to the conclusion that it was not binding. It was simply a recommendation, so to speak. The opposition party Economic Freedom Fighters, who had always criticised our institutions, went to the Constitutional Court and its ruling was clear. The report of the Public Protector was not a recommendation, but a legally binding ruling. In the end, Zuma accepted that he had to repay the money.

A few days after the verdict I was at Johannesburg airport and a large black man blocked my way. 'Thank you! Thank you!' he shouted. 'I have been away from the Court for a long time', I said, 'I have nothing to do with this'. He did not even say why he expressed his gratitude, he assumed that I knew why.

My impression is, and now I'm speaking as a citizen, not as an ex-judge, that there is huge support for the stands made by the Court. That is why I would say that our judges are not exceptionally courageous, they are just doing their job. They do their duty as best they can and I feel very proud of the people who are now sitting on the bench.'

Disappointment over Nelson Mandela

Since Nelson Mandela died in December 2013, more and more black South Africans believe that when Apartheid fell this black freedom fighter made too many concessions to the "white" minority in South Africa, a minority that still dominates the country, economically at least. On occasion South Africans even refer with envy to Zimbabwe, where white farmers have been forcibly 'expropriated'.

Albie Sachs: 'The best way to counter this is to tell the story of the past. You have to make a country fairer, but in an honest way.'

In my opinion, the ANC can boast of four important things. First of all, the movement was the driving force behind the ending of Apartheid. It did not do this alone, of course, but it was central. Secondly, it was instrumental in the creation of the new democracy, in fact it was the key to that achievement.

As the Constitutional Court, we had to introduce elements of sharing & caring. We had to abolish the death penalty and corporal punishment. We had to facilitate land reform and

improved access to education. We had to prevent people from being unlawfully driven out of their homes or off their land. A very important case at the Court was ensuring that people with HIV had access to medicines. We also had to improve the lot of African women in traditional households so that they have a fair share of ownership in the family and in decision-making.

The transition to democracy was an extraordinary story, but it did not happen by itself. Until that change, South Africa had been an unjust and cruel country. The new constitution was not intended to maintain the status quo, to protect what already existed. It had to be emancipatory, bring about real change.

There were breakdowns, crises, murders. Mandela played a remarkable role, but he did not do it alone. There were large teams working hard and a lot of people were involved at street level.

We had to ensure the implementation of the Constitution and help the transformation of the country. Our rulings have ensured that those rights were actually implemented, as the Constitution, in our view, asked of us.

Thirdly, and this is often underestimated, the ANC was central to the reconstruction of South African institutions. Under Apartheid, there were no fewer than 16 different education administrations. These had to be united into one department. The province boundaries were redrawn. Soldiers who had faced off against each other were merged into one force. That is quite extraordinary. And some even became commanders over others. All of this proceeded calmly. The parliament was integrated and opened up. The executive, the press and the judiciary were reformed. The ANC in particular was fundamental to these achievements.

The fourth achievement of the ANC is the creation of a democratic system in which the party itself is prepared to relinquish power. It may seem paradoxical, but the fact that they have now lost the elections, and conceded defeat, is by far the ANC's most important accomplishment.

The electoral defeat of the ANC

During the last elections in August 2016, support for the ANC fell below the psychological 60 percent line for the first time. Never before had the party that led South Africa out of Apartheid, and had the late Nelson Mandela as its icon, won so few votes.

Albie Sachs: 'Parties come and go. Leaders come and go. Leaders become popular. Leaders lose supporters. The last elections were free and fair. And power in some of our largest cities has passed from the ANC to the opposition. The fact that the governing party relinquished power under a constitution that it had itself created, proves how vital the democratic process is, a process made possible by the efforts of the ANC is.

I received an email from someone from Congo, who has been a member of the opposition there for years. He was completely bowled over that the ANC had relinquished power! Great, right? Even though he had been a fan of the ANC for decades, he recognised that an African governing party giving up power when it loses an election, is such a rare occurrence.

Why did the ANC lose its support? That is up to the people themselves to decide. My



Figure 1: Eva Brems (UGent) and Albie Sachs on the 3rd Mandela Lecture, 2016.

impression is the (new) middle class in particular, which is doing reasonably well, is moving away from the ANC. The poor are still big ANC supporters, not only because of the struggle, but also because their lives have actually improved.

South Africa has made good progress in all these years. From a state of starvation we have progressed to a point of being “just hungry”. People have bread on the table, but not enough. Our welfare benefits are well developed: one in three receives benefits, the poor, children, but also the elderly and single people. Ninety percent of the population has access to electricity, and a similar proportion to clean water.

One area in which spectacular progress has been made is housing. 3.5 million houses, brick houses with water, sewerage and electricity, were given away free of charge to people who had previously lived in slums. So about a quarter of the population has been moved into better accommodation. This is impressive by international standards, and I think it explains why the poor are still fervent supporters of the ANC.

What is shocking is the extent to which the super-rich have become even wealthier. And what people really can't stand is corruption, they get very angry about it. For example, when the news emerged that certain wealthy individuals are able to nominate candidates for important positions in the government or other institutions.

The fight for better internal democracy within the ANC will be an important issue in the coming years. I do not know how that will turn out. The next elections are in less than that year.

Slide to the right

Crime rates in South Africa are extremely high, and some voices are calling for the reintroduction of the death penalty. Will society once again slide to the right, become more authoritarian? In other parts of Africa, there seems to be a growing desire for strong leaders. Albie Sachs: ‘Our first major case in the Constitutional Court was the abolition of the death penalty. The new constitution had not yet abolished the death penalty, although it did not allow it. Mandela and the ANC wanted to get rid of it, while de Klerk could not imagine a country that did not execute its citizens. So it was left to the Constitutional Court and we immediately decided that it was not compatible with the values in our Bill of Rights.

In terms of the death penalty, the verdict was unanimous, but we could also express our own opinions as members of the Court. The Constitutional Court strives for consensus, but also publishes the opinions of the individual sitting judges. This makes your judgments much richer, much more sophisticated than if the Court produces only one text that is supported by the unanimity of the Court.

There was one stunning opinion, which came down to the following: the death penalty is such a severe, irreversible punishment. A mistake cannot be undone. The discretionary power of a judge is incompatible with such a punishment. Moreover, it has never been proven that the death penalty is better as a deterrent compared to the knowledge that you will be behind bars for a long time.

My opinion was and is that the state should not kill its citizens. As another colleague said, when the state kills someone, you do not punish the crime, you repeat the crime.

And, I do not see a typical African tendency towards anti-democratic leadership. It is dangerous to generalise. There are many countries about which we hear very little in the news, such as Mauritius or Namibia, two countries where there are regular elections and fairly open societies. What is becoming clear, however, is that military regimes, with the exception of Egypt, are increasingly being rejected in spite of the fact that the African Union is simply not strong enough to take a stand against them.

In the case of South Africa, I do not see a shift towards autocratic leadership. In my opinion, much depends on the economy, history and population of a country. In South Africa, citizens are very politically aware. Nor do we have a strong army, something that as a patriot I am happy about. The army simply cannot seize power. In fact, South Africa is a very diverse country, with a strong economy, and it is also highly industrialised, and so requires very sophisticated management. Finally, dialogue and consensus are deeply rooted in the culture, which often leads to more democracy and openness.

The violent student protests

Since last year, many students in South Africa have protested en masse against the planned increase in enrolment fees. The protest has become increasingly bitter with students devastating the patrimony and police shooting at demonstrators with rubber bullets.

Albie Sachs: 'I find the #FeesMustFall movement astonishing. Suddenly, there was an outburst of idealism, passion and dedication, that had nothing to do with political calculation and the question of what's in it for me? The movement talked about very complex issues that were conveniently referred to as decolonization, and about very concrete problems, such as the working conditions of campus workers or the mountain of debt that haunt many students.

One in three students in South Africa is too poor to be able to pay for books and to afford a square meal. Some students have to spend the night in the library, because they don't have the fare for the bus or because their township is too far away. And all this while many of their fellow students can fly to London or Antwerp, and so on.

It's not always a racial difference. There are black students with wealthy parents, who have PhDs from Oxford and travel the world. In the middle you find the group, about

one third of the students, who have too little money to pay for their studies themselves, students whose families work tirelessly to cover the costs. Another problem is that if the fees are not paid on time, students do not receive their credits.

In the beginning there was overwhelming support for the movement among students and among the public, but that support has become divided. The vast majority, 75% or more, are satisfied with what has been achieved and want to consolidate their gains. They say: Let's get back to studying now. We don't want a small group of students disrupting our lessons and exams and, and we certainly don't want them burning our books.

However, a small minority thinks that no one should pay enrolment fees. The other side wonders why those students who are comfortably off shouldn't pay more, as they can afford it anyway.

I do not know how it will turn out, but I am hopeful. Two months ago I spoke to about two hundred female students, born free's of all colours, and I was so impressed. I spoke to a young woman who used such exquisite, thoughtful language, while trying to prove that she was not free. So how come you speak as a free person, I said. Listen to yourself anyway. You contradict yourself. Your mind is as free as it can be!

This is the new generation that will produce thoughtful, mature leaders. Their career sometimes resembles that of Nelson Mandela. In the white communists, he initially saw only "the other race", the enemy, but they would later become his friends. During his struggle, he had to admit that it was often whites who gave him weapons, who gave him shelter when he had to go into hiding again. And at the same time it was often blacks who spied or tortured for the Apartheid regime.

Even these students have seen that it makes sense to have fellow students who are white participate in the cause. Not only because the police are less likely to quickly overreact, but also because those students also want to make an important point. It remains to be seen how things will go, but I love their energy. I like their idealism. I love their thoughtfulness. I worry when they set buildings on fire. That is terrible, you can't turn something like that back.



Sachs, the man with the pink glasses

In a strange way, I have only really become optimistic since they blew me up, in 1988. That's the day every freedom fighter fears. What if they come to get me? Will I be brave? Will I survive it? They tried to kill me and I survived! In one fell swoop I was free of all the grief, the lack of sleep and the interrogations.

I consider myself the most privileged person in the world. I have been able to go to school, to university, I was able to become what I wanted to be. Eventually I became a freedom fighter, of my own free will. Even in prison I was still privileged. I remember one of the white prison guards saying to a black prison guard: Bring some water to the boss. I hated to be called a boss. After the attack, it was my story made the front pages and the television news, but so many people were blown up. I was in the New York Times, just because a white body turned out to be more important than a black one. I got so many opportunities after that as well. How many law students can say that they co-wrote the constitution of their own country? Well then! And not just writing a few amendments, but the actual basis for them. How exceptional is that. And then to be allowed to sit on the Constitutional Court!

I have lived a joyful life, not a life that has been exclusively one of sacrifice. I was a freedom fighter, I knew the risks and I am glad that I have been able to see the things for which we fought become a reality.

SPACE AND TRANSFORMATION: THE STRUGGLE FOR ARCHITECTURE IN POST APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

Iain Low

School of Architecture Planning & Geomatics, University of Cape Town, South Africa

The title and this essay, 'Space and Transformation – the struggle for architecture in post-apartheid South Africa' derive from the 2nd Annual Nelson Mandela Lecture delivered in Ghent in 2015. Its source as my topic is located in the intersection of three interrelated trajectories. The most obvious is the issue of my disciplinary grounding and the locus of intellectual thought, that of architecture and the complexity associated with the production of space, particularly under conditions of change. The other is the life work and philosophical teaching of this extraordinary man Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela and the third is the condition of the world, and South Africa in particular, as we experience it today at what appears to be this unique historic intersectional moment of globalization and expansive technological shift within our nations' democratic emergence.

The essay draws on texts derived from other disciplines, such as literature and philosophy, particularly those that have relevance to conditions of the South, but resorts to the spatial disciplining associated with design. In so doing it reflects on architectural projects produced during the first decades of democratic rule. Most of these projects fall within the realm of human settlement, and have been selected in order to demonstrate transformation relative to the lived reality of ordinary South Africans, especially those marginalised and dispossessed by apartheid legislation. A semi structured longitudinal analysis has been conducted so as to reflect on the relations between the agency of design and the instrumentation of architecture as practice in determining spatial transformation.

KEYWORDS: MANDELA, SPACE AND TRANSFORMATION, POST-APARTHEID, RE-RITING ARCHITECTURAL TYPE, DESIGN AGENCY, LAND, HOUSING, SOCIO-SPATIAL INFRASTRUCTURE, RE-BUILDING COMMUNITY.

Prologue

This essay is derived from the 2nd Annual Nelson Mandela Lecture delivered in Gent on the 12th of November 2015 under the auspices of the Embassy of South Africa to Belgium, the Luxembourg and the European Union [ambassador Mxolisi Sizo Nkosi], the Office of Internationalisation Policy at Ghent University [academic director prof. Guido Van Huylenbroeck], and of GAP – the Ghent Africa Platform, the body within the University of Ghent that assembles researchers working on Africa related issues, represented by prof. Johan Lagae – and to whom I owe the honour of having been invited to have delivered that prestigious lecture.

It is pertinent that the essay is being published in the year 2018, marking the centenary of Mandela's birth. Nelson Mandela is an individual who committed his life to struggle and the emancipation of [black] people in South Africa and across the globe. His be-

ing in the world, whether as a 'free' man or a prisoner of conscience, embraced many significant events that have informed the coming into being of a 'democratic' South Africa. All of this is accountable to him having transcended his subjective individuality through dedication to the higher cause of humanity, as something for which he was prepared to die.

Introduction

Space is fundamentally political. It represents the physical manifestation of a particular set of power relations. One of the primary and most enduring legacies of apartheid is its spatiality. Whilst apartheid and other forms of discriminatory legislation have been relatively easy to repeal, amend and replace within the legal framework, it is far more difficult to erase its affective modalities. The consequence of these discriminatory policies were both politico-economic and socio-spatial. They were negatively discriminatory in effecting a radical racialised segregation of people as individuals, families, and communities. Consequently, not only was this 'setting apart' the consequence of racialised politics, but more importantly, it produced the effective genocide of local cultures – culture as everyday and celebratory practices and as ways of becoming in the world that had relied on the social cohesion of community in very particular and different constitutions of time-space. Apartheid, and indeed colonialism, slavery and the entire modern project, is predicated on the exploitation of one set of human beings for the benefit of another. It is a project that has therefore been detrimental to the whole of humanity. It denied the development of many through the exclusion of the Other, as a primary and non-negotiable constituent within the human project. In this architectural design remains fully complicit.

In his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Mandela relates of how, at the age of nine, upon the death of his father, Gada Henry Mphakanyiswa, he was taken by his mother, Noqaphi Nosekeni, from Mvezo to Qunu, to live at the Great Place, Mquekezweni, the royal residence of Chief Jongintaba Dalindyebo, then acting regent of the Thembu people – and who was to become Mandela's benefactor and guardian for the next ten years of his life [Mandela, 1994].

Perhaps one of the most significant experiences that Mandela gained in this time was with regard to the practice of leadership and concomitant governance within African culture. Observing the regent, Mandela's primary impression was of a man who exercised power in a manner that enabled his subjects to speak in order that all who wanted to might be heard. The foundation of self-government resided in the ordering of a horizon of inclusivity amongst the leadership, in order to maximize inclusive participation in a genuinely democratic manner. The regent would only speak in conclusion, so as to confirm any agreement reached, or alternatively, in the event of irresolution, then to enable a further gathering and meeting of equal minds. Genuine leadership demands a form of governance that enables and empowers consensus amongst people of difference. And it is probably here, in Qunu, that Mandela develops his interest in an alternative or humanist politics, one engendered and practically informed by the application of the African tradition of Ubuntu.

Under white occupation, being fundamentally anti-Ubuntu and intolerant of difference, colonialism's contestation of local practice[s] constituted the 'arrested development' of people and their pre-existent traditions and customs. Indigenous approaches to land and settlement, to space and to ways of being and of becoming in the world were ruthlessly contested and ultimately violently overwritten and obliterated by the introduction of so-called rational and scientifically based norms and standards, as non-negotiable measures of western thinking.

It is therefore not surprising that the issue of identity and of cultural practice are considered fundamental to post-apartheid restitution. This constitutes one of the most uncomfortable truths about post-apartheid South Africa; the inability and a certain unwillingness to grapple directly and effectively with the depth of the problem of reconstituting a sector of society that has been effectively decimated by what constitutes a sophisticated form of warfare. Exclusion, as ultimately manifest in the pervasive and enduring 'poverty, unemployment and inequality' are the lasting effects of this. This is Africa's postwar disaster – a disaster that in fact both required and deserved intervention by the global community, in a manner not dissimilar to the Marshal Plan that underpinned the rehabilitation of post WW II Europe. Any critique of Africa and its post-independence struggles, cannot be separated from the gains of its European Colonisers. The history of humans must necessarily be foregrounded in the trauma of some against the wealth of Others.

It should also not be surprising that in South Africa today, a sustained demand for radical and immediate decolonization has entered into the heart of the discourse of our local politics. Currently this trajectory is being driven by the new 'born free' generation; those born after the demise of apartheid, but yet to gain access to the substantive benefits of an open, free and democratic society.

Today the demand for equal access and opportunity to education is mirrored in the lives of ordinary citizens who still suffer the deep reaches of colonialism's alienating effects. Not only is this a precept of the Freedom Charter's demand that 'The Doors Of Learning And Of Culture Shall Be Opened!' [Freedom Charter, 1955], but it reflects directly on a central tenet of Mandela's philosophy in his belief that 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world' [Mandela, 1994].

We cannot speak about space and transformation if we do not address the exigencies of social justice and spatial equity. Land has now become central to demands for restitution. Land, not simply as commodity, but Land in the form of the enablement of sustainable livelihoods that permit all citizens to participate reasonably in the post-apartheid promise of 'a better life for all'. This is the essence of a participatory democracy, that is the proactive engagement by a nation in order to maximize inclusion in the affairs of the state – and that support the type of activities that are conducive to building active citizenship. Universally Land, or reasonable access to it, seems to be a non-negotiable prerequisite for this to occur in an egalitarian manner, and Zimbabwe, notwithstanding the political machinations that have undermined its independence, represents a clear example of the consequences of failure in addressing critical dimensions of decolonization.

And yet, spatial transformation has only recently entered the formal policy framework

of the South African government; chapter 8 of the new National Development Plan for 2030, the NDP, otherwise known as ‘make our future work’ [NDP, 2011], is directed at effecting redistributive justice through infrastructure delivery as an interventive strategy that intersects across all aspects of the built environment toward, in particular, transforming human settlements.

One of the most enduring and deep and broadly experienced legacies of Mandela has been from the energy devoted to the development and adoption of the Constitution for the new democratic dispensation. The Constitution of South Africa [Constitution, 1996] is a document that was driven by Mandela, in the lead up to national independence and the dawn of a democratic dispensation on 27 April 1994. Based on the people’s struggle document, The Freedom Charter of 1955 it was promulgated in Parliament by Mandela on 18th December 1996, coming into effect on 4 February 1997, and has become to be recognized for its comprehensive inclusivity. The absence of its real effect on ordinary people and communities on the ground remains elusive. For some, access to the benefits of the Constitution rests with an elite who have the means to engage in legal battle. With the re-emergence of NGOs and advocacy groups in support of the cause of the poor, South Africa is repositioning itself to re-engage with a more meaningful approach to and implementation of, its constitutional, legal and policy frameworks.

Whilst the Constitution provides the supreme law for the state in South Africa, the NDP provides an equivalently cogent and critical policy context for thinking about implementing a South African project of transformation. However, in contradistinction, the country is singularly lacking in its capacity to implement. Somehow we lack the ability to translate [new] knowledge sets into practice, thereby rendering the sophistry of our policy and planning discourses as impotent. This is perhaps where the project of education, that was so close to Mandela’s thinking, becomes supremely relevant. The emancipatory power of education is to be realised in the capacity, not so much to solve problems, but to think about the world in new and different ways. When we begin to question ‘what might be possible under a given set of circumstances’ [Low, 2004] then life might change in South Africa, and the very particularity of our history, memory and traditions might regain substantive implication for imaginative interpretation of our past, in order to alter the circumstances that we have come to dwell within.

Yet leadership in the task of re-framing of education in South Africa seems lost. A loss most powerfully manifest in the techno-managerial approach to both the structuring and delivery of education which is akin to ‘transforming’ toward something that fosters the transfer of skill sets as opposed to empowering for critical thinking – and that therefore effectively renders graduates as cogs in the service of capitalist consumerism. The net result has been in a form of national hegemonic exchange with the ANC party conflating itself with the State predominantly through the deploy of its own cadres. Lacking the necessary experience and insight, these cadre are unable to engage with the responsibility of their newfound positionality – to the extent that the fabric of the state has begun to collapse. This is an outcome that aligns with neither the vision nor the legacy that Mandela would have imagined.

Apartheid continuities | spatial transformation

In the absence of an economic revolution there can be no radical or real change. We should not be surprised by the common chorus from the masses in their persistent reflection on a perceived absence of sustained change in their daily lives. ‘Transformation’ has remained as an order of the day, with Radical Economic Transformation [RET] emerging as a new sound bite for the masses violent responses to their enduring ‘unemployment, poverty, inequity’ – a condition that has now come to characterize the South African experience of being poor. Predominantly slow in its pace and marginal in its location and effects, we have contended with a weakening State and a more anxious and severely demanding citizenry.

Nevertheless, in the realm of space, and in its transformative reconfiguration, we can discern evidence of productive resistance in the form of ‘counter-currenting’ [Low, 2010]. This is evident from individual project-based interventions in township environments where architects have consciously deployed their design agency in the interest of engaging with a future past. This only occurs predominantly in the experimental space afforded by smaller non-mainstream projects. Here process can be privileged over the haste of product, and critical reflection in action enables evolutionary adjustment, a quality endemic to transformation. The results are in projects which might be termed hybrid by virtue of the complex differences each one attempts to negotiate. An examination of the process of accretive change reveals consistent shifts in professional practice. A gradual decentralization of power and inclusive beneficiation of all participants has arisen from co-production across and within disciplines. A common thread is evident in the resurfacing of the NGO, CBO, PSO as mediating agent between the state and communities; [re-]building community has become a precondition for effecting sustainability and resilience in the built environment, and going green implies parallel social engagement [Low, 2018].

Tradition | modernity | tradition — and the re writing type

‘Spatial order is one of the most striking means by which we recognize the existence of the cultural differences between one social formation and another.’ Bill Hillier/Julienne Hanson; *Social Logic of Space.* [Hillier, 1985]

Can democracy operate effectively in the face of extant hierarchic power structures? Spatial configuration represents an effective measure of this condition and is capable of reflecting upon transformation or change. If power indeed changes, then, so too should space. What then might the order of post-apartheid space might be?

Whilst evidence of spatial transformation exists, apartheid space remains predominantly intact, awaiting far more radical change in our society. Where spatial change is evident, it emerges as a response to contestations of the ‘socius’ [Graafland, 2010] whereby the inadequacy of functional typologies and their racialized constructs have become reimagined. The task of architecture lays in a radical re-writing of space, both typologically, through individual buildings and morphologically as urban or rural terrain.

South African society however still remains caught between an adherence to two opposing cultural practices; one of tradition and the other of modernity. Tradition, as aligned

with pre-colonial cultural practices of tribal collectivism, and Modernity, as aligned with western coloniality and its extractive capitalist practices. The extremes which set tradition and modernity apart have served to perpetuate the status quo, inhibiting effective societal change.

Philosophers such as Ricouer and Hoontonji have posed the critical question of: ‘How to become modern without losing touch with sources?’ [Ricouer, 1965]. This is as much a socio-political question as it is a spatial one. In other words our situation is not so much about exchanging one hegemony for another – but, formulated differently, the South African condition presents a clear challenge to speculate about a new order, one that matches a contemporary hybridizing society and of how to situate modernism in the heart of tradition, or perhaps rather – how to re-situate tradition at the forefront of modernism? What we do know and understand about architecture and design is that its actions can never be neutral.

In fact, its practice involves some of the most discriminatory behaviour known to humankind. Whether it be the global organization of slavery, the genocide of the Jews, the occupation of Palestine or the colonial practice of apartheid in South Africa, space has been deployed in the service of setting one group of people against another. When we draw a line, we create a boundary and we set things apart. We are forced to discriminate [Low, 2004].

Some questions that arise then, are ones of, in whose interest and to what purpose do we discriminate?

How is it possible to discriminate positively, constructively, or even productively?

What is the configuration of space in a world that strives for equality, for opportunity, for spatial equity and social justice?

Within the realm of African tradition, the modern convention of singular authoritative authorship remains contested. The traditional emphasis on co-production privileges a process toward new structural content intended upon ensuring critical difference. This, as de-centred practice, implies participation within a horizon of interconnectivity. It hearkens back, forward, to reclaim origins and the relationality of the San, as first people’s, in their cultural practice of Becoming.

In his treatise on ‘Modernity at Large’ Arjun Appadurai, the Indian theorist, identifies the necessity for the Production of Locality. He views this within a process that he considers as being relational and contextual, and not necessarily spatial or scalar [Appadurai, 1996]. By inferring a third typology or a hybrid, he infers a bridging between cultures of a particular time-place. This approach embraces all complex constituents in producing a situated modernism [Low, 2014], thereby effecting what I would term as transcending modernity by means of tradition. In this manner, the necessary task of re-writing the world into its contemporary being, demands critical praxis, capable of rendering new narratives, to inform reconfigured settlement arrangements.

Rural | Urban Interface — the Mandela Museums

Mvezu, Qunu and 'Mthata Area, Eastern Cape, South Africa

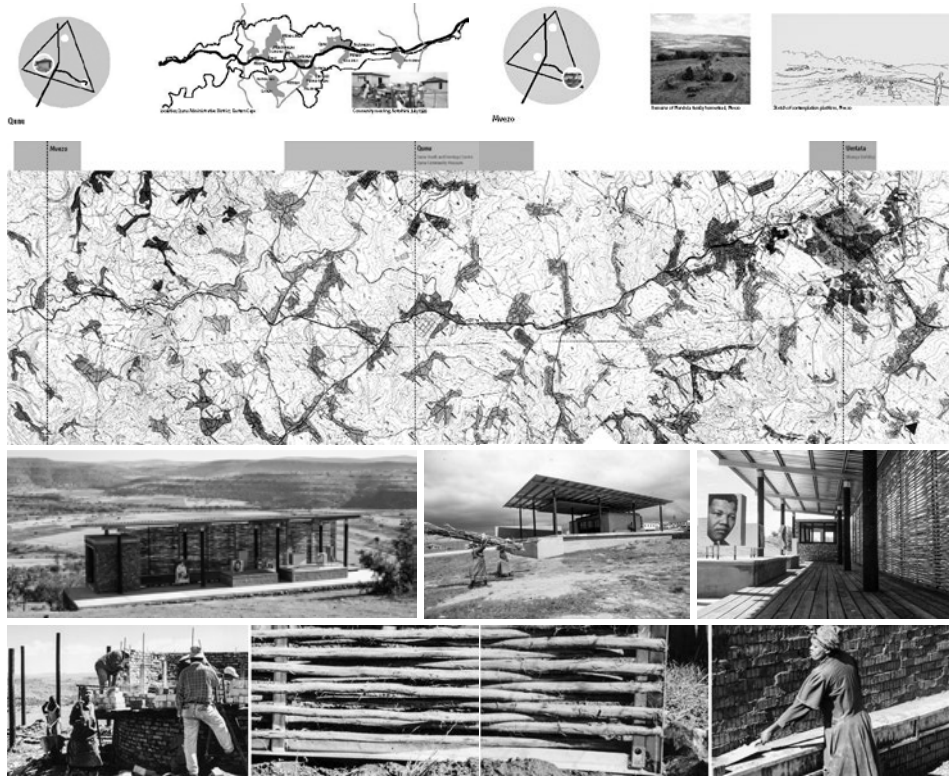


Figure 1: Nelson Mandela Museums, Eastern Cape [all images courtesy of Cohen Judin Architects].

An early architectural intervention that approximates this re-writing of architectural type, is manifest in the Eastern Cape province through the design and implementation of the Nelson Mandela Museums [Cohen Judin, 1996-8]. Intended on bringing Mandela to the people in his home area, this project was conceived of through the introduction of an additional layer of infrastructure into a poor rural community. Implemented toward the end of the twentieth century, at Mandela's birth place Mvezu, his later dwelling place Qunu, and in the provincial capital 'Mthata, it exemplifies what spatial transformation might represent when design agency is critically deployed in seeking out new socio-spatial relations within the context of South Africa's generally overlooked rural/urban interface. Culture and Infrastructure have been imaginatively co-conceived of, through the intervention of a series of pavilions. Inserted into this rural landscape they function as a new cultural fieldwork capable of mediating building with landscape. As a series related of interventions, embedded within the agricultural terrain, their critical cross-programming accommodates multiple functions for – exhibition, for water provision and agri-support,

for sheltering in their shade, for taxi pick up and drop off, for play and relief, and for pride and privilege.

Operating as a network of places within this neglected landscape, their built realisation significantly relied on the creative incorporation of local labour, through the utilisation of traditionally available materials and skills. The designed deployment of these affords an intervention that grounds the modernist pavilions to local conditions, whilst simultaneously mediating urban with rural, to create a viable hybrid typo-morphology or what might be termed as the possibility of a contemporary vernacular.

This unconventional fusing of culture with infrastructure affords a generosity of temporality often associated with site specific interpretation – impermanence being a pre-modern attribute endemic to the San and other nomadic or unsettled communities of the South. In a sense Europe has therefore now become subsumed within an African landscape of interconnectivity, thereby engendering multiple inversions of the historic colonially constructed relation between settler and indigeneity, to resituate tradition or local culture as lead in the production of this hybrid. The rural and vernacular speak back to the metropole in a manner that is consistent with Mandela's appreciation and value for a didactic connection with the origins of tradition. However, and perhaps more significantly, this initiative intervenes in a manner that values the rural as a continuum of the urban, and therefore as integral and critical to the problems of migration and population growth. We need to re-conceptualise South Africa as a site of spatial of continuum rather than becoming entrapped in the popular segregatory discourses around urbanization per se. Rural regeneration is a critical component in the task of transforming the spatial legacy of apartheid, and given its grounding and rootedness in tradition, it is something that we ignore at risk to an authentic and sustainable transformation.

Implementation otherwise: there shall be housing, security and comfort

[Freedom Charter, 1955]

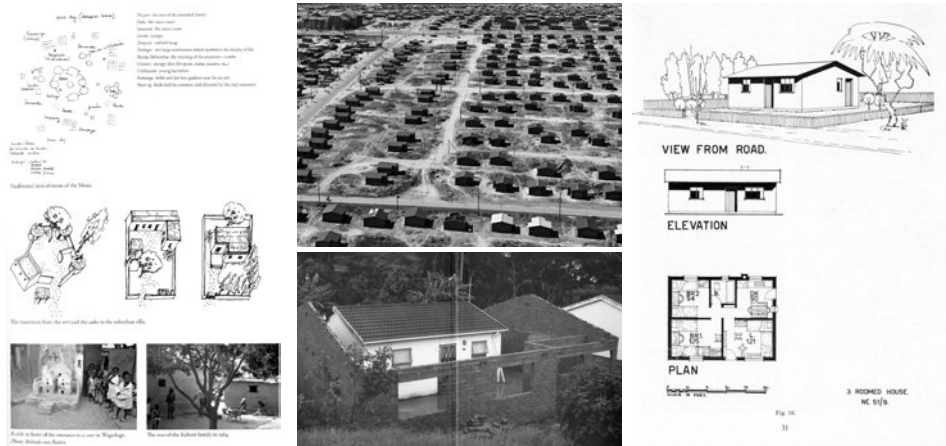


Figure 2: A tradition of homesteading post 1994 RDP state housing Apartheid modernity NBRI-NE51/9.

The ANC came to power on the basis of its Reconstruction and Development programme [RDP], a significant policy manifest deployed as a means of translating the Freedom Charter in preparation for governance. Given the magnitude of South Africa's housing problem, particularly in the urban areas from which black citizens had been excluded, Mandela had already effectively promised everyone a house.

On becoming President of the Republic, Mandela's first cabinet included many struggle stalwarts. From the outset it was apparent how unprepared and inexperienced the ANC were in governance. Joe Slovo was appointed as the first Housing Minister and the '1 plot – 1 house' approach to housing delivery became a measure for rapid delivery on an equitable basis across the multiple differences that represented the previously disenfranchised South African citizenry. The RDP house, a unit based on the National Building Research Institute [NBRI] of the apartheid government's strategy for 'Bantu housing', became the unit of delivery. Its spatial configuration establishes an autonomous and inflexible unit, incapable of accommodating either local cultural practices of dwelling nor future change and growth over time

Whereas the Government of the Republic of South Africa has delivered approximately 4 mil. housing units during the first two decades of its rule, this strategy has, to a large extent, appropriated and replicated the past. The RDP unit's autonomy, combined with its central siting on the allocated plot, makes for a housing fabric of independence. Characterised by suburban sprawl, mono-functional environments, and the absence of requisite humanizing social infrastructure, many developments have surfaced as Cartesian ghettos, notably on the periphery of the larger cities. They are impossible to extend or modify, and require destructive intervention – to the point of demolition in certain in-

stances – in order to accommodate local needs for additional space and flexibility for changing needs.

Yet, despite the failure and problems associated with this form of housing delivery by Government, discernable evidence exists demonstrating the possibility of innovation through alternative approaches. Numerous counter responses have emerged from across the spectrum of built environment actors, notably from marginal citizens themselves, the NGO sector, and private sector developers, but also from within certain government and local authorities. These projects and their modes of production demonstrate the remarkable capacity of individuals and communities in building and caring for themselves, especially under conditions of adversity. These efforts present a veritable source of knowledge from which government, educators, NGOs and communities could respond and creatively interpret. The projects present themselves as sites of spatial transformation with enormous potential for research learning. Furthermore one can claim with confidence that this production is something that Mandela would not only have recognized and praised, but that he would have directed government to substantially engage with improving housing design and its delivery, whilst [re-]building community.

Implementation 'otherwise': toward mediated co-production








| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| NBRI / RDP STATE HOUSING SUBSIDY NATIONAL +/- 4 MIL. UNITS | RDP / PHP PEOPLE'S HOUSING PROCESS VICTORIA MXENGE-LANSDOWN RD | SDI / RE-BLOCKING INSITU INFORMAL UPGRADE SHEFFIELD ROAD | DAG-SHAC / ORGANISED INVASION OCCUPATION OF STATE LAND STELLENBOSCH |
|  |  |  |  |
| COMMUNITY STANDARD PLANS STATE CLOSED REPRESENTATION / POVERTY | WOMEN'S SAVINGS GROUP EDUCATOR + ARCHITECT COCT / PGWC BUILDING COMMUNITY / MODEL DEVMT | INFORMAL COMMUNITY SDI / CORC + UNIV/ARCHITECT COCT / PGWC SERVICES / COMMUNITY / UPGRADE | INFORMAL COMMUNITY DAG / PROF-SERVICE ORGANISATION SHAC / STELLENBOSCH HSING ACTION LAND ALLOCATED |
| PRASA-RDP+ / LEGALISED OCCPTN MANSEL RD DURBAN - E'THEKWINI | PGWC-RDP+ / STARTER HOME WELTEVREDE VALLEY CAPE TOWN | VPUU / LIVE-WORK UPGRADE CO-PRODUCTION HARARE - KHAYELITSHA | JHC / SOCIAL HOUSING INNER CITY RENTAL BRICKFIELDS - JHBG INNER CITY |
|  |  |  |  |
| INFORMAL COMMUNITY COMMUNITY ARCHITECTS E'THEKWINI / PG KZN LIVE-WORK / COMMUNITY / SMME | INFORMAL COMMUNITY WC-PWD / HOUSING ARCHITECT COCT / PGWC BACKYARD RENTAL / COMMUNITY | SMME COMMUNITY SUN / SUSTAINABLE URBAN N'HOODS COCT / KW LIVE-WORK / COMMUNITY / VIOLENCE | RENTAL CONSULTANT ARCHTS JOHANNESBURG HOUSING COMPANY INTEGRATED DEVMT / STARTER |

Figure 3: Mediated Co-Production: An overview of two decades of post-apartheid housing alternatives – where design agency complements social process to effect community [re-]building.

Projects built on the margins in the post-apartheid housing terrain represent a veritable site of creative experimentation. This is due to the numerous pre-existent conditions that have historically informed shelter production. The sustained limitations of the State through its stubborn singular approach have marginalized the imagination in mainstream delivery. As prodigious builders, Africans have always enjoyed the ownership over the means of their shelter production. This is a characteristic endemic to vernacular practice. Given the scale and complexity of the problem, particularly within urban settings, this creativity has been complemented by community initiatives that seek to foster self-reliance. Self-Building, Back Yarding, Land Occupation, Live-Working, and Communal Living, all represent the flowering of new forms of non-nuclear family habitation, have provided the impetus for questioning the ANC State sponsored RDP single family unit. Delivering at scale has required sophisticated skills to negotiate the potential conflict between multiple stakeholders, and supported the emergence of a reinvented NGO sector, as well as of new forms of professional practice, foregrounded by a capability to mediate participation.

RDP – PHP | BNG/ SHS

Within the first decade of democratic governance, the ANC had amended official Housing Policy to incorporate two significant developments. On the one hand was the Peoples' Housing Process [PHP] designed to recognize and direct collective housing subsidies toward any community who was willing, prepared and capable to engage with its own housing delivery. On the other there was a more ambitious shift toward a redefinition of housing as human settlement, with the new Breaking New Ground [BNG] policy and its complementary aspiration of Sustainable Human Settlements [SHS, 2004]. The former PHP is exemplified in the highly acclaimed Victoria Mxenge project; based in a community comprised of Eastern Cape migrant women, with unique capacity to save, construct and manage their own human settlement. The outcome is predicated on the delivery of individual shell structures, implemented on a house by house basis, prepared for occupation, yet also capable of gradual upgrade from the inside, where women have great agency, toward the outside with equal dexterity. The production must be measured, not so much in the physical form of settlement, but more so, through its intangible, yet resilient, community social infrastructure produced in parallel. Today Victoria Mxenge operates as a consolidated and evolved Urban Commons, consulting and assisting in the housing sector across Cape Town and the rest of South Africa.

BNG/SHS was first tested at the Joe Slovo settlement on the N2 highway leading out of Cape Town. It involved the establishment of Thubelisa Homes, a Government directed implementation and management agency capable of mediating public-private sector investment and testing new prototypes that accommodated collective affordable housing complete with select community facilities. Now in its final phase it has undergone five iterations, each building upon, yet challenging the other, with mixed levels of success – and presenting itself as a case study for research reflecting in assessing SHS/BNG.

SDI/RE-blocking

Shack Dwellers International [SDI] has made a significant impact on most South African peri-urban landscapes. When governments fail to deliver, people resort to their own initiatives. Shacks are physical manifestations of a dire necessity for shelter. With the backlog of at least 1 mil housing units, together with many more families living in sub-standard backyard conditions, South Africa has experienced a surge in the development of informal settlements. Predominantly implemented through illegal occupation, informal settlements are unregulated and their communities endure significant stress due to lack of planning regulation and an absence of municipal services, significant poverty and unemployment, a lack of social support amenities, and an absence of public open space, landscaping and etc. To a large extent they should be classified as inhumane settlements. SDI employs an upgrading approach in informal settlements known as re-blocking. It operates within existing settlements intended on humanizing them through infrastructure upgrade. A number of strategies are deployed in concert in order to achieve this and of which the co-production between community, local government and a local NGO/CBO seem to constitute a non-negotiable triad. The SDI linked NGO acts as mediator and offers a managerial and socio-techno assistance in negotiating an agreed mode of upgrade. Establishing the ground knowledge around the settlement is done collaboratively and establishes a data base set of information around demographics, household and shack sizes and income. Occupant's concerns relate to issues around adjacency [neighbours], location [economic opportunity], as well as to open space, service position and future growth potential [horizontal & vertical]. The engaged surveys encourage user participation, building confidence through attention to detail in terms of establishing the correct interpretation of different household needs. Finding a comfortable fit in the interrelationship between socio-economic need and affordable physical form with the reconfiguration of specific units requires patient skill and design imagination.

PLFI/preparing land for (organised) invasion

In the face of the uncertainty associated with government and developer failure, sustained delays, inferior quality, corruption and etc ..., the vast majority of the poor remain excluded from accessing shelter through state mechanisms. Illegally occupying empty land close to cities is a common global phenomenon across most decolonial urbanizing contexts. This approach, whilst illegal, demonstrates initiative from marginalised people and constitutes the productive capacity of those with limited means to participate in the construction of human settlements. When enacted spontaneously, with little coordination, the resultant settlement requires considerably more resources, time and effort to formalize in post-occupancy. If managed through an orderly process that foresees formalization as part of temporal growth, then social and physical investment can add to sustainable communities. Balanced densities, diverse typologies, public space and collective amenities as well as municipal servicing can all become prefigured and agreed upon amongst occupants. This is an approach that is shunned by ruling parties, yet presents a critical and viable opportunity to advance human settlement at scale and speed, within the exigencies of seemingly permanent socio-economic constraints – and potentially leading toward formalisation.

RDP/starter homes

Weltevrede Valley in Cape Town, Pelip Housing in Red Location, New Brighton outside of Port Elizabeth, Mansel Road in Durban and Brickfields in downtown Johannesburg, each demonstrate a particular trope of spatial transformation through their designer's response to contesting the autonomy of the RDP housing unit. Careful observation of everyday practices affords genuine capacity to accommodate local need and realised a set of locally produced responses to the post-apartheid housing issue. The cumulative effect of these challenges has spoken back to the status quo and contributed toward shifts in housing policy and practice. Government's then new SHS/BNG Housing policy [2004] owes its existence to counter moves spoken from the GroundUp.

VPUU/JHC

The Violence Protection through Urban Upgrade [VPUU] project adopts a model of co-production by deepening the co-operation between community, state and donor agency with facilitation by an NGO intermediary. Intended to intervene across existing established settlements where crime and violence are prevalent, public infrastructure is identified as a means of contributing toward neighbourhood stabilisation. Commencing with in-service training for local community participants, empowered to work within the project, critical sites and programmes are identified to be inserted in the existing fabric. The interrelations between social and physical interventions contribute to provide a binding layer of public infrastructure. Active boxes, live-work units, youth after hour activities and other facilities are inserted into the project at previously designated danger points. Their interconnection through well-constructed pathways that are lit at night responds to the need for 24/7 safety, especially in the case of vulnerable women and children. The strategy is predicated on collective participatory decision making which, when replicated in other contexts, achieves the same by other means; eg. an informal settlement would gain water points, children play-learn spaces, etc.

Reblocking by Insitu upgrade | empower shack



Figure 4: Empower Shack. Section BT, Site C, Khayelitsha, Cape Town – UTT/ETH-Z.

Today, efforts to reblock informal settlements are under critical advancement through their integrative combination with more formal processes. Empower Shack, an experimental informal settlement upgrade project at BT Section at Site C in Khayelitsha, 35km outside of Cape Town is a current example of the renewed approach. Designed by Urban Think Tank [UTT] in collaboration with the Swiss Institute of Technology [ETH-Z] in Zurich, it brings together multiple transformational strategies to demonstrate a more radical, nuanced and hopefully a resilient approach to the housing question. The project offers genuine capacity to maintain a community, whilst radically upgrading its informal settlement. Reconfiguring the site, offering an open formal housing unit, capable of adaptation, cross-programming whilst capable of accommodating the non-negotiable need for non-nuclear, diverse and plural household types [Low, 2018].

Piecemeal in its approach, the project is indicative of a process oriented method to human resettlement. Commencing with a pilot project, it has now expanded, developing through four discrete phases to the current stage – providing 72 formal units on a piece of land previously occupied by some 60 shack dwellers. The opportunity for economic activity, for social title, for flexible occupation, combined with clear delineation of areas for effecting owner and collectivized improvement, intimates toward success. Despite its design ambition, the scheme is driven by rigorous research, and is predicated on enhancing a practice of self-reliance, a dimension of human development that Mandela's generation comprehended as a means toward freedom, independence and participatory citizenship.

The MegaCity and the issue of rapid African urbanization

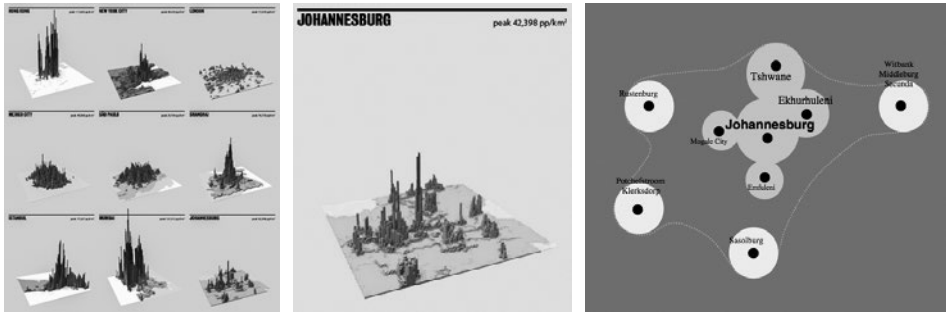


Figure 5: Johannesburg: a polycentric city | Gauteng: a multi nodal city-region in the making.

The 2002 8th Venice Architecture Biennale, curated by Ricky Burdett from the Urban Age Programme at the London School of Economics [LSE], was organized under the rubric of ‘Living in the Endless City’. The Biennale surfaced key statistical information and their spatial implications for the future of the city. One of the most intriguing revelations was the multi-centred nature of South Africa cities, developed as a direct by-product of apartheid spatial planning, and establishing a phenomenon replicated across all scales of urban settlement. The Gauteng City Region is a large metropolitan conurbation comprised by three metro areas and a number of sub-cities, all of which are subject to rapid urban expansion. The ‘left-over’ space between places is to a large extent a consequence of apartheid spatial segregation. However, it is also the logical site for local growth, which, if disciplined by a visionary plan with appropriate infrastructure for cross-regional integration, holds the possibility of producing a new form of city – structured as a continuous terrain, interconnected by infrastructural tissues, yet defined by the networked place-nodes, of differentiated primary functions and local significance.

Establishing a new scale of city can afford unique opportunities for redress of spatial inequity; the marginalized periphery may become embedded within the city as region, enabling a new re-appropriation of land as distributed within the MegaCity and strategically located for productivity. The creative intersection between movement and mobility, living and working, with food security and environmental sustainability could produce a re-combinative infrastructure capable of advancing South African Cities into the 21st century. A new and reconfigured order for the [African] MegaCity needs to be conceived of in parallel with the tyranny of policy planning – which has driven the modern city to destruction [Low, 2015].

Rem Koolhaas has previously identified Lagos as a unique urbanising site that transcends the modern western model of city making. His prognosis is that to study the African cities is to suggest a paradigm for a possible future. How well this resonates with Mandela’s conception of the uniqueness of African agency, particularly when informed by African educated minds [Koolhaas, 2000]. Writing back to the world out of Africa, through local spatial innovation in the realm of city making, collectively considered as a high point of

human civilization, would meet the magnitude of achievement that Mandela anticipated in liberation.

After 25 years of so-called democratic independence South Africa has not as yet overcome the spatial legacy of apartheid. Most gains may be considered to be measured in quantitative [numbers of units delivered] and spatial transformation as a substantive project, with qualitative outcomes for community building and dwelling in comfort, remaining predominantly absent for the agenda. Within this context the demand for land restitution and inclusive economic participation by those suffering from poverty, unemployment and inequality is evident from a generally growing unrest across the country.

Nevertheless, there do exist clear signs of successful efforts to challenge that inheritance. On the one hand there exists a well-developed built environment industry, capable of engaging policy, planning, design and implementation. On the other, since 1994, this sector appears to have become more fully embedded with the western hegemony in leveraging capital for profit as opposed to that of social gain. The tension between the state, at the various levels of government, and communities in all their multiple representations, is evident in the sustained everyday conflict over delivery and demand. Land, as spatial resource with amenity, has become recognised as critical to national transformation. In a society traumatized by the ravages of a dehumanising system of relentless discrimination, it is unsurprising that a grassroots resistance has taken so long to gather significant momentum.

Where success is evident it is in the smaller focused programmes where new forms of instrumentation can emerge and nurture careful [urban] renewal. This success evidences creative alignment across the numerous strands of human endeavor necessary to integrate the complex systems that inform the contemporary production in the built environment. Concomitantly, 'ubuntu', in the form of co-production has become a key indicator for success in an increasingly fragmented and globalising world. Emblematic of the co-operation between communities of difference, this tendency signifies a spirit that would have pleased Mandela. Design thinking represents a unique form of human agency. It identifies the discipline of architecture and enables the synthesis in the face of multiple and competing knowledge sets. When creatively deployed, with empathy, in the interest of humanity, and not solely for profit, then not only is space transformed, but society can be too.

Conclusion

In an early 1982 image produced by the late professor Ivor Prinsloo, then Director of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Cape Town, for the cover of *Architecture SA*, the official Journal of the South African Institute of Architects [SAIA], a projection of possible hybridity is presented as a challenge to the spatial disciplines. Premiated on an interpretation of Laugier's primitive hut, this collage sets up a terse dialogue between the extremes of two speculative origins of architecture.

Sameness and difference are co-constituted within a single image, bound together under the spectre of light in the form of the constructed rainbow; the rainbow being the

metaphor by which the prospective diversity of the new South African nation has become colloquially associated.

What we are grappling with in the quest for space and transformation is as to what might constitute the order of a non-western modernism in a post-colonial state? Of how it might yet still be possible to reconcile the irreconcilable, as exemplified by the extremes between poverty and entrenched entitlement, traditional and modern practices, or at the very least, of how their differences might co-exist? Or, perhaps more acutely, of an understanding as to whether, in fact, we might require a more radically reformative and entirely new spatial practice? This is not a phenomenon that is unique to South Africa. It is, of course, a condition that permeates all contemporary dimensions of human action, particularly in the post-colony, being globally engaged in negotiating the reconfiguration of hegemony from the hierarchic toward the networked.

What South Africa has more recently uncovered is a realisation of the impossibility of managing change. Historically the magnitude and scale of bringing an unknown order into being is aligned with revolution – something in the buildup to freedom that Mandela had consciously and deliberately mediated against. Yet, 25 years after the advent of democracy, we remain trapped in a fragmented process of resistance to transformation, and lacking in real progress toward inclusive participation and an empowered capacity for self-reliance being transferred to the previously marginalized.

Our challenge remains to establish a new, inclusive socius, one that must necessarily preempt [spatial] change, through a more radical means than transformation. Mandela's legacy leaves us with a consciousness of the fact that unless the lives of the historically excluded are radically changed to enjoy equal access to social justice and benefit from spatial equity, then architecture and all our politicking will remain meaningless. For Mandela the humanist, tradition places value on a life well lived, above that of material achievement, yet, tradition also recognizes the necessary dialectic and reciprocal relation between these extremes. Lest we forget, Mandela was a radical activist, one who placed his life at risk in the service of struggle. Failure to achieve these simple needs would have driven Mandela to embark on a different path to change, and it would most certainly have excluded the negotiative tolerance of 1990's.

It is time for architecture, and spatial practitioners to directly engage with this project. It is after all within the domain of their privilege.



Figure 6: Tradition and Modernity: Hybrid Africa.

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PRODUCING NEW SPATIAL(IZED) (HI)STORIES ON CONGOLESE CITIES: REFLECTIONS ON TEN YEARS OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN UGENT AND UNIKIN

Johan Lagae

Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, Ghent University, Belgium
Former vice-president of the Ghent Africa Platform (GAP)

Jacob Sabakinu Kivilu

History Department, University of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

This article presents the context and some of the results of ten years of collaboration in the field of African urban history between researchers from Ghent University (UGent), and mainly its Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, and scholars of the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN), which, in part, has benefited from the forum created by the Ghent African Platform (GAP). What ties together this collaborative work, is the conviction that 'History matters' when thinking not only about the past, but also about the present and the future of cities in today's DR Congo. Moreover, we argue, it is the combination of our complementary expertise in socio-demographic history and architectural/urban planning history that has enabled us to develop new narratives on space and society in these urban environments. These, we believe, hold a relevance for the historiography of Congo's colonial past as well as for current discussions on colonial heritage and urban development. By demonstrating that we have gained much through stimulating a cross-disciplinary and inter-generational conversation that brings together (the expertise from) scholars working on Congo/Africa and coming from different backgrounds, academic cultures and age, we explicitly want to advocate setting up forms of relationship between the 'North' and 'South' that go beyond the common trope of 'Capacity Building'. A number of specific pieces of work related to the cities of Kinshasa and Matadi will be discussed, illustrating how we have also deliberately sought to target different audiences by producing different kinds of output, from academic publications to exhibitions, reports for policy makers to outreach activities in the cultural arena. As such, we believe that this ten years of collaboration on African Urban History is fully in tune with GAP's main agenda of creating a cross-disciplinary forum where scholars from North and South, and from different generations can meet and exchange ideas, and we hope to embed our future collaboration in an even broader community, both at UGent and UNIKIN.

KEYWORDS: DR CONGO, URBAN HISTORY, CROSS-DISCIPLINARITY, COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

A fruitful (first) encounter

In August 2007, the *Ecole de médecine* of the *Université de Kinshasa* (UNIKIN) formed the stage for an international workshop entitled 'Sites, Sights and Spaces. New methodolo-

gies in the historiography of cities in the Congo (DRC)'. Over the course of five days, a group of almost 60 people from eight different countries (DR Congo, South Africa, Senegal, Angola, Belgium, UK, France and the US), coming from various disciplinary backgrounds and academic cultures, was engaged in often lively debates on a number of issues related to the broader field of African urban history:¹ Sessions dealt with topics such as colonial built heritage as well as with spaces of the marginalized/marginal spaces in the city over time; the potential of using visual sources such as photographs and maps was addressed, as well as drawing on oral history and on innovative anthropological readings of the city. At the heart of the discussion was the question of why 'history matters' when thinking of African/Congolese cities. It was a shared belief in the importance of new historical perspectives when thinking not only about the past, but also about the present and the future of cities like Kinshasa that triggered both authors of this article to organize this workshop, together with colleague and renowned Congo-scholar Nancy Rose Hunt (Hunt, 1999).

It was Jean-Luc Vellut from the *Université Catholique de Louvain*, the internationally esteemed, yet in Belgium still somewhat underrated historian of Congo's colonial past (Vellut, 2017; Etambala & Mabilia, 2016), who had brought the three of us together a couple of years before, when he was acting as the main scientific curator in the preparation of the exhibition *The Memory of Congo. The colonial era* would open its doors in February 2005 in the Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren (Vellut, 2005). Johan Lagae was invited by Vellut in 2003 to become member of the core curatorial team because of his PhD on colonial architecture in Congo (Lagae, 2002), and was responsible for, among other things, for introducing spatial and visual urban history as a new way of looking at Congo's colonial past (Lagae, 2015). Jacob Sabakinu Kivilu served as president of the scientific committee of the exhibition and hosted Vellut and Lagae on a prospection mission to Kinshasa in 2003. Nancy Hunt was brought in by Vellut as one of the external consultants and participated in some of the round table discussions in the early phase of mounting the project.

The 2007 UNIKIN-workshop on Urban History was a direct result of that earlier encounter which had made us aware of a shared interest in Congo's colonial history and in the vibrancy of a city like Kinshasa. The three of us felt that it was timely to start a cross-disciplinary and inter-generational conversation of how to engage with Congo's cities, an engagement that would draw on recent developments in the broader domains of both African Studies and of African Urban History in particular (e.g. Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1993; Anderson & Rathbone, 2000; Salm & Falola, 2005; Freund, 2007). Moreover, we shared the conviction that it was crucial to stage this conversation not in Belgium, but in Congo. By bringing insights from other places and academic culture to DR Congo and engaging with local scholarship and ongoing debates in Congolese academic circles, an important underlying idea of the UNIKIN-workshop, even if we might never have articulated it explicitly as such, was underlined, that we wanted to create an encounter that would go

1 The international workshop took place from 17 to 21 September 2007. It was made possible through an INCO-grant of the VLIR-UOS, with additional financial support from UGent, UNIKIN and the KULeuven.



Figure 1: An overview of the spatial development of Kinshasa, in 5 steps from the 1920s till the 1950s. The Avenue Kasa Vubu acts as the main axis linking the postwar cités (in the south) to the city center (in the north), along which the mobility of the African population was made possible in the 1950s via a bus transport system and the massive distribution of bicycles. Pages from Kennivé & Van Coster, 2012: 54-55.

beyond the trope of ‘Capacity Building’ and in which everyone involved would have his/her say on an equal basis. In the beginning, this somewhat implicit agenda created quite some disciplinary miscommunication and even misunderstandings as well as some friction between different generations of junior and senior scholars, in particular with regard to methodological questions. But over the course of five days of work and discussion, we nevertheless succeeded in triggering a very open-minded and engaged conversation. As a result, the workshop became an important moment for many of the participants. Even if no publication resulted from the 2007 UNIKIN-workshop, the intensity of the discussions and the commitment of all participants, did create a number of very tangible outcomes in the form of a number of collaborations, some of which continue today.² For the two authors of this article, the UNIKIN-workshop marked the beginning of a long lasting collaboration on the urban history of cities such as Kinshasa and Matadi, in which a number of people of both the UGent Department of Architecture and Urban Planning

2 In fact, some of the participants met again recently in Florida in 2018, at the invitation of Nancy Rose Hunt, albeit in the context of a quite different Congo-related project. From the UGent perspective, the workshop was important for establishing a link between Luce Beekmans from the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning with prof. Ibrahima Thioub at his team at the Université de Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, Senegal, first in the context of a Phd research (Beekmans, 2013) and, later, via the work conducted by UGent master students on the SICAP-housing scheme in Dakar, which will result in a book project.

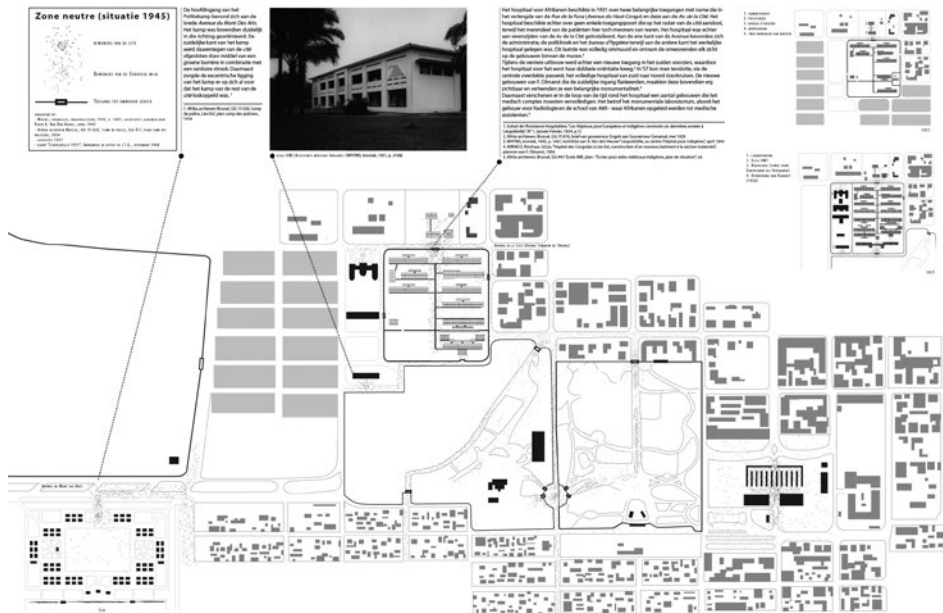


Figure 2: A detailed mapping of Kinshasa's "zone neutre" (i.e. a series of "zones tampons" separating the "ville européenne" from the "cite indigène"), with an indication of the Hôpital Mama Yemo, the hospital for Africans which ended up being situated on the "wrong side" of the "buffer zone", in the European part of town. Pages from Kennivé & Van Coster, 2012: 34-35.

and various departments of the UNIKIN, in particular the History Department, were involved over the years.³ At some point, the Ghent Africa Platform (GAP) helped to create openings for a more cross-disciplinary conversation at UGent, and Lagae's role as vice-president of GAP encouraged him to make contacts beyond the boundaries of his own faculty when setting up research with Sabakinu. Baz Lecocq, during his UGent-mandate as professor of African history, and anthropologist Koen Stroeken both participate(d) in FWO-funded research projects, and, more recently, postdoc-researcher and historian Gillian Matthys, was involved in some funding applications. But it should be acknowledged that we have perhaps not yet realised the full potential of the GAP-platform. In the future more could and should be done, especially given that the work of some colleagues in fields such as Conflict and Development Studies, as well as the large fieldwork expertise in Africa/Congo of scholars coming from the fields of Medicine and Law, could actually be very useful for some of our ongoing projects, as the last GAP-symposium in December 2017 revealed.

3 At UGent, the following members of Lagae's research unit have been involved in the conversation: postdoc researchers Luce Beeckmans (since 2007) and Kristien Geenen (2015-2016); Phd candidates Kim De Raedt, Sofie Boonen, Simon De Nys-Ketels, Robby Fivez; and a number of master students who produced master dissertations on Congo-related topics (see below) or participated in research seminars. On the UNIKIN side, important interlocutors have been professors Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem, Jean-Marie Mutamba, Pamphile Mabilia, Elikia M'Bokolo, Léon Tsambu and assistants Dodo Mukwema, Nephthali Fofolo and Yok Bakwema.

The conversation that was stimulated by the 2007 UNIKIN-workshop between the two authors of this article has led over the last ten years to a series of outcomes in the form of publications and exhibitions directly related to the field of African urban history, some of which we will discuss below. But it also informed other projects beyond this disciplinary domain. The *Congo belge (en images)*-book and exhibition project, initiated by Magnum-photographer Carl De Keyzer in collaboration with Johan Lagae and first shown in January 2010 at the Museum of Photography in Antwerp (FoMU), is a case in point. In fact, both Sabakinu and Patricia Hayes, a South African based visual historian who also participated in the UNIKIN-workshop, were invited to bring their voice to the project and thus played a major role in contextualizing the atypical and often un-settling selection of late 19th and early 20th century photographs presented in the show/catalogue (De Keyzer & Lagae, 2010; Lagae, 2012).

Thinking about space and people in cities

Belonging to different scholarly generations, both authors come to the field of African Urban History from different disciplinary backgrounds and academic cultures. Sabakinu (°1945) was trained as a historian at the Universities of Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in the late 1960s and 1970s, being versed on the one hand in the tradition of quantitative, socio-demographic research in line with the work of Léon De Saint-Moulin (De Saint-Moulin, 2010; Sabakinu & Obotela, forthcoming), and, on the other, in the approach of tracing and close-reading (early) historical local sources which was introduced in Congo's academic circles by historians such as François Bontinck, Jean-Luc Vellut and Bogumil Jew-siewicki (Mabiala, 2004; Vellut, 1974). While he has worked extensively on the history of medicine in colonial and postcolonial Congo (e.g. Sabakinu, 1984; 1990), an interest he shares with the above mentioned Nancy Hunt, Sabakinu had from an early stage, a keen interest in urban history. In 1981, he obtained his PhD with a dissertation on Matadi in which he presented an in depth reading of the port city's changing urban society through analyzing its shifting demographic constellation (Sabakinu 1981). At the center of this research was the question of how a socio-economic inquiry could help shed light on strategies of urban governance, including aspects of violence and segregation, and on tensions among the city's inhabitants.

Graduating as an engineer-architect in 1991, Lagae (°1968) initially conducted architectural history research on Congo in the context of his Phd on Belgian colonial architecture (2002). This early work was very much informed by the early 1990s 'postcolonial turn' in architectural history and how the work of authors like Gwendolyn Wright or Zeynep Çelik urged scholars to engage with the 'Politics of Design' in colonial contexts (Wright, 1991, Çelik, 1997). But he quickly developed a broader interest in a spatial reading of Congolese cities, including the analysis of the evolution of urban form and urban landscapes beyond individual buildings, not only in order to contribute to a rewriting of the history of 20th century Belgian (and global) architecture but also, and more importantly, to gain a more nuanced understanding of Congo's colonial past. In his more recent work there is a focus on the agency of other, often overlooked actors that made and shaped the colonial/postco-

lonial city, such as the more anonymous bureaucrats of the Public Works Departments or middle figures in urban society, a topic which he first explored in a visual history-project on the city of Boma he developed for the 2005 Tervuren exhibition (Lagae et al., 2005).⁴ This Boma-project was one of the catalysts behind our discovery of a shared interest in urban history, and of the possibilities of combining our expertise in socio-economic history and architectural/urban history. What brings our work together across our respective disciplines, then, is the conviction that, as Anthony D. King, a pioneer in the study of colonial cities, once articulated, “how people build affects how people think [at least as much as] how people think governs how people build.” (King, 1984: 99). Or, to put it differently, what is really at the heart of our collaborative work is an interest in the “urban process”, a notion that architectural historian Spiro Kostoff coined and that can be defined as “that intriguing conflation of social, political, technical and artistic forces that generates a city’s form” (Kostoff, 1992).

Collaborating through a cross-disciplinary and inter-generational conversation

In the aftermath of the UNIKIN-workshop, Sabakinu became involved as a consultant in Luce Beeckmans’ PhD on colonial and postcolonial urban planning in Africa of which Lagae was a co-supervisor (Beeckmans 2013). But the first long lasting and more mutual collaboration was initiated two years later, in 2009, with a research project entitled “City, architecture and colonial space in Matadi and Lubumbashi, Congo. A historical analysis from a translocal perspective”, for which Sabakinu acted as a co-supervisor (FWO Go78609N, 2009-2012). The Lubumbashi-part of the research has drawn to a large extent on a collaboration with historian Donatien Dibwe, professor at the *Université de Lubumbashi* (UNILU), who was also one of the participants in the 2007 UNIKIN-workshop. It has led to a series of master dissertations (Boonen, 2009; Fenaux, 2010; De Nys-Ketels, 2012), numerous articles (e.g. Lagae et al., 2013; Boonen & Lagae, 2015a; Boonen & Lagae, 2015b; Lagae et al., 2016a) and a PhD dissertation which will soon be submitted (Boonen, 2019). Moreover, this historical research was quickly picked up by the local artistic scene in Lubumbashi and resulted in a series of very stimulating forms of exchange and collaborations with artists such as Sammy Baloji and Patrick Mudekereza, continuing till today (Njami 2012; Mudekereza, 2017; Baloji 2018).

In the context of this FWO-funded project, we collaborated mainly on the Matadi-section, in an explicit attempt to complement Sabakinu’s 1981 socio-demographic PhD research with an in depth analysis of the port city’s urban form and spatial development. This project proved more labor intensive than originally anticipated, also because several other opportunities to collaborate came our way. Nevertheless, as we will discuss below, some intermediate outcomes on our Matadi-research were already produced in 2011 and the main research outcome is now in a final stage of completion.

If this first long term collaboration proved fruitful in terms of a cross-disciplinary approach, it was also instructive with regards to the benefits one can draw from an inter-

4 This visual history complements the very substantial inquiry of Boma (Khone 2005), which focuses largely on the tensions between two ethnic groups in what was at the time the capital city of the Congo Free State.

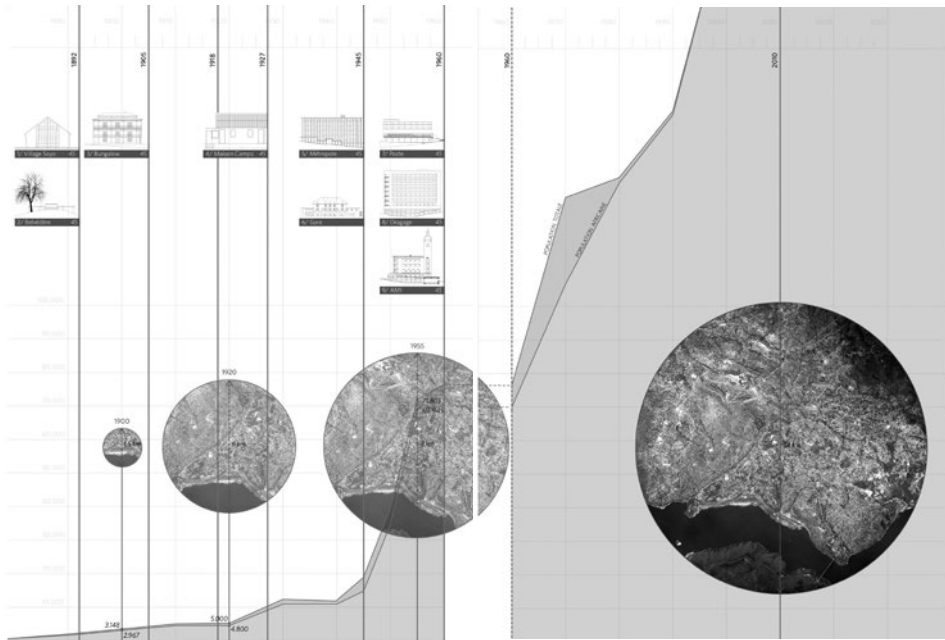


Figure 3: The spatial development of the port city of Matadi, showing the expansion of the urban territory in relationship to the growth of the city’s population, and presenting some of the key architectural structures from the different time periods in the colonial era. Scheme prepared by Luce Beeckmans, which will be included in the forthcoming historical atlas of Matadi (Lagae *et al.*, 2019).

generational conversation, a lesson already learned during the 2007 UNIKIN-workshop, when we had explicitly invited junior scholars from various backgrounds to present their work for a broad audience of peers and more established researchers. In the following years, Sabakinu became a crucial interlocutor for the research conducted under Lagae’s supervision at UGent in the context of Congo related research seminars, master dissertations, and PhD research projects.⁵ From the UGent perspective, it has been extremely beneficial to collaborate over the last ten years with someone who is very knowledgeable on a wide and sometimes almost forgotten scholarly literature, dealing not only with Congo but more broadly with Africa as a whole. For the Matadi-project, for instance, Sabakinu provided access to important literature on Congo’s economic past, including colonial reports and trade bulletins, but also to comparative material allowing us to contextualize the Matadi case within a wider network of African port cities. A more

5 Since 2007, two PhD dissertations in which Congo is addressed have been completed at the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning (Beeckmans, 2013; De Raedt, 2017), while three Congo-related PhD dissertations are currently forthcoming (Boonen, 2019; Fivez, 2020; De Nys-Ketels, 2020). Since 2005, sixteen Congo-related master dissertations have been produced at the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, most of which will be mentioned below except for the following ones: Vermeersch, 2011; Vandamme, 2013; Kaisin, 2016; Van Craenenbroeck, 2016; Camerlinck, 2017.

recent master dissertation of Congo's road infrastructure (Heindryckx, 2016) was greatly enriched by gaining quick access to references regarding the role of specific colonial enterprises as well as of missionary congregations in the regions under investigation, and pointing out the importance of issues of land tenure in colonial Africa, a topic that requires further investigation. More generally, the ongoing conversation with Sabakinu has also been crucial in raising awareness among UGent researchers of the risks associated with working mainly, or even exclusively, with sources found in Belgian archives. His support in making fieldwork possible for both master students and PhD candidates has been extremely important. For the critical inquiry of the 'politics of design' regarding school building programs in post-independence Africa/Congo, conducted by Kim De Raedt in the context of her recently submitted PhD dissertation (De Raedt, 2017), for instance, Sabakinu's support was fundamental in the tracing of former members of the Ministry of Education as well as heads of educational institutes who were able to shed light on the Congolese tactics and agency when dealing with the funding bodies such as the World Bank, the European Development Fund or Unesco.

The fact that since 2007, a number of master students, PhD candidates and some postdoc researchers of Lagae's research unit at UGent have been part of the ongoing conversation and in most cases have also spent time in DR Congo to conduct fieldwork, has allowed Sabakinu and the staff and students of UNIKIN's History Department to come into contact with new research questions and sometimes overlooked archival collections, both in Belgium and in Congo, which local historians and scholars could also engage with.⁶ Moreover, this younger generation of architectural scholars has demonstrated a strong capacity to work with visual sources and especially to produce detailed and innovative mappings of buildings, cities and even larger landscapes for cases such as Kinshasa (Van Hulle, 2009; Kennivé & Van Coster, 2012), Lubumbashi (see above), Matadi (Weyers, 2005), Mbandaka (Claeys, 2009), Kisangani (Aelvoet, 2010; Lierman, 2011), Yangambi (Keymolen *et al.*, 2015), and the Bas-Congo region (Vandepoele & De Ruyter, 2018). This has opened up new avenues for engaging with and communicating on urban history research in DR Congo, and has stimulated the local debate on the need to work towards new (hi)stories of specific sites and cities. In recent years, UNIKIN students have started to research for master dissertations on related topics, such as the ongoing inquiries of the history of Kinshasa's different neighbourhoods, of the sacred city of Nkamba, Simon Kimbangu's birth place, or of the role of customary chiefs in the spatial organization of the peri-urban areas of Kinshasa. Already in the context of the 2005 Tervuren exhibition, a local scholar initiated a study on the relationship between space and society in the city of Kisangani (Lanza 2005), which she is currently pursuing in the context of PhD research and that in approach is related to a 2005 inquiry of Boma, the first capital city of

6 Over the last ten years, substantial archival research has been done in the Brussels-based Africa Archives, the collections of the Royal Museum of Central Africa, as well as particular funds in the State Archives. In Kinshasa, important archival findings were made in the Archives Nationales du Congo in Kinshasa, and, recently, also in the archives of the ONATRA, the Office National du Transport. In September 2017, the very important, yet overlooked archival fund of Safricas, one of the major constructions companies, active in Congo since the 1920s, was traced by UGent PhD candidate Robby Fivez.

VILLE DANS LES COLLINES

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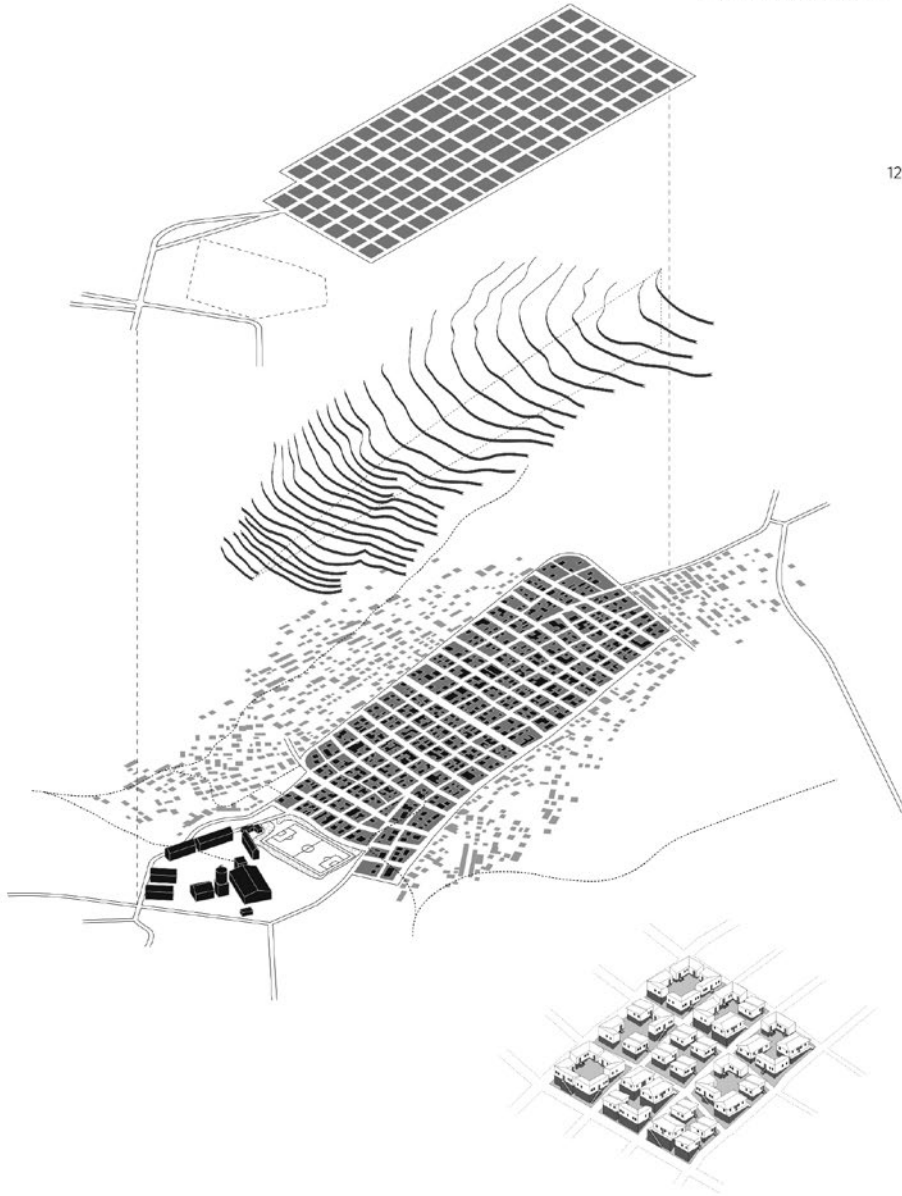


Figure 4: A scheme illustrating the spatial organization of the "cite indigène" of *Bruxelles Nord* in Matadi, based on plan drawn in the 1930s by the Brussels' based technical services of the Ministry of Colonies. The projection of a grid-plan and type-houses on a hilly landscape with a very complex topography resulted in strange and non-efficient situations. Drawing by Sam Lanckriet, 2015, which will be included in the forthcoming historical atlas of Matadi (Lagae *et al.*, 2019).

the Congo Free State (Khonde 2005). Urban history topics have been included in seminars of the *Chaire d'Histoire de la Population africaine* at UNIKIN. Yet, the significant drop in student population at UNIKIN's History Department over the last decades, resulting in quite limited numbers of students and staff today, has formed an obstacle to fully taking advantage of this opportunity on the Congo side, all the more since some of the junior researchers are now conducting their research in the USA or in South Africa.

In what follows, we will briefly sketch out some aspects of such spatialized (hi)stories for the cities of Kinshasa and Matadi, and illustrate how, in our collaborative work, we have made efforts to target various kinds of audiences. For if we share, as will come clear below, a strong belief in the fact that 'history matters' when thinking about the Congolese city, we are also convinced that the urgency of this message should be communicated well beyond the confines of the academy.

Documenting Kinshasa's postcolonial urban landscape and architectural heritage

An important part of our collaboration has been concerned with the city of Kinshasa, Congo's capital city. It has involved both historical research on the spatial development of the city and inquiries into the city's built heritage. The latter took place in the context of a project on Kinshasa's *patrimoine urbain*, initiated in 2009 by Bernard Toulhier, who at the time acted as *Conservateur général du patrimoine* of the French Ministry of Communication and Culture. The project involved the selection of about 150 heritage sites in Congo's capital city, for which documentation was compiled and a preliminary analysis of their current situation and state was conducted. In order to maximize the outreach of the results obtained, a dedicated website was produced, as well as a monograph co-edited by Lagae and to which, among others, Sabakinu and Beeckmans contributed (Auber et al., 2010; Toulhier et al., 2010). Our previous conversation on Kinshasa's urban history proved crucial at various stages of the project. First, some significant changes to the initial selection of sites was made in dialogue with a team of local consultants, in which Sabakinu and Leon de Saint Moulin played a prominent role. It resulted in shifting the original strong focus on architectural highlights to an approach that also took into consideration urban memory sites and parts of the city where local, African agency was very palpable in the making and shaping of the city. In the end, several infrastructures were included in the survey that were crucial components of a segregated colonial urban society, such as the *Canal Cabu* or the *Rotonde radiophonique* along the *Avenue Kasa Vubu*, while explicit mention was made of the *Village du chef Ngandu*, situated in a peripheral area of the city, as an exemplary site where so-called customary land regulation had been crucial in place-making both in the past and the present. The conversation also resulted in a shift in the project's main agenda: in the end, we no longer claimed to produce a survey of *patrimoine urbain*, which lists the prime heritage sites of the city, but rather we opted for a presentation that would help people grasp and make sense of the complex urban landscape of Kinshasa, a city one can read both as a patchwork and a palimpsest (Lagae, 2010). To that end, close attention was given to documenting the development of the city's urban form via a series of newly produced maps that illustrated how Kinshasa's spatial organization

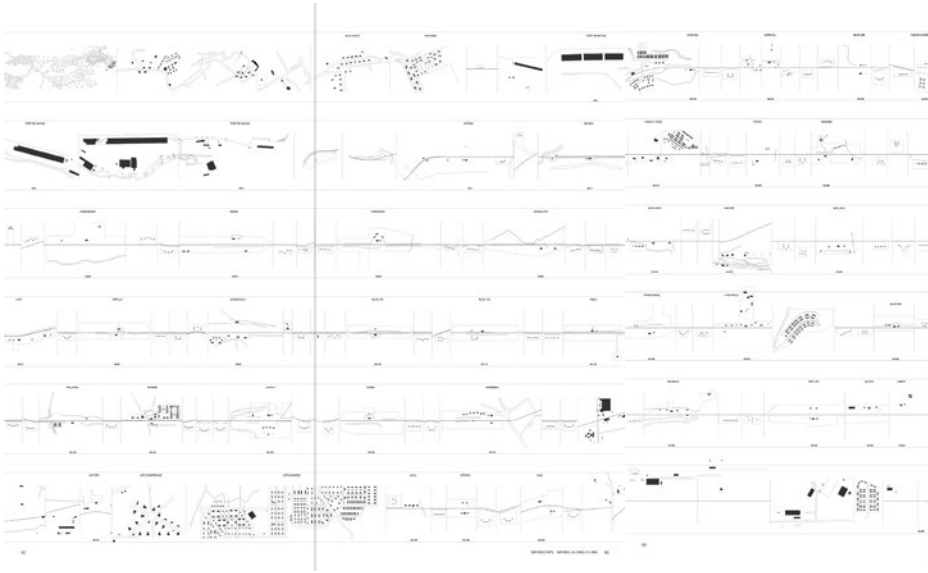


Figure 5: A diagram showing the footprint of every building and built infrastructure of the OTRACO (Office des Transports du Congo) along the Matadi-Kinshasa railway line. This diagram is a redrawn version on an undated archival document [probably late 1950s], found in the OTRACO-archives in Kinshasa in September 2017, which is still used for maintenance purposes by the railway company. Pages from Vandepoele & De Ruyter, 2018: 82-83.

was both the result of colonial urban planning practices based on the principle of racial segregation and of ad hoc and pragmatic ways of dealing with local constraints of the actual site, such as hydrography or topography (Toulier *et al.*, 2010).

In subsequent work, this approach has been refined, first in a display entitled ‘Mapping Kinshasa’, shown in 2010 at the *Afropolis*-exhibition in the *Völkerkunde* Museum in Cologne, Germany. It was a first attempt to present the city’s spatial development by focusing on six organizing urban structures and how these have developed over time, a theme explored in a master seminar at UGent (Department of Architecture UGent 2010), then, in an architectural guide for Kinshasa co-edited by Lagae and Toulier (2013), for which Sabakinu produced an important reflection on the notion of ‘built heritage’, in which he argued for bringing the debate to a broader local audience, thinking in particular of the younger generation of *écoliers*. While a large part of the guide was based on earlier historical research, one chapter in particular drew directly on the work of a very insightful historical atlas produced in 2012 by two UGent master students on the *Avenue Kasa-Vubu*, arguably one of the most interesting streets in Kinshasa, to gain a nuanced understanding of the growth of a segregated city (Kennivé & Van Coster, 2012; Lagae *et al.*, 2016b). And here again, the work was significantly enriched by the fact that these two students were able to complement their important findings in Belgian archives with substantial material traced in local archives in Kinshasa and fieldwork observations in a challenging urban area, made possible thanks to the guidance and support from UNIKIN.

Currently, our collaborative work on Kinshasa continues in the context of a FWO-funded research project dealing with hospital infrastructure in DR Congo, which has allowed the connection between Sabakinu's expertise on medical history with, on the one hand, architectural history research on hospital typologies and bureaucratic building procedures within the colonial administration and, on the other, with an anthropological analysis of spatial regimes of governmentality and of informal practices which have emerged in hospital sites over time (FWO Go45015N, 2015-2019). The first important results have been obtained with regard to the *Hôpital Mama Yemo*, the former hospital for Africans situated in the city center of Kinshasa, the origin of which goes back to the early 1920s. Through archival work in Belgium, the construction history of the hospital complex has been documented in great detail, and thus has provided local stakeholders with important data on the building stock as well as on how the urban situation of the complex has changed over time (Geenen *et al.*, 2016). Conducting extensive fieldwork and setting up conversations with a variety of local informants was crucial to gaining an understanding of how the specific spatial organization of the hospital complex according to the *type pavillonnaire*, a typology that had been common in Europe since the late 19th century and was 'exported' to colonial territories (Mésenge, 2010; Chang, 2016), in fact made it possible for very localized practices of dealing with sickness to take root in the complex. For one thing, the pavilion-typology facilitated the presence on site of the *garde-malade*, a person accompanying a patient in order to provide logistic support (cooking, bringing medicines, etc.). But fieldwork also indicated that we need to fundamentally question the idea that the *Hôpital Mama Yemo* forms an isolated enclave in the city center. On the contrary, it was found that it actually functions as one of the major *zones de passage* for those *Kinois* going from the market to the main bus stops along the *Boulevard du 30 juin*, resulting in intriguing tactics at the hospital gates of gaining access into and being able to leave the site (Geenen & De Nys Ketels, 2018). As such, this research is an important reminder not to take boundary walls at face value and see them as pure instruments of exclusion and inclusion, but rather, as landscape architect Oles has argued, as "places of truck, of interaction and exchange" (Oles, 2015).

Mapping the history of a segregated port city: Matadi

Apart from Kinshasa, our collaborative work has mainly focused on another urban center in DR Congo: Matadi, the port city. As indicated above, Matadi was part of the first FWO-funded project that started in 2009, but it is only now that we are actually in the final stage of a project that has become much larger than anticipated, and which has started to touch on very different dimensions, resulting in a variety of outcomes which target different audiences. One very specific outcome was an exhibition display produced in 2009-2011 for the MAS, *Museum aan de Stroom*, Antwerp. Invited by the MAS's Africa curator, Els De Palmaer, to work on the relationship between the port cities of Antwerp and Matadi, we quickly decided it would make more sense to tell the story of that relationship not by focusing on colonial goods entering the metropole via Antwerp nor by following the trajectory of Belgian colonials from Antwerp to Matadi, but rather by bringing to the fore one group that in a very peculiar way embodies the connection between the two cit-

ies: the Congolese seafarers. To that end, we spent two fieldwork missions in Matadi in 2010, interviewing (former) Congolese seafarers and documenting the memories of how they experienced their time in Antwerp, complementing this information with an –albeit incomplete- spatial mapping of the specific places in Antwerp that testify of their –temporary- presence in the city. This material has been part of the permanent display in the MAS, in the section on ‘Antwerp World port’ (Lagae et al., 2012), but has also served as the basis for academic output (e.g. Lagae & Sabakinu, 2018).

Over the last ten years, we have simultaneously been conducting substantial archival work in order to investigate in great detail some of the key buildings in Matadi and the spatial development of Matadi’s urban form, and this work complements a preliminary study into these topics conducted by a UGent master student (Weyers 2005). Through this, we have gained insight into how the relation between the city and the port infrastructure has

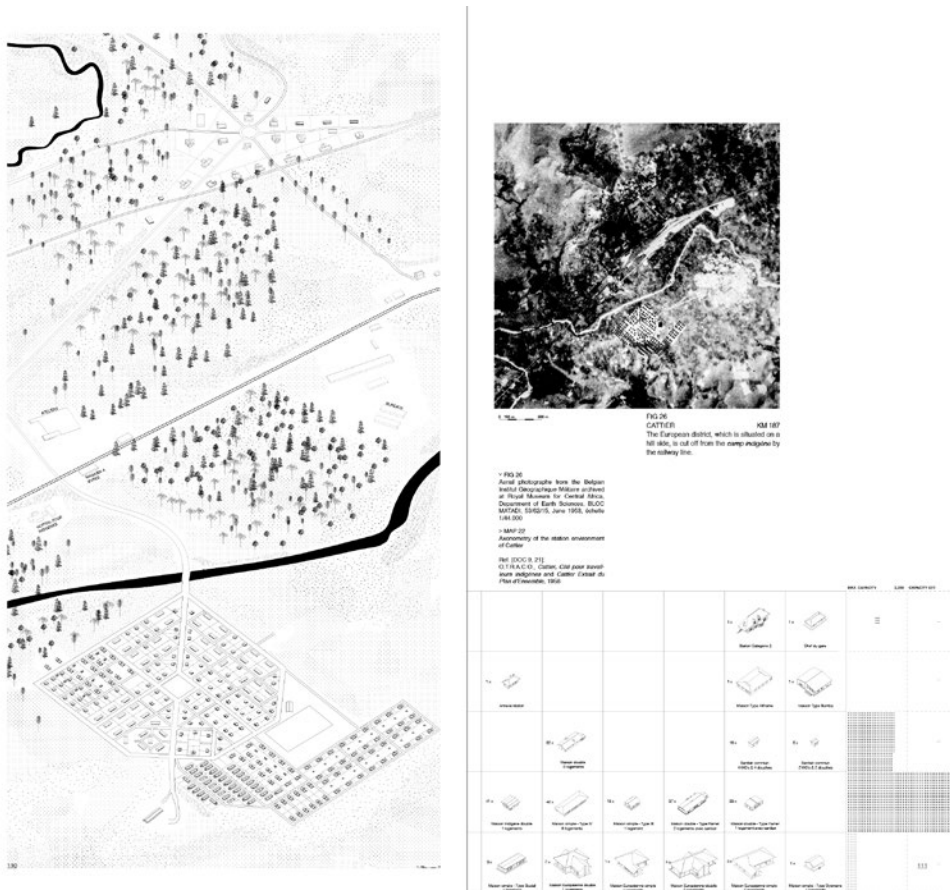


Figure 6: Spatial mapping of the Cattier-site along the Matadi-Kinshasa railway line, illustrating the use of type-buildings for the railway station, storage facilities, housing of the European agents and the accommodation of the workers of OTRACO (Office des Transports du Congo), the colonial railway company. Pages from Vandepoele & De Ruyter, 2018: 110–111.

changed over time, as well as how the principle of a segregated city was implemented in colonial Matadi. Our research, not surprisingly, revealed that many parallels can be drawn with what happened in Kinshasa, because of the standard guidelines and models of colonial urban planning that were applied all over the Belgian Congo. But Matadi proved a powerful case, revealing the limits of these guidelines and models, as the site chosen to found the port city proved very challenging to implement standardized city plans, construct type buildings (from houses to schools to hospitals), or introduce urban infrastructures such as an urban sewage system because of the extreme topography, coupled with a severe tropical climate. The outcome of this collaborative research, that also draws heavily on Sabakinu's 1981 PhD on Matadi, will result in the course of 2019 in the publication of a historical atlas of Matadi (Lagae *et al.*, 2019b). For this forthcoming publication, we collaborated closely with Luce Beeckmans and two former UGent students in order to produce an appealing visual narrative presenting Matadi, first, as a port city on the Congo river and, second, as a complex segregated colonial city erected in the hills. This narrative addresses explicitly aspects of the provision of workers' housing and urban sanitation (Lagae *et al.*, 2019a), as well as of the policing of a segregated urban environment, a dimension that has recently gained currency in the field of colonial studies (Lagae & Sabakinu, 2017; Blanchard *et al.*, 2017). Through this work, we aim to contribute to the new strand of historiography on colonial cities that pays attention to the messiness of implementing urban segregation, an approach Carl Nightingale advocates in his seminal book on the topic (2012).

In addition we believe that this historical research is also relevant for contemporary Matadi and it has already been important in the context of another project, commissioned by the Congolese Ministry of Housing and Planning, with regard to the urban development of six secondary cities in DR Congo, including Matadi, to which Lagae contributed as a consultant (Hydea, 2015). This project asked for the development of a methodology which local authorities could use to manage their building stock and plan how this *patrimoine urbain* might inform future urban development. While this project is in essence about contemporary urban governance, it was decided to bring a strong historical component to it, in order to show that 'history matters' when thinking and planning the future of Congolese cities. If one is to define priority strategic urban projects, the project team argued, it is crucial to have a sound understanding of the origin of urban form and of its development over time. Unfortunately, it was a message that seemed to fall on deaf ears in the technocratic oriented milieu of the clients and the local representatives of the World Bank, which provided the funds, though this attention of the historical dimension was picked up with some enthusiasm at the local level, as became clear during the visits to these cities as well as during a workshop with local administrators of the six selected cities which took place in Matadi in autumn 2015 and resulted in a first online database (Urbacongo, 2015).

What's next?

The two examples given above of Kinshasa and Matadi provide a select overview of the kind of work on urban history that has been produced in a collaborative dialogue between UGent and UNIKIN over the last ten years and which includes not only both authors of

this article, but more broadly, different researchers from UGent (in particular from its Department of Architecture and Urban Planning) and from UNIKIN, and more specifically its History Department. As we have shown, this collaborative work has led to a series of different outcomes, some of which are academic in scope (articles, conference papers, books and book chapters, master dissertations and PhDs), while others deliberately were developed to target a broader audience: exhibitions in both Belgium and DR Congo, presentations for local stakeholders and policy makers, conferences in the cultural arena, etc. We have explicitly opted to publish a substantial part of this work in French, rather than using the lingua franca of academic research, English, as we deem it crucial that a wide Congolese/African audience can easily access the results of our research.

Currently, several plans are on the table to continue this conversation, and also to broaden it beyond the strict field of urban history. In recent years, very promising master dissertations have been produced on colonial landscapes and infrastructures: the road network has proven to be an overlooked subject that is full of potential (Heindryckx, 2016; Heindryckx, 2017). Recently two UGent-students produced an atlas of the Bas Congo region, using the Matadi-Kinshasa railroad as the backbone for a mapping of the transformation of particular landscapes along the trajectory, illustrating how the railroad is, in fact, an infrastructural project with a very wide footprint (Vandepoele & De Ruyter, 2016). Finally, in the context of an ongoing FWO-project that looks at the colonial and postcolonial Congo from a Construction History-perspective (FWO G053215N, 2015-2019), we are currently discovering a number of building typologies and infrastructures that beg further in-depth investigation, such as hydraulic dams, breweries, cement factories, silos for the storage of various resources and workers' camps, the latter being a subject on which already some groundbreaking research has been done (De Meulder, 1996). This research raises new research questions with regard to the introduction of specific building technologies in Congo, such as the use of reinforced and pre-stressed concrete (Fivez, 2017), or the international flows of building expertise that informed construction in Congo. But more importantly, it also urges us to think in more profound ways on fundamental issues such as the distribution of (forced) labor on building sites (Lagae & Van Craenenbroek 2015; Fivez, 2018) or the resource extraction linked to building activities, and the legacy of "imperial debris" it created (Stoler, 2013).

In other words, there is still more than enough on our plate to continue our collaborative conversation for at least another decade. But, as was already suggested at the beginning of this chapter, one of the challenges remains how to extend our collaborative conversation beyond the disciplines that have been involved so far (socio-economic history, architectural/urban planning history and anthropology) to other fields such as Conflict and Development Studies, Medicine and Law. It is here that GAP offers a forum from which we could benefit more, as our collaborative work neatly fits the platform's agenda. For if we took one lesson from the 2007 workshop on urban history we co-organized at the UNIKIN in Kinshasa, it is that the most exciting, if challenging, context to work in is one where it is possible to start a dialogue between North and South across the boundaries of disciplines, academic cultures and generations.

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TWENTY FIVE YEARS FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH AND RIGHTS: SOME PROGRESS BUT STILL A LONG WAY TO GO

Marleen Temmerman

Department of Public Health and Primary Care, Ghent University, Belgium
& The Aga Khan University, Kenya
Former president of the Ghent Africa Platform (GAP)

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of 25 years women's health and rights, a difficult journey with steps forward and backwards since the landmark conference in 1994 when reproductive rights were for the first time on the menu. However, although great strides have been made in reducing maternal and child mortality since then, among others by the United Nations with the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals for 2015, showing that change is possible, many countries are still lagging behind in reaching the goals. While the new global architecture, in particular with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health, ensures that these issues remain high on the political agenda, this paper argues that we must move from political commitment to action, via the creation and dissemination of research evidence. As the Founding President of the Ghent Africa Platform (GAP) at Ghent University, I still believe GAP has an important role to play regarding this international collaboration and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

KEYWORDS: WOMEN'S HEALTH, WOMEN'S RIGHTS, REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, UN DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of 25 years women's and health an rights, a difficult journey with steps forward and backwards since the landmark conference in 1994 when reproductive rights were for the first time on the menu. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo articulated a bold new vision about the relationships between population, development and individual well-being. At the 1994 ICPD Conference, 179 countries adopted a forward-looking, 20-year Programme of Action that continues to serve as a comprehensive guide to people-centred development progress. The ICPD Programme of Action was remarkable in its recognition that reproductive health and rights, as well as women's empowerment and gender equality, are cornerstones of population and development programmes (1).

At the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established following the adoption of the United Nations Millen-

niun Declaration with eight international development goals for the year 2015 to be reached by the year 2015. Health was very central in the MDG agenda with 3 goals targeting health goals such as HIV, malaria, tuberculosis (MDG6), child health (MDG 4: to reduce the under 5 child mortality rate by two thirds between 1990 and 2015) and maternal health (MDG 5; to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters between 1990 and 2015 and achieve universal access to reproductive healthcare by 2015). It took another 7 years however, to adopt MDG5b which includes universal access to reproductive health care. In 2010, confronted with unacceptably high rates of maternal and child mortality, the UN secretary general called on the world to develop a strategy to improve maternal and child health in the world's poorest and high burden countries, starting with 49 low income countries. The 2010 Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health was a bellwether for a global movement and led to significant progress worldwide in women's and children's survival and health. The Every Woman Every Child movement that grew out of the Global Strategy mobilised stakeholders in all sectors to work towards shared goals. It fostered national leadership, attracted new resources and financial commitments, and created a worldwide movement of champions for the health and wellbeing of every woman and every child.

The year 2015 marked a defining moment for the health of women, children, and adolescents. It was not only the end point of the United Nations' millennium development goals (MDGs) and their transition to the sustainable development goals (SDGs), but also the 20th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development's plan of action and the Beijing Declaration and platform of action.

This was a moment of reflection as well as celebration. Although great strides have been made in reducing maternal and child mortality during the MDGs, showing that change is possible, many countries were still lagging behind in reaching goal 4 and goal 5, with vast inequities between and within countries

During the MDG era, good progress has been made towards realising the vision to end all preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths within a generation. Millions of lives have been saved, and progress towards the health related millennium development goals was accelerated. Child mortality fell by 49% and maternal mortality by 45% between 1990 and 2013. Strides forward were made in areas such as access to contraception and maternal and child health services, skilled attendance at births, reduced malnutrition, newborn interventions, management of childhood illnesses, immunisations, and combating HIV and AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis (2).

Reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health (RMNCH) has been a priority for both governments and civil society in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). This priority was affirmed by world leaders in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that called for countries to reduce child mortality by 67 percent and maternal mortality by 75 percent between 1990 and 2015. Although substantial progress on these targets has been made, few countries achieved the needed reductions. The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, launched in 2010 and expanded in 2015 to include adolescents, is an indication of the continued global

commitment to the survival and well-being of women and children (3).

Annual official development assistance for maternal, newborn, and child health has increased from US\$2.7 billion in 2003 to US\$8.3 billion in 2012, when there was an additional US\$4.5 billion for reproductive health (4). A continued focus on reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH) is needed to address the remaining considerable burden of disease in LMICs from unwanted pregnancies; high maternal, newborn, and child mortality and stillbirths; high rates of undernutrition; frequent communicable and noncommunicable diseases; and loss of human capacity (3). Cost-effective interventions are available and can be implemented at high coverage in LMICs to greatly reduce these problems at an affordable cost. RMNCAH encompasses health problems across the life course from adolescent girls and women before and during pregnancy and delivery, to new borns and children. An important conceptual framework is the continuum-of-care approach in two dimensions. One dimension recognizes the links from mother to child and the need for health services across the stages of the life course. The other is the delivery of integrated preventive and therapeutic health interventions through service platforms ranging from the community to the primary health center and the hospital (3).

The sexual and reproductive health and rights agenda

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are fundamental to people's health and survival, to economic development, and to the wellbeing of humanity. Several decades of research have shown – and continue to show – the profound and measurable benefits of investment in sexual and reproductive health. Through international agreements, governments have committed to such investment. Yet, progress has been stymied because of weak political commitment, inadequate resources, persistent discrimination against women and girls, and an unwillingness to address issues related to sexuality openly and comprehensively (5).

Health and development initiatives, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the movement toward universal health coverage, typically focus on particular components of SRHR: contraception, maternal and newborn health, and HIV/AIDS. Countries around the world have made remarkable gains in these areas over the past few decades, but the gains have been inequitable among and within countries, and services have often fallen short in coverage and quality. Moreover, in much of the world, people have insufficient access to a full set of sexual and reproductive health services, and their sexual and reproductive rights are not respected or protected. Acceleration of progress therefore requires adoption of a more holistic view of SRHR and tackling of neglected issues, such as adolescent sexuality, gender-based violence, abortion, and diversity in sexual orientations and gender identities.

Progress in SRHR requires confrontation of the barriers embedded in laws, policies, the economy, and in social norms and values – especially gender inequality – that prevent people from achieving sexual and reproductive health. Improvement of people's wellbeing depends on individuals' being able to make decisions about their own sexual and re-

productive lives and respecting the decisions of others. In other words, achieving sexual and reproductive health rests on realising sexual and reproductive rights, many of which are often overlooked – eg, the right to control one’s own body, define one’s sexuality, choose one’s partner, and receive confidential, respectful, and high-quality services.

To address these issues, The Lancet and Guttmacher Institute, decided to join forces and to set up a Commission to review evidence in the field of SRHR. The Guttmacher-Lancet Commission report presents evidence needed to review the scope of the unfinished SRHR agenda (5) Each year in developing regions, more than 30 million women do not give birth in a health facility, more than 45 million have inadequate or no antenatal care, and more than 200 million women want to avoid pregnancy but are not using modern contraception. Each year worldwide, 25 million unsafe abortions take place, more than 350 million men and women need treatment for one of the four curable sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and nearly 2 million people become newly infected with HIV. Additionally, at some point in their lives nearly one in three women experience intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. Ultimately, almost all 4.3 billion people of reproductive age worldwide will have inadequate sexual and reproductive health services over the course of their lives (5).

Other sexual and reproductive health conditions remain less well known but are also potentially devastating for individuals and families. Between 49 million and 180 million couples worldwide might be affected by infertility, for which services are mainly available only to the wealthy. An estimated 266 000 women die annually from cervical cancer even though it is almost entirely preventable. Men also suffer from conditions, such as STIs and prostate cancer, that go undetected and untreated because of social stigma and norms about masculinity that discourage them from seeking health care (5).

Key messages of the report include:

1. Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are essential for sustainable development because of their links to gender equality and women’s wellbeing, their impact on maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health, and their roles in shaping future economic development and environmental sustainability.
2. Everyone has a right to make decisions that govern their bodies, free of stigma, discrimination, and coercion. These decisions include those related to sexuality, reproduction, and the use of sexual and reproductive health services.
3. SRHR information and services should be accessible and affordable to all individuals who need them regardless of their age, marital status, socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
4. The necessary investments in SRHR per capita are modest and are affordable for most low-income and middle-income countries. Less-developed countries will face funding gaps, however, and will continue to need external assistance.
5. Countries should incorporate the essential services defined in this report into universal health coverage, paying special attention to the poorest and most vulnerable people.

6. Countries must also take actions beyond the health sector to change social norms, laws, and policies to uphold human rights. The most crucial reforms are those that promote gender equality and give women greater control over their bodies and lives

Role of research, evidence generation and knowledge sharing

As elaborated above, despite substantial progress during the Millennium Development Goals era, figures remain staggering: 303 000 women died due to pregnancy or child-birth-related causes in 2015 (6); 225 million women wanting to avoid pregnancy do not use safe and effective family planning (7); and 45% of all under-5 deaths happen during the neonatal period (8).

Accelerated efforts are needed to complete the unfinished agenda in reproductive, maternal, newborn and adolescent health and rights. The consolidated evidence base of what works in tackling poor RMNCAH has not overcome the gap in implementation, for neither cure nor prevention. Policy decisions should be informed by evidence, and for this we need more investment in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of high-quality data, together with a greater investment in implementation research to understand health systems and test solutions in a range of situations and contexts (9).

Inequity is a key factor to consider in RMNCAH research, particularly regarding adolescents and migrants. Innovative approaches are needed to ensure quality of care for adolescents for whom few specialised services are available, and for the large numbers of migrants with a documented lack of access to health services.

The *Global strategy for women's, children's and adolescents' health (2016–2030)* provides a roadmap for ending preventable deaths of women, children and adolescents by 2030 and helping them achieve their potential for and rights to health and well-being in all settings. The global strategy has three objectives: survive (end preventable deaths); thrive (ensure health and well-being); and transform (expand enabling environments). These objectives are aligned with 17 targets within nine of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), including SDG 3 on health and other SDGs related to the political, social, economic and environmental determinants of health and sustainable development (10).

The development of effective, innovative solutions requires collaboration between academic researchers from different disciplines, scientists, health care providers, and – perhaps most importantly – women, their families, and communities. The involvement of end users in identifying problems and solutions provides vital insights and increases the likelihood that solutions will be taken up at scale; their involvement should be part of the assessment criteria of any research proposal (9).

The new global architecture, with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health, ensures that RMNCAH remains high on the political agenda. However, we must move from political commitment to action, via the creation and dissemination of evidence (9).

The commitment of the research community should go beyond conducting and publishing research findings: from conception until the use of results, any research should be carried out in continuous partnership – with policy makers, politicians, development

partners, and the media – to ensure that evidence is properly translated into policy and practice. We are far from reaching the goal of safe pregnancy and childbirth for all women and girls, and of reaching sexual and reproductive health and rights in all countries. Research and innovation are essential ingredients for progress (9).

Stakeholders and development partners are called to leveraging their investment in research and innovation with new funding modalities aiming at mobilising new and innovative actors.

Partnerships is one of the 17 SDGs, key to reach the goals by 2030; the research community is a crucial partner moving the agenda forward with knowledge gathering and evidence creation and innovation.

As the Founding President of the Africa Platform at Ghent University (GAP) when it was established in 2007, I am proud and humbled to recognize and appreciate the role of GAP in international university collaboration, not only in the field of health but also in a wide variety of other research domains. As a truly academic platform, the Africa Platform unites all expertise on Africa available at the university and its associated colleges of higher education, and over the last decade it has had a considerable impact on fostering academic collaboration between Ghent University Association and African universities. GAP has brought academics together, across various disciplines and countries, it has inspired academics to engage in joint research, and it has motivated students to travel to Africa for fieldwork or teaching. These types of north-south collaboration are enriching for the different partners: they lead to stronger networks, to state-of-the-art science, and to more friendship, respect and understanding between academics across the globe. Regional platforms or networks such as the Africa Platform always have a positive impact on knowledge generation and research, and on partnering with non-academic stakeholders (NGOs, media, policy makers) when it comes to implementing research findings. All of this remains essential to address many of the world's challenges, of which reproductive health is a leading example.

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THE ROLE OF TREE DOMESTICATION IN GREEN MARKET PRODUCT VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Patrick Van Damme

Department of Plants and Crops, Ghent University, Belgium

Current president of the Ghent Africa Platform (GAP)

Internationally, there is increasing interest in acquiring 'green' market, organic and/or fair trade products, also sourced from the wild. The latter is expected to come from well-managed (forest) systems. This has led to the development and implementation of programmes designed to reduce deforestation and forest degradation (for mitigation of climate change, and sustainable provision of environmental goods and services) (REDD and REDD+). Crucially, this approach needs to be extended to the many poor, hungry and marginalized smallholder farmers in developing countries so that they can benefit from this increased market interest, but also to allow them to improve their natural resource (management) basis. In this context, agroforestry tree domestication has made considerable progress in the last 20 years, especially in Africa, in providing planting materials of many new tree crops for food, cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries and consumer markets across many agro-ecological zones. Tree domestication is an important element and the first necessary step in the development of sustainable tree production for introduction in agroforestry systems. These trees can then form the basis of Non-Timber Forest Production (NTFP) that can feed into livelihood development. In contrast to wild trees, planted trees can offer a more regular and continuous supply of NTFPs that then feed into local-to-global value chains and highly sophisticated markets that demand higher quality and greater uniformity. Together with research institutes, local farmers are now developing new, more performant cultivars of species of interest. They thus eventually help to create direct benefits from the processing and subsequent marketing of food and non-food products in local, regional and international markets. The latter activities also create business and employment opportunities in local cottage industries. Similarly, through the indirect environmental and ecological services provided by trees, food security can be greatly enhanced as agroforestry may improve the production environment of crops and thus close the yield gap (i.e. the difference between the potential and actual yield) of modern crop varieties. In this way, agroforestry adds income generation to agro-ecological approaches which together reverse the cycle of land degradation and social deprivation whilst at the same time transforming the lives of poor farmers. However, these benefits do not come without some risks: the loss of genetic diversity and local rights over genetic resources, and exploitation by unscrupulous entrepreneurs. Agroforestry developments should therefore focus on better access to 'green' business opportunities for poor smallholder farmers in Africa by maximizing the benefits and minimizing the risks.

KEYWORDS: AGROFORESTRY TREE PRODUCTS; GENETIC DIVERSITY; INDIGENOUS TREE SPECIES; LIVELIHOODS, REDD+

Introduction

Agroforestry tree domestication, especially as pursued by the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), is now entering its third decade. In the last 20 years, great progress was made as documented by Leakey *et al.* (2012). Advances were on two distinct levels. In a first stage, domestication consisted of a phase of field and laboratory research performed by formal research institutes, where new strategies and techniques were tested and developed, whereas the biology and genetics of target tree species were also studied in order to provide a better understanding of the potential for genetic selection to meet many different and new domestic and more international market opportunities (Leakey & Akinnifesi 2008; Leakey *et al.* 2012). In effect, this first phase was rather top-down. In a second phase, this whole domestication approach was implemented as a (more beneficiary-driven and thus) participatory process in which local communities are helped by so-called Rural Resource Centres to engage and innovate in ways that ensure that they are the beneficiaries and owners of their own initiatives, the latter consisting of planting useful tree species and integrating them in their farming systems (Tchoundjeu *et al.* 2010; Asaah *et al.* 2011; Leakey 2012c).

In Africa, in particular, where most of the traditional agricultural production systems integrate trees, animals and crops, and where most of the latter is small-scale, focusing on the tree component is of primordial importance. Hence this review on the role of tree domestication in small-farmer livelihood development.

Through the domestication and cultivation of little known wild trees producing common-property, Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) are transformed into agricultural crops producing AgroForestry Tree Products (AFTPs) (Leakey 2012b). The domestication process involves steps to (1) evaluate the ethnobotanical and socio-economic potential of the wild resource of useful species, (2) characterize and quantify the extent of genetic variation, (3) effectively capture and make salient use of genetic variation, and finally (4) determine how best to integrate the domesticates within a wide range of farming systems for greater social, economic and environmental benefits (Leakey 2012a).

More specifically, the domestication of indigenous tree species that produce traditionally and culturally important products ultimately leads to the introduction of these perennials in low-input agroforestry systems where they produce foods, medicines and other goods which are marketable in niche markets that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. These sustainably produced AFTPs and their associate environmental/ecological services can therefore be seen as contributing to 'green' markets that comprise:

- organic and locally grown food;
- 'health' and 'natural personal care' products;
- sustainably produced building materials (e.g. timber);
- complementary, alternative and preventive medicine (naturopathy, Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine, etc.); while also contributing to
- 'fair trade', eco-certification and sustainable eco-tourism.

Recognizing the merits and pull effect of 'demand-side economics' (Dixon & Richards, 2016), targeting and 'using' local, regional and international markets for AFTPs is vital for promoting successful adoption of agroforestry and agroforestry species on a suf-

ficiently large scale to have a meaningful economic, social and environmental impact. Importantly, making high quality germplasm available to farmers opens the way for the development of new niche markets, thus creating opportunities for rural communities to enter the cash economy.

Agricultural policies have traditionally (and erroneously) set their primary focus on promoting the supply side. However, it is important to ensure that supply does not exceed demand. Producers should also be aware of market expectations, especially in terms of the quality and timely delivery of products. Therefore, market expansion for organic ATFP foods will only be effective if the institutional set-up is adequate and enabling, and encompasses policy networks including organic farmers' associations, certification agencies and public authorities; and if it includes/is based on the provision of well-informed and -targeted R&D as well as educational efforts (know-how).

Ecosystem services markets¹ encompass a wide range of practices, such as watershed protection, the conservation and/or sustainable use of threatened species, etc. Currently, however, there is great interest in reducing measurable and verifiable greenhouse gas emissions and development of carbon markets, through a number of financial mechanisms, such as Reduction in Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), and the conservation and sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD⁺) (Moe & Rottereng, 2018). REDD consists of a set of steps designed to use market and financial incentives in order to reduce (or avoid) the emission of greenhouse gases, while REDD⁺ fosters improved forest management that helps reduce deforestation and enhances forest carbon stocks. The latter mechanisms can both be promoted through the introduction and adoption of agroforestry. Both REDD and in particular REDD⁺ operate in novel market environments which generate funding. They involve mechanisms that both combat climate change and improve human wellbeing in developing nations. Consequently, they represent a suite of policies, institutional reforms and programmes that provide monetary incentives for developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sustain economic growth by halting or preventing the destruction of forests.²

Agroforestry offers the potential to add tree-based REDD/REDD⁺ income generation to product marketing. In order to foster the latter, agroforestry embraces a holistic approach to rural development (Leakey & Asaah 2013). This process starts with the prioritization of the most important species through preference ranking exercises with key stakeholders and using ethnobotany as a source of use-information (Van Damme & Kindt 2011). This is followed by farmer-led identification and characterization of superior germplasm, and progresses through participatory tree domestication, to tree planting and sale of AFTPs (Leakey 2012a).

Generally speaking, many plants and animals have been domesticated by humankind through successive generations of selection and breeding. However, in the case of trees,

1 <http://www.green-markets.org/context.htm>

2 http://www.conservation.org/learn/climate/solutions/mitigation/pages/climate_redd.aspx

the conventional crop breeding approach takes a long time and gains are small in each generation. This is because of the long period from seed germination to the attainment of sexual maturity, and the out-breeding nature of trees that results in genetic segregation during sexual reproduction. Fortunately, however, plants are amenable to asexual regeneration which means that it is possible to produce multiple copies of a selected individual plant by rooting stem cuttings, or by grafting, budding or marcotting (air layering) techniques (Leakey 2004). Using these relatively simple techniques, it is possible to rapidly capture and multiply selected individuals as clones or cultivars (cultivated varieties). While these techniques have been known and used for thousands of years, they have only recently been applied to tropical and subtropical tree species that for many centuries have provided local people with traditionally important foods, medicines and other products for everyday use through gathering from wild tree stands. The success of these asexual regeneration techniques has highlighted the potential and also been the start of agroforestry tree domestication (Leakey 2012a).

From the outset a key element of the strategy used in this (basically ICRAF-led) domestication programme, has been to ask local, often resource-poor, farmers which species they would have liked to domesticate and what characteristics they would have liked to improve (Tchoundjeu *et al.* 2010; Asaah *et al.* 2011). In response to the first question (which species to domesticate), the majority of farmers, especially in Africa, have said that they would like to domesticate local fruit and nut species which are nutritionally important and which have local (and sometimes regional) markets (see *supra* for the two-phase approach showing where farmers participate in the domestication process). Regarding the second question (what characteristics to focus on), a common response is that they prefer earlier fruiting (shorter time to sexual maturation) and plants of short stature that facilitate ease of harvesting. Fortunately, both outcomes are easy to achieve when using vegetative propagation techniques by propagating material from the already mature crown of selected tree specimens that have the required or expected characteristics. Indeed, through vegetative propagation, one preserves the mother trees' features, whereas production of plants from seeds is less unambiguous as in many cases the 'father' is not known especially with cross-pollinating species.

Similarly, vegetative propagation techniques also make it easy to meet the needs of new and traditional, commercial markets for uniformity, quality and regularity of supply-characteristics which enhance the market price charged to the consumer, but also the prices that can be obtained by producers. Uniformity and quality are a direct response to and derive from clonal propagation, whereas regularity of supply should be the outcome of large-scale propagation of cultivars. The achievement of these targets is of great importance to maximizing the outcomes of the AFTP value chain, as these characteristics are of increasing importance with each successive step along the value chain: from local to global (Figure 1), and also for meeting the expectations of green and niche markets.

One of the specificities of agroforestry systems is that they build on and use symbiotic natural equilibria and mutualistic relationships to counter both abiotic and biotic stresses, and to make the most of environment and natural (soil) resources. Agroforests that

make no use of external (chemical) inputs are production options appropriate to and form an integral part of green marketing, but are also highly beneficial as approaches to sustainable intensification of tropical agriculture as they generate income, boost food and nutritional security; restore and maintain aboveground and below-ground biodiversity, as well as corridors between protected forests; serve as CH₄ sinks; maintain watershed hydrology; promote soil conservation (Pandey 2002), as well as having social benefits such as greater security over land tenure, enhanced gender equity and employment/business opportunities (Leakey 2013). Agroforests also mitigate demand for wood and reduce pressure on natural forests. Promotion of the woodcarving industry facilitates long-term carbon sequestration in artefacts whereas it also brings about new sequestration through intensified tree growth (following increased demand for these objects that basically 'have' to come from specific species). The potential delivery of all these benefits means that there is an urgent need to support the integration of agroforestry approaches to tropical agriculture through the development of suitable policies. This can be assisted by, and based on, robust country- and continent-wide scientific studies aimed at better understanding the potential of agroforestry and ethnoforestry for climate change mitigation and human well-being.

The domestication-commercialization continuum

a value chain usually starts with a producer who can ensure that the quality of the raw product sold at the 'farm gate' is as high (and uniform) as possible. This runs counter to the natural heterogeneity of products from wild tree populations. Many studies of tree-to-tree variation in a range of marketable AFTPs (fruits, nuts, kernel oils, food thickening agents, pharmaceuticals, perfumed essential oils and so on) have exhibited 3- to 10-fold variations in types and quality of end products (Van Damme *et al.*, 1999; Atangana *et al.* 2001; Anegebeh *et al.* 2003; Waruhiu *et al.* 2004; Leakey *et al.* 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2008; Assogbadjo *et al.* 2006; Scheldeman *et al.*, 2007; Page *et al.* 2010; Abasse *et al.* 2011; Atangana *et al.* 2011).

Interestingly, and as illustrated by the continuous nature of this intraspecific variation, there has been no strict indication of specific varieties within these AFTP populations (Leakey *et al.* 2012). Furthermore, it is only recently that work formally describing and characterizing specific ideotypes, or the so-called 'plus' germplasm, has been done (Leakey & Page 2006). However, the variability which, for example, is seen in any bulk load of fruits, is one of the major reasons why wholesale traders pay low prices to farmers, even though retail markets recognize this variability and charge customers more for the better (bigger and tastier) fruits (Leakey *et al.* 2002; De Caluwé *et al.* 2010a, 2010b; De Caluwé 2011). The market logic is such that it is not until traders can buy bulk loads of a standard quality (i.e. of a single cultivar) that there is the prospect of farmers receiving a better price for their 'farm gate' sales.³ This can be seen in products such as apples, pears, plums, etc., sold in shops and supermarkets in industrialized countries,

3 <https://www.wfp.org/content/farm-gate-price-monitoring-impact-countries-lesson-learned-2013-2014-pilot-april-2016>

but is also increasingly the case for lesser-known, so-called neglected and underutilized species such as cherimoya (*Annona cherimola*) as shown by the Cumbe case in Peru (Vanhove & Van Damme 2013). The latter authors found that value chain features such as market channels, chain governance, quality performance and the distribution of added value over the component links in the chain differ significantly between cherimoya fruits that are traditionally produced and marketed, versus those that are registered by a collective trademark, such as the ‘Cumbe’ variety. The latter is exported from its production area (Lima province in Peru) to neighbouring Andean countries, as graded and highly selected fruits with greater quality. This creates significant value for both producers and traders, while the former local (and traditional) cherimoyas have lower value due to their uneven and unpredictable quality. Studies on the genetic diversity of cherimoya in the countries of origin have stressed the necessity for conserving highly diverse (southern Ecuador and northern Peru) or rare (Bolivia) cherimoya germplasm as sources of within-species genetic (bio)diversity for broadening the breeding basis.

There are some concerns that commercial success of superior cultivars may lead to a loss of genetic diversity, which is understood as loss of variation in crops due to the modernization of agriculture (van de Wouw *et al.* 2009), and may occur when farmers who believe that quality is exclusively linked to a certain genotype purchase or exchange grafts from/between each other. Potentially, this is a risk, but currently the evidence suggests that this risk may not be as great as feared, as the possible concomitant genetic erosion has been minimal in species such as apples and grapes which have been cultivated and traded for hundreds of years (Gross & Miller 2014). In cutnut (*Barringtonia procera*), indigenous to the Pacific, more than 70% of the tree-to-tree variation in the Solomon Islands was found to occur at the level of a village population (Pauku *et al.* 2010). This is similar to high person-to-person variation seen in people at the village/town level, although genetic variability also includes elements attributable to specific races, tribes and families; in people we are familiar with the recognition of elite individuals as sporting heroes, beauty queens, Nobel Prize winners, Oscar winners, etc. In crops, similar recognition can be accorded to individual plants that meet the specific expectations or needs of a particular market due to their particular combination of a number of specific genetic traits – an ideotype (Leakey & Page 2006). To understand all these variations, studies have been conducted on a number of agroforestry trees to evaluate multi-trait variation using characterization web diagrams (Atangana *et al.* 2002; Leakey 2005; Simbo *et al.* 2013). To appreciate the potential, Leakey (2012a) has likened these opportunities to those captured by dog breeders from the genetic diversity of the wolf (von Holdt *et al.* 2012).

With regard to the risk of genetic erosion, the current approach in participatory domestication of agroforestry trees results in a number of cultivars of each species in each participating community. This means that the diversity in unselected traits will remain high across the production population of each species. This conclusion is supported by the findings from molecular studies of *Barringtonia procera* (Pauku *et al.* 2010) and *Adansonia digitata* (Assogbadjo *et al.* 2006) showing that trees with particular morphotypes are

not necessarily closely related. It would thus seem that the risk of genetic erosion is small, provided a wise domestication strategy is followed (Leakey & Akinnifesi 2008). There are already over 50 agroforestry tree species under some level of domestication (Leakey et al. 2012) and potentially hundreds, if not thousands, more could be domesticated in this way. As many tree species produce more than one useful or marketable product (e.g. *Garcinia kola*; Leakey 2012a; or *Vitex doniana*; Dadjo et al. 2012), it is also possible to identify a number of different trait combinations (e.g. fruit or nut ideotypes) within a single species, and sometimes within a particular product (e.g. oils for food, cosmetics and medicinal products from a nut). Thus, kernel oils with different chemical components or physical traits may have potential in pharmaceutical, cosmetic or food industries, leading to a hierarchy of ideotype selections (Leakey 2012a). Taking all this inter- and intra-specific diversity into account, the potential scale of the value chains emanating from the domestication of agroforestry trees is enormous and offers scope for new industries to dramatically change the economies of tropical societies and nations (Leakey 1999).

ICRAF's agroforestry tree domestication programme has now become global and is implemented in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Oceania. It thus represents a new wave of crop domestication, focused on improving the livelihoods of farmers and the national economies of developing countries in general, and these of Africa in particular (Leakey 2012c; Leakey & Asaah 2013). Another potential risk arising from successful domestication, however, is that unscrupulous entrepreneurs seeing the market potential of domesticated cultivars with marked quality characteristics will try to circumvent or undermine the initiatives of poor rural communities engaged in tree domestication (Leakey & Izac 1996). To try to minimize this risk, Lombard and Leakey (2010) have proposed the development of a register of farmer-derived cultivars, with a GPS location for the mother tree and a DNA 'fingerprint' of the clone. The need to match supply (tree domestication and cultivation) with demand (tree product commercialization) means that domestication initiatives need to be matched with marketing initiatives all along the value chain from the local to the global scales. Currently, the domestication initiatives in agroforestry are mostly at a local scale. Consequently, much focus is on the development of cottage industries conditioning, drying and packaging tree products for local and some regional markets (Asaah et al. 2011; Leakey & Asaah 2013). These initiatives are aimed at moving the place of many tree products from the traditional street markets towards new business opportunities. This process involves trying to engage local community members as new entrepreneurs and initiate small- and medium-scale enterprises, thereby creating employment in value-addition and associated activities, such as the local fabrication of simple processing equipment (Leakey & Asaah 2013; Mbosso et al. 2015).

However, in addition, there are also some marketing initiatives that are running ahead of domestication, in which the trade in processed tree products to regional and international markets has preceded domestication. These initiatives face the risk that demand may be restricted by low quality, lack of uniformity and unreliable supply. At the global level, there is also a small number of commercial initiatives involving tree products. These are

Public-Private Partnerships in which multinational companies are working directly with local communities in developing countries (Leakey 2012a). One of these involves Unilever plc. and communities in Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania that are domesticating *Allanblackia* spp. as a new oil crop for margarine production (Jamnadass et al. 2010) on account of its unique fatty acid content which displays considerable tree-to-tree variation in oleic and stearic acid composition (Atangana et al. 2011; Tsoheng et al. 2016).

Towards sustainable and multifunctional agriculture

It has recently been suggested that agroforestry can be used to close the so-called yield gap (i.e. the difference between the potential yield of modern crop varieties and the yield actually achieved by poor smallholder farmers in the tropics and sub-tropics; Leakey 2012a, 2012b). Indeed, in a well-managed agroforestry systems, trees are seen as complementing crop production, not as competing with them.

This could be achieved by a three-step process involving: (i) the restoration of soil fertility and the rehabilitation of agro-ecological functions of the production environment; (ii) tree domestication; and (iii) the commercialization of agroforestry tree products. Moreover, it is recognised that in this way agroforestry is capable of improving food and nutritional security, poverty alleviation and rehabilitation of degraded land so that new areas of forest do not need to be cleared for the expansion of agriculture to feed the growing human population. In other words, agroforestry can deliver Multifunctional Agriculture, in which outputs are the enhanced production of crops and livestock in ways that are environmentally, socially and economically much more sustainable than those from conventional farming practices (Leakey 2012a, 2012b). Seen from this perspective, the role of tree domestication in value chain development takes on very high priority in the rural development of tropical and subtropical countries.

Towards a resilient green market for agroforestry tree products and agroforestry systems

Developing good-quality germplasm material for a broad range of green markets is one thing. However, making these markets function is another. REDD and similar approaches to marketing for reduced carbon and greenhouse gas emission are becoming increasingly global, and are being promoted by national governments and international organizations. As such, REDD+ can act as an incentive to plant more trees as it compensates/rewards farmers and farmer organisations who do so. At local levels, however, there is some scepticism and dissent based on the fact that very often REDD/REDD+-like systems often lead to the inequitable delivery of benefits to the wrong stakeholders. Nevertheless, the general thrust of current negotiations is towards increasing acceptance by producer groups, and the improvement of current compensation schemes that involve most or all of the stakeholders. To avoid the kind of negative outcomes seen in earlier reforestation schemes, REDD+ must incorporate the following: rights-based spatial planning; equitable and accountable distribution of financial incentives; improved financial governance to prevent corruption and fraud; policy reform to remove perverse incentives for forest

conversion; and the strengthening of economic benefits and safeguards for smallholders, e.g. such as the use of multi-purpose tree species (Barr & Sayer 2012).

As mentioned earlier, AFTPs occurring in resource-poor farming systems are by default – for socio-economic reasons – generally organic, and thus well-fitted for introduction into green and fair trade markets. There are, however, a number of elements that may constrain sustainable AFTP market development. These, for example, are the inadequacy of transportation facilities, communication systems, financial capital or access to credit, market information and linkages, and limited knowledge about AFTP market and market information among households. The latter is limited, rendered deficient and significantly influenced by socio-economic factors such as household members' education, gender, income level and ethnicity, and the distance to market and road access.

However, local AFTP markets can offer many inspiring and motivating advantages. Local markets exist and may be relatively large, while export markets often have to be developed *ex nihilo*. Local markets are relatively stable and guaranteed, while export markets are often fickle, unstable and frequently demonstrate 'boom and bust' characteristics. Participants in local markets are often independent, whereas export markets may suffer from dependencies which increase the risk of the loss of benefit to poor producers and the collapse of demand if any of the actors withdraw. Another problem can be the sophisticated requirements of export markets for levels of processing, quality control and grading that are beyond the capacities of local producers. By comparison, local markets are relatively unregulated and involve less bureaucracy. In addition, the lower value of goods sold in local markets poses a lower risk of take-over by wealthy businessmen or displacement by large-scale, capital-intensive producers. All told, therefore, local markets have lower entry barriers compared to export markets, as there is a minimal requirement for intervention and capital investment to support local trade and enhance livelihood benefits. This allows poor, unskilled and marginalized community members to engage in – and learn – the trade.

The cultural value of many local and traditionally traded products also provides market stability and can be used to expand markets amongst urban communities with strong rural roots. Many of these products have value in local markets which may be unknown in export markets which tend to be socially and geographically foreign. In addition, local market dynamics are adapted to the situations of remote areas where supply and demand are in better balance as production, and thus offer, usually responds to concrete local demand patterns. Participation in these local markets may also give producers greater control, as they can set their own prices, sell where and to whom they wish, and determine their own work pace to fit in with other household activities. Local producers and traders therefore understand the needs of the market and its quality standards and expectations. Last but not least, local markets are accessible and close to producers/traders thus reducing transaction costs relative to export markets (Shackleton *et al.* 2007).

However, there are some disadvantages to local markets. For example, they may show limited potential for growth or grow more slowly than export markets and can quickly become saturated. This limits the opportunities for new entrants and can thus constrain

the expansion of individual businesses and hence limit income generation. Local markets may also have poor external visibility and so are often neglected by policy makers and development planners. Low visibility can also result in inadequate research and development support (e.g. extending shelf life, resource ecology and management) relative to emerging internationally marketed products. Other constraints can include a lack of technology, credit, contacts or skills needed to develop business opportunities. Rural areas may have scant access to market intelligence and may be beholden to historical trade patterns with less potential for product diversification to reduce risk of market collapse in the long run. Producers supplying these local markets are often dispersed over large areas making it difficult to target interventions and build collaboration. In these areas, informal traders may face problems establishing themselves in the market place and frequently encounter harassment; furthermore, the conditions under which they operate are often poor.

In conclusion, producers supplying local markets may be constrained from performing all or most functions along the trade chain (Shackleton *et al.* 2007). Nevertheless, the horizontal integration of a value chain offers opportunities for more control, the realization of more benefits and lower levels of dependency. At the same time, consumers located near local markets are often poor and have limited purchasing power keeping prices low. Products in specialized export markets can often fetch high prices. There may be few buyers in local markets for producers who are creative and produce high quality, unusual goods. Local markets are often located in marginalized areas characterized by poorly developed transport and communication.

Given all these potential benefits, but also in the face of the constraints faced by the commercialization of AFTPs, there is a need to raise the status of local and national AFTP trade. Shackleton *et al.* (2007) suggest that this can be done by:

- integrating tree products into national surveys for statistical documentation of volumes and values generated by agricultural and forest goods, and into household income and expenditure surveys;
- communicating trade statistics to increase awareness of the size, value and significance of the trade amongst key stakeholders such as traditional authorities, local government structures and municipalities, conservation agencies, forestry officials, retailers, consumers and the general public;
- seeking political backing for the local and national trade in important indigenous products;
- raising the status of collectors/producers/extractors and remove associated stigmas;
- recognizing, affirming and facilitating development based on existing/traditional knowledge;
- identifying and supporting cultural links to forest products;
- promoting locally produced products through, e.g., special markets, fairs, etc.;
- facilitating multi-stakeholder fora to support development of AFTP markets;
- seeking to integrate AFTPs with other development sectors to form part of a holistic approach to development and poverty alleviation – AFTPs on their own are often limited in their potential for livelihood support and other forms of income generation are also necessary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, important strides are being taken in agroforestry to initiate integrated rural development approaches which transform many tree-based food and non-food products, which were formerly harvested from the wild, into new sophisticated market commodities for local, regional and sometimes even international markets. Furthermore, this is being done in ways which also improve the sustainability of tropical agriculture by reversing the complex set of interacting environmental, social and economic factors which cause the downward spiral of land degradation and social deprivation that traps millions of farmers in poverty, malnutrition and hunger. By focusing on all the links in the value chain, this approach is also creating opportunities for poor rural communities to get onto the bottom rungs of the ladder into the cash economy by creating opportunities for the development of cottage industries and the service industries which support them. This approach also opens up the opportunity to benefit from payments for environmental services, such as carbon markets and the environmental and social product certification schemes, that flow from more environmentally and socially sustainable agriculture.

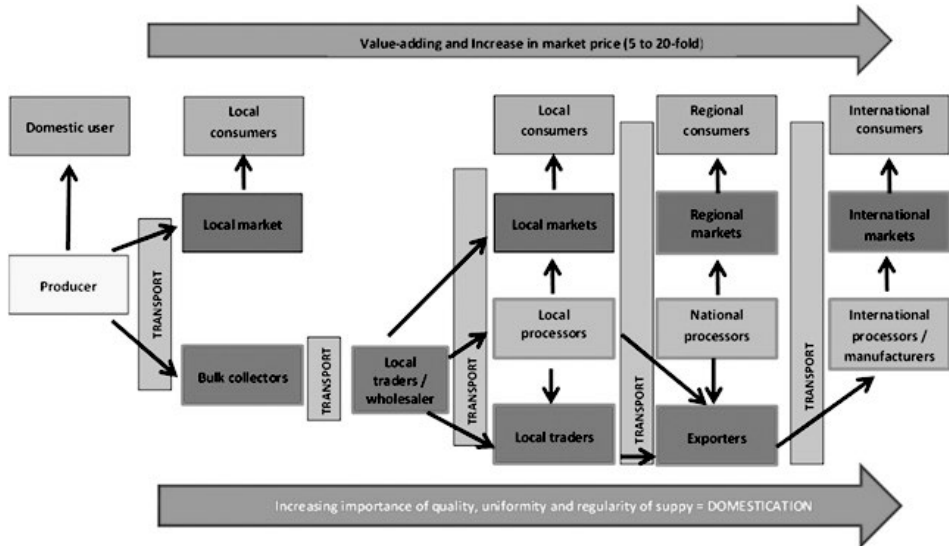


Figure 1: Domestication and the value chain: domestication becomes increasingly important with each step from local to global because of the increasing need for product uniformity, quality and regularity of supply – criteria which are associated with increasing market price.

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REGREENING OF THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIAN MOUNTAINS: EFFECTS ON FLOODING AND ON WATER BALANCE

Tesfaalem G. Asfaha (1,2), Michiel De Meyere (2), Amaury Frankl (2), Mitiku Haile (3), Jan Nyssen (2)

(1) Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Mekelle University, Ethiopia

(2) Department of Geography, Ghent University, Belgium

(3) Department of Land Resources Management and Environmental Protection, Mekelle University, Ethiopia

The hydro-geomorphology of mountain catchments is mainly determined by vegetation cover. This study was carried out to analyse the impact of vegetation cover dynamics on flooding and water balance in 11 steep ($0.27\text{-}0.65\text{ m m}^{-1}$) catchments of the western Rift Valley escarpment of Northern Ethiopia, an area that experienced severe deforestation and degradation until the first half of the 1980s and considerable reforestation thereafter. Land cover change analysis was carried out using aerial photos (1936, 1965 and 1986) and Google Earth imaging (2005 and 2014). Peak discharge heights of 332 events and the median diameter of the 10 coarsest bedload particles (Max_{10}) moved in each event in three rainy seasons (2012-2014) were monitored. The result indicates a strong reduction in flooding ($R^2 = 0.85$, $P < 0.01$) and bedload sediment supply ($R^2 = 0.58$, $P < 0.05$) with increasing vegetation cover. Overall, this study demonstrates that in reforesting steep tropical mountain catchments, magnitude of flooding, water balance and bedload movement is strongly determined by vegetation cover dynamics.

KEY WORDS: HYDRO-GEOMORPHOLOGY, REFORESTATION, CREST STAGE, PEAK DISCHARGE, BEDLOAD

Introduction

The northern Ethiopian highlands have long been subjected to severe land degradation (Hurni, 1988; Gebresamuel *et al.*, 2009; Nysen *et al.*, 2015) mainly due to deforestation, overgrazing, impoverishment of the farmers, erosive rains, steep slopes and limited agricultural intensification (Nyssen *et al.*, 2008) as well due to the recurring droughts in the second half of the 20th century. Due to the severity of the degradation, several hydrogeomorphologic features, including dense gully and river networks have developed throughout the region (Frankl *et al.*, 2011; Yitbarek *et al.*, 2012). In the western Rift valley escarpment in particular, the severity of land degradation is evident in the development of dense gullies and scar networks in the steep slopes transporting high levels of discharge and sediment, including very large boulders, down to the Raya graben. Consequently, devastating flood events claimed the lives of many people and livestock up to the mid-1980s. To reverse the problem and specifically protect Alamata town and many villages of the

Raya graben from flooding, several rehabilitation interventions were initiated in the second half of the 1980s which comprised both physical structures and reforestation measures including the establishment of exclosures on highly degraded steep slopes (Asefa *et al.*, 2003; Nyssen *et al.*, 2010; Nysen *et al.*, 2015) and abandonment of farming and resettlement of people who lived in the severely degraded catchments. In particular the establishment of exclosures (previously degraded areas that are protected from agriculture and grazing to facilitate rapid rehabilitation), have been one of the most effective ways of pursuing vegetation regeneration in the region (Aerts *et al.*, 2003; Descheemaeker *et al.*, 2006). Consequently, the vegetation cover of many of the previously degraded catchments has been improved (Nyssen *et al.*, 2008) (Figure 1) which in turn has resulted in several hydrogeomorphic changes.

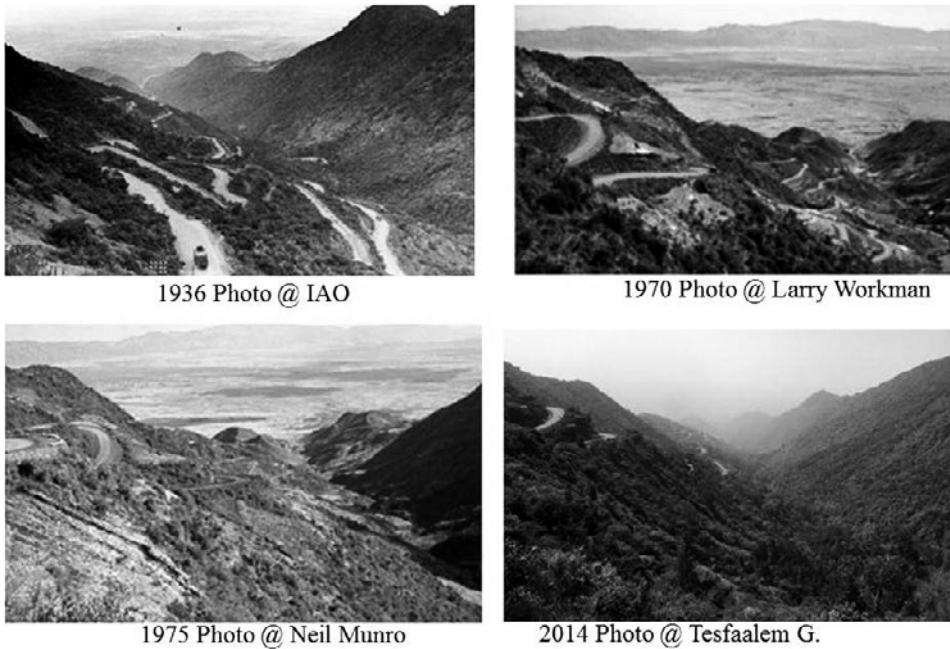


Figure 1: Incidental series of repeat photographs of Gira Kahsu catchment shows expansion of agricultural land up to 1975 and dramatic reforestation thereafter.

Many researchers in the region have reported on the role of the improved vegetation cover in reducing the amount of discharge and sediment production from rehabilitated catchments. A study by Descheemaeker *et al.* (2006) showed a significant reduction in runoff after rehabilitation of small exclosed catchments while Nyssen *et al.* (2010) reported a reduction of direct runoff volume after catchment management. In their study Frankl *et al.* (2011) found gully systems to be partially stabilized. However, the impact of changes in vegetation cover on the hydrogeomorphic characteristics of steep mountain catchments, and particularly on flooding and water balance, has not been sufficiently studied in the western Rift Valley escarpment of Ethiopia.

Objectives

The main objective of this study was to analyze the dynamics of flooding and water balance in response to vegetation cover change in the western Rift Valley escarpment of Northern Ethiopia. The study had the following five specific objectives:

- Analysis of the role of reforestation interventions on minimizing land degradation,
- Investigation of land cover changes over the last eight decades (1936-2014),
- Analysis of variability in peak discharge in relation to spatial rainfall variability, vegetation cover and physiographic factors,
- Analysis of bedload dynamics in relation to peak discharge, vegetation cover, rainfall variability and physiographic factors, and
- Examination of major stream channel adjustments in relation to spatial variability in rainfall distribution, vegetation cover, peak discharge and stream bedload dynamics.

The study area

The study area consists of a section of the western Rift Valley escarpment of Northern Ethiopia. First, 20 adjacent catchments, which had been severely degraded up to the mid-1980s and were later reforested to various degrees, were selected for analyzing the role of reforestation interventions in minimizing land degradation in the western Rift Valley escarpment of Northern Ethiopia. Based on the result, 11 catchments were selected for detail analysis (Figure 2). The catchments contained contrasting vegetation cover (ranging from 4 - 58%), which fully represent the diverse characteristics of the catchments in the western Rift Valley escarpment in terms of vegetation cover, geomorphology, land rehabilitation, settlement and other land uses..

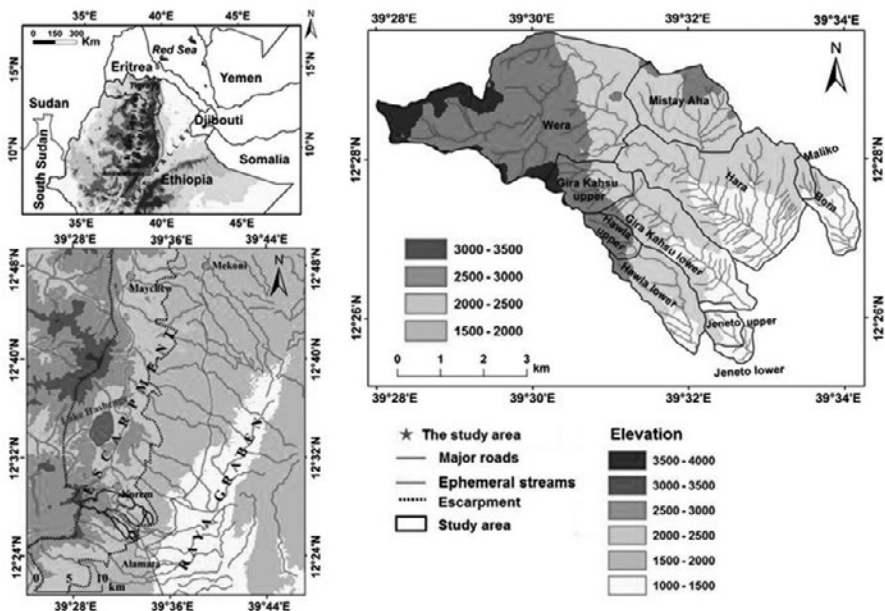


Figure 2: Location map of the study area.

Location

The study area (12°20' and 12°30' and 39°27' and 39°35') is found in the Southern zone of Tigray region of Northern Ethiopia on the edge of the western Rift Valley escarpment (Figure 1). Specifically, the study catchments are found in Ofla wereda (93%) and Raya Alamata (7%) wereda of the southern Tigray region.

Lithology and geomorphology

The lithology of the study area is composed of Cenozoic volcanic rocks consisting of the Hashenge formation, the Alaje formation and the Aiba basalts (Berhe *et al.*, 1987; GSE, 1996).

The elevation of the catchments ranges from 1549 to 3140 m a.s.l., and the average catchment slope gradient ranges from 0.27 to 0.65 m m⁻¹. Even at the highest elevations, no frost occurs and there was no glacial or periglacial activity during the Pleistocene (Hendrickx *et al.*, 2015). The escarpment drains towards the east and ephemeral mountain streams turn into braided river systems when reaching the Raya graben floor (Billi, 2007; Biadgilgn *et al.*, 2015) (Figure 2).

| Catchment | Area (km ²) | Slope gradient (m m ⁻¹) | Perimeter (km) | Elevation (m a.s.l.) | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|------|------|
| | | | | Max | Min | Mean |
| Wera | 12.52 | 0.28 | 18.34 | 3140 | 2332 | 2748 |
| Mistay Aha | 3.79 | 0.27 | 8.12 | 2636 | 2282 | 2422 |
| Hara | 24.47 | 0.34 | 28.46 | 3140 | 1592 | 2477 |
| G. Kahsu upper | 1.87 | 0.52 | 5.97 | 3085 | 2099 | 2666 |
| G.Kahsu lower | 5.89 | 0.50 | 14.20 | 3085 | 1705 | 2276 |
| Hawla upper | 0.83 | 0.54 | 3.90 | 2920 | 2299 | 2628 |
| Hawla lower | 3.38 | 0.57 | 9.68 | 2920 | 1856 | 2272 |
| Jeneto upper | 0.62 | 0.58 | 3.16 | 2165 | 1711 | 1910 |
| Jeneto lower | 1.0 | 0.50 | 4.08 | 2165 | 1677 | 1869 |
| Maliko | 0.36 | 0.65 | 2.66 | 2420 | 1884 | 2184 |
| Bora | 1.76 | 0.51 | 6.28 | 2414 | 1549 | 1920 |

Table 1: Basic topographic characteristics of the catchments.

Soil

The catchments under investigation have five soil types. Eutric Cambisols, Lithic Lep-tosols, Eutric Regosols, Pellic Vertisols and Eutric Nitosols. Moreover, some parts of the catchments are severely degraded up to the bed rock (MoA, 2003).

Population distribution

According to the 2007 population and housing census report of the Ethiopian central statistical authority (CSA), Tigray region had a total population of 4,316,988 (CSA, 2008).

This was projected to increase to 5,055,999 by 2015 (CSA, 2013). There is great variability in population size among the administrative zones in the region where in 2007, 29% (1,245,824) of the total population was found in the central Tigray zone followed by 23% (1,006,504) in the southern Tigray zone. Excluding the urban areas, Ofra wereda, which constitutes 93% of the study area is one of the most populous weredas in the southern Tigray region next to Hintalo Wejerat and Raya Azebo Weredas. Similarly, in terms of population density, next to Alaje and Endamekoni weredas, Raya Alamata and Ofra weredas (where 7% and 93% of the study catchments are found respectively) are the most populous weredas in the zone. These weredas have higher density than the zone itself.

| Place | Population size | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| | 2007 ^a | 2015 ^b | Density (person Km ⁻²) ^c |
| Tigray regional state | 4,316,988 | 5,055,999 | 122 |
| North western Tigray zone | 736,805 | 848,021 | 60 |
| Central Tigray zone | 1,245,824 | 1,431,672 | 138 |
| Eastern Tigray zone | 755,343 | 883,860 | 142 |
| Western Tigray zone | 356,598 | 418,756 | 30 |
| Mekelle city special zone | 215,914 | 323,700 | 2960 |
| Southern Tigray zone | 1,006,504 | 1,149,990 | 115 |
| Seharti Samre wereda* | 124,340 | 139,479 | 81 |
| Enderta wereda* | 114,297 | 124,784 | 92 |
| Hintalo wejerat wereda* | 153,505 | 172,452 | 89 |
| Alaje wereda | 107,972 | 120,989 | 158 |
| Endamekoni wereda | 84,739 | 93,716 | 153 |
| Raya Azebo wereda | 135,870 | 154,861 | 88 |
| Raya Alamata wereda | 85,403 | 95,094 | 133 |
| Ofra wereda | 126,889 | 138,563 | 128 |
| Maychew/town/wereda | 23,419 | 35,067 | 2166 |
| Korem/town wereda | 16,856 | 25,190 | 2247 |
| Alamata/town/wereda | 33,214 | 49,795 | 3943 |

a based on the 2007 population and housing census report

b projections based on the 2007 population and housing census report

c calculated based on the projected population in column 3.

* these weredas are now in the South Eastern Tigray zone which was established after the 2007 population and housing census

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the study area.

Materials and methods

Analyzing the role of reforestation interventions on minimizing land degradation

As a first approach, analysis of the impact of reforestation interventions on minimizing land degradation was carried out on 20 adjacent catchments by (i) examining the relationship between land degradation as represented by density of scar networks and

vegetation cover as represented by Normalized Difference Vegetation Cover (NDVI) as well as major topographic variables (slope gradient and slope aspect); and (ii) by identify the major stream channel adjustments occurring in response to catchment scale vegetation cover changes.

The mean NDVI values of each catchment were computed from Landsat satellite image (Thematic Mapper) of 25 December 2010 while all scars on the steep slopes of the 20 catchments were mapped on Google Earth imagery (0.6 m resolution acquired in October 2005) and were processed in GIS to examine the status of land degradation in each catchment. The topographic characteristics of the catchments were computed from a 30 m resolution digital elevation model (DEM). Detail field observation and interviews with local communities were used to identify the major stream channel adjustments that had occurred in response to vegetation cover changes.

Analyzing long term land cover changes over eight decades (1936-2014)

Based on the analysis of the role of reforestation interventions on minimizing land on 20 adjacent catchments, 11 study catchments with contrasted vegetation cover were selected for detail analysis. Hence, long term land cover change analysis was carried out from both black-and-white aerial photos (1936, 1965 and 1986) and high resolution Google Earth imaging (2005 and 2014) complemented with detail field verifications. The digitization process was carried out on screen using ArcGIS and stereoscopes were used to supplement the mapping process.

Analyzing variability of peak discharge in relation to precipitation variability and vegetation cover

— *Monitoring precipitation variability*

Peak discharge is an important variable that best explains the hydrological characteristics of mountain streams. Hence, the run off response of the 11 catchments was analyzed using peak discharge events which were monitored over three rainy seasons (2012-2014) in 11 stations. In any hydrological analysis, it is crucial to have data on the spatio-temporal distribution of precipitation across catchments (Volkman *et al.*, 2010), which is usually done from ground based rain gauge networks (Villarini *et al.*, 2008). Hence, seven non-recording rain gauges (opening diameter = 20 cm) were installed to collect the amount of precipitation events over three years (2012 – 2014) (Figure 3). Measurements were made once a day (6:00PM). The locations of the rain gauges were selected based on geographic spread, topography, altitude and accessibility (WMO, 2008), giving a density of one rain gauge per 5.2 km². This allowed for accurate representations of spatial variability of rainfall (Volkman *et al.*, 2010). The station precipitation data were converted in to a daily precipitation map (Villarini *et al.*, 2008) using the Thiessen Polygon method (National Weather Service, 1999) and finally, total annual rainfall of the stations and area-weighted average daily precipitation over the catchments (P_d) were calculated. The precipitation events together with vegetation cover of 2014 were used to explain the variability in runoff of response of the catchments.

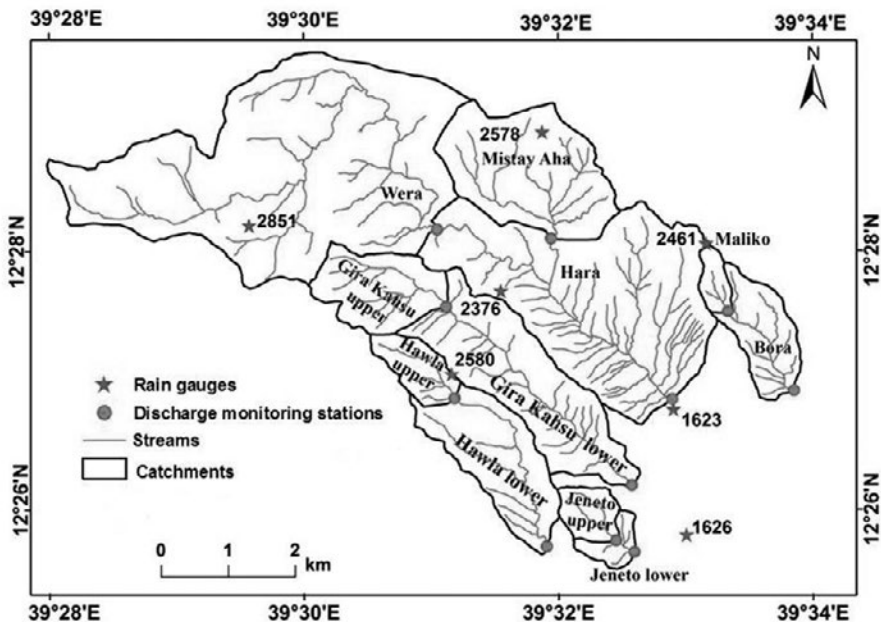


Figure 3: Monitoring stations for rainfall, peak discharge and bedload.

— *Calculation of peak discharge*

Runoff response of catchments can be directly measured in different conventional ways. In the case of mountainous streams, however, direct measurement during the floods presents many challenges mainly due to the flash rate of the flow and its destructive character (WMO, 2008; Lumbroso and Gaume, 2012). Hence, it is frequently impossible or impractical to measure the peak discharges when they occur because of conditions beyond human control (Rantz, 1982). When such conditions occur, peak discharges in steep mountain streams are indirectly estimated after floods (Lumbroso and Gaume, 2012). In the current study, peak stage discharges were measured in the rainy seasons of 2012, 2013 and 2014 using 11 crest stage gauges (Waltermeyer, 2008) (Figure 4) which were installed in the outlets of the catchments.

The peak stage data were collected after runoff events (Figure 5). Each station was visited at least once a week on a rotational basis whereby recorded peak stage was associated with the largest precipitation event in the intervening period and a total of 332 measurements were carried out. Based on the daily peak stage data, peak discharge events were computed using the Manning’s equation which is the most commonly used hydraulic technique for estimating open channel flow for uncalibrated section (Jarrett, 1984; Lumbroso and Gaume, 2012; Karalis et al., 2014):



Figure 4: Crest stage gauge (A), sawdust being placed in the bowl of the lower cap before and after measuring peak stage (B), remnants of sawdust on wood staff indicating the highest peak stage of the flood (C), and wood staff being cleaned for the next flood (D).



Figure 5: Intensive rainfall event of 21.1 mm (occurred in a very short period) in Wera' catchment (23/8/2013) produced a strong flash flood of $128 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ at the monitoring station. Crest stage gauge appears in the middle of the opposite bank.

Analyzing bedload supply and movement

The rapid, deep, turbid, and turbulent character of the flows, as well as large roughness elements and uneven bed topography usually make direct measurement of bedload transport in mountain streams very difficult (Wohl, 2000). In this study, due to the flash nature of the stream flows and the fact that peak discharges usually occur in the late afternoon or at night, variability in bedload supply and entrainment were studied by measuring the size of the 10 coarsest bedload particles (Max10) moved by peak discharge events.

Benchmarks were painted on largest bed materials, which are relatively stable, or bed rock outcrops which hardly move by runoff as reference points. Photographs were taken before and after peak flow event from fixed direction and are used to identify the new bedload particles deposited inside the polygons delimited by benchmarks (Figure 6). The average intermediate diameters of the newly deposited 10 coarsest bedload particles (Max10) were measured in situ using a tape measure. To avoid measurement errors and bias, an average of five measurements were taken per stream bed particle. While we tried to take vertical photographs (to facilitate measurement via photo) by positioning a camera directly over the areas between the painted large boulders, we found that in the lower stations where the stream cross-sections were wider (up to 30 meters in Hara station), it was difficult to take vertical photos and this led to significant distortions. Moreover, some materials were obscured by overlying grains and grass (Church *et al.*, 1987). Hence, only in situ measurements were used for the sake of accurate measurements while the photos were used to identify the newly moved bedload particle in peak discharge events.

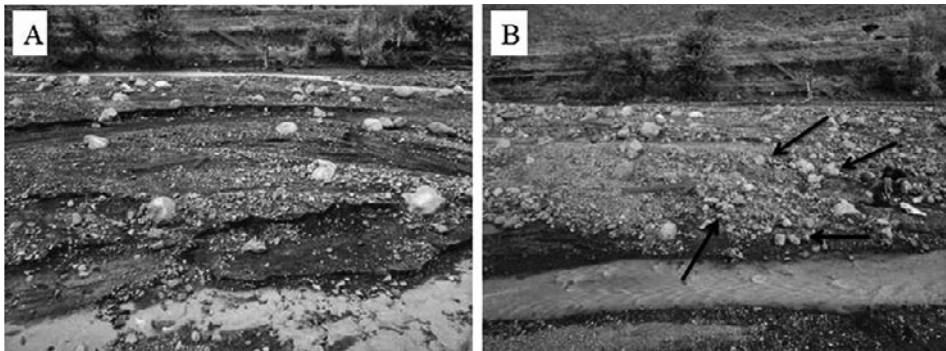


Figure 6: Hara monitoring station: photographs of bed materials (A) taken before (photographed on 19/7/2012) and (B) after a flood event (re-photographed on 20/7/2012). Black arrows indicate some of the new coarsest bed load particles moved, blue arrows indicate crest stage gauge and red arrows indicate tape meter (diameter = 20 cm) used as a scale for the size of the bedloads moved.

In addition, in order to analyze the characteristics of the stream bed particles at the monitoring stations, stream bed particle sampling was carried out using the Wolman's (1954) pebble count method, which is the most widely used and the most efficient technique (Harelsion *et al.*, 1994). Stream bed particles were sampled systematically at every 30 cm interval both before and after the rainy season (Figure 7).

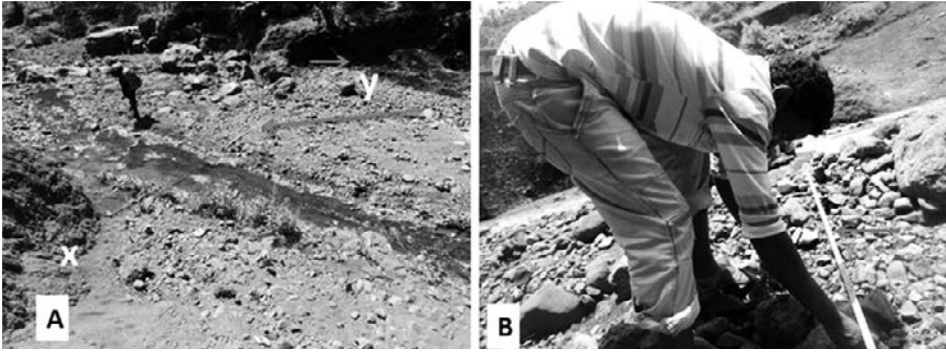


Figure 7: Systematic pebble counting in Wera' station; measuring tape stretched along the stream (A), x and y indicate painted benchmarks for starting the pebble count before and after the rainy season. An assistant researcher, measuring the stream bed particles at every 30 cm interval (B).

Finally, the average size of the 10 coarsest bedload particles (Max_{10}) moved in each peak discharge event was explained by various biophysical and hydraulic variables such as vegetation cover of the catchment, scar density, average catchment slope gradient, catchment area, hypsometric integral, as well as by hydraulic variables such as peak discharge (Q_p), stream power (Ω) and critical shear stress (τ_c).

Analysis of stream channel geomorphologic changes over eight decades (1936-2014)

Stream channel geomorphologic adjustments were analyzed by mapping the geomorphologic changes of stream channels using aerial photos (1936, 1965 and 1986) and Google Earth images (2005 and 2014) as well as field measurements. The changes were explained in relation to vegetation cover changes, peak discharge and other biophysical variables. Investigation of active and inactive stream channels; boulder bars, abandoned channels, terraces, incised channels as well as changes in the width of the stream channels were carried out for the main streams of the 11 catchments during the detail geomorphological survey. Locations of the major geomorphologic changes were collected using hand held Garmin Global Positioning System (GPS) (resolution = 7 m) and were mapped using the 2005 and 2014 Google Earth images (0.6 m resolution). Local informants who have knowledge about the historical changes in the vegetation cover and its impact on flooding and boulder supply to the streams were involved during the field campaign. Channel morphological changes were monitored over three years (2012-2014) at the outlets of the eleven stations selected for monitoring of peak discharge and bedload particle movement.

Results and discussion

The implications of integrated catchment rehabilitation on minimizing land degradation

Analysis of the level of land rehabilitation in 20 adjacent catchments by correlating density of scar networks (mapped on Google Earth imagery of 2005) and vegetation cover as represented by Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) reveals that the density of scar networks was negatively related to NDVI ($R^2 = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$) and positively with the steepest slope gradients of catchments ($> 60\%$) ($R^2 = 0.21$, $p < 0.05$) (Figure 8). Generally, this result indicates that the reforestation intervention which led to improvements in vegetation cover contributed to the reductions in the levels of degradation of the catchments, whereas the positive relationship between the density of scar networks and slope gradient shows the highest susceptibility of steep mountain catchments to land degradation (Tesfaalem et al., 2016).

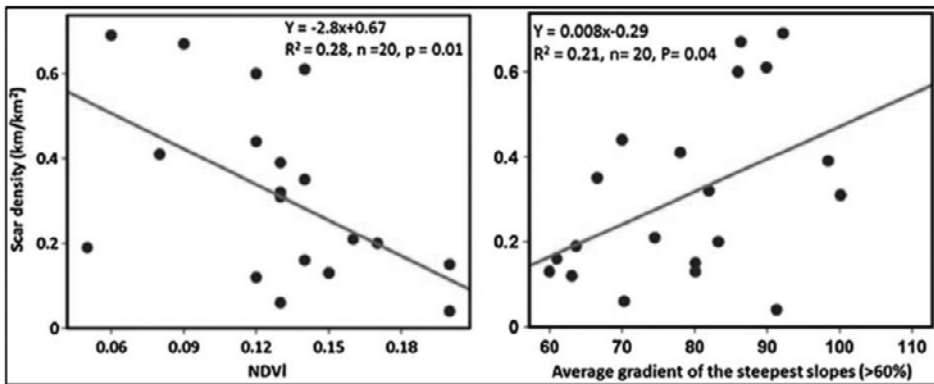


Figure 8: Relationship between Normalized Difference Vegetation Index and scar density (left) and between average gradient of the steepest slopes (>60%) and scar density (right).

Given that such steep catchments need time to fully recover from the impact of severe degradation, some of the scar networks in the catchments with relatively less vegetation cover still remain as relics on the slopes, being overgrown by vegetation. This is commonly observed in the catchments which are not excluded from the reach of both human beings and livestock. In the Gira Kahu catchment, a catchment from where flow of huge discharge and sediment volumes caused devastating flooding of the Raya Graben and in Alamata town in particular, the scars have almost disappeared due to the establishment of exclosures in most part of the catchment. This implies that when steep catchments are freed from the reach of human beings and livestock, the rate of rehabilitation becomes faster.

The analysis of historical aerial photos also indicated that in the 1930s, the density of scar networks was much less than in 2014. Though it was not possible to map the scar networks for 1965 and 1986 due to the low resolution of the aerial photographs, it could be understood that the density of scar networks could have been much more than the scar

density in 2014 before they recovered owing to increasing forest cover. This is strengthened by the fact that the density of scar network in Gira Kahsu lower catchment was higher in 1936 (0.14 km km^{-2}) than in 2014 (0.04 km km^{-2}).

Long term dynamics of land cover

The long term land cover change analysis using the aerial photos of 1936, 1965 and 1986 as well as Google Earth imageries of 2005 and 2014 (Figure 9) revealed two important periods of land cover change in the study area, (i) rapid deforestation between 1965 and the early 1980s and (ii) remarkable improvement of vegetation cover after 1986.

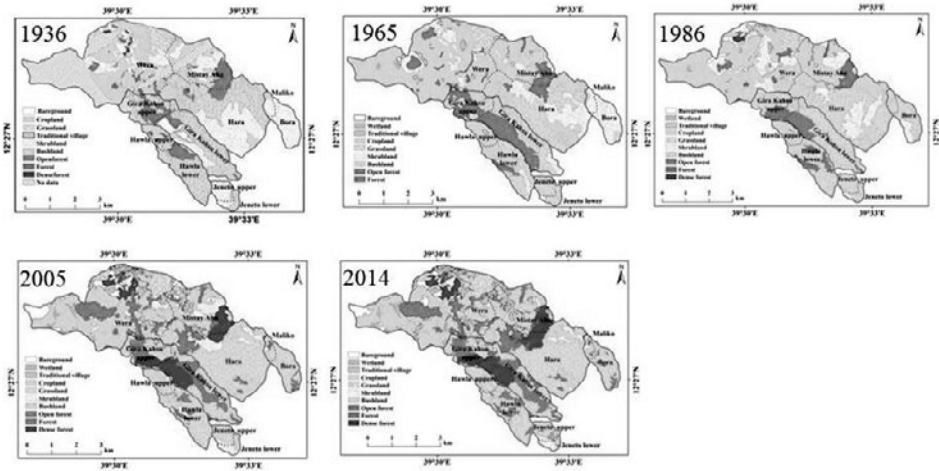


Figure 9: Long term land cover maps (1936-2014).

Bushland was the dominant land cover class in the 1930s. Cropland became the dominant land cover between the 1960s and first half of the 1980s. Due to the reforestation interventions initiated in the second half of the 1980s, forest cover increased from 9% in 1986 to 23% in 2005 and 27% in 2014. Total woody vegetation cover (forest, bushland and shrubland) increased from 52% in 1986 to 62% in 2005 and 2014. On the other hand, the proportion of cropland decreased from 43% in 1986 to 31% in 2005 and 2014. Although the 1936 aerial photos did not fully cover the study area, it appears that vegetation cover was better than in 1965 and 1986. Woody vegetation cover was 65% in 1936, 48% in 1965 and 52% in 1986. Particularly, Gira Kahsu upper and Gira Kahsu lower were the catchments which showed remarkable improvement in vegetation cover after the second half of the 1980s (chapter three) owing to the integrated reforestation activities and establishment of exclosures in these catchments.

Therefore, this study demonstrates the role of reforestation interventions in rehabilitating severely degraded catchments over a relatively short period of three decades even in steep mountain regions with high rainfall variability.

Variability of peak discharge in relation to rainfall variability and land cover change

Variability in discharge typically depends on precipitation variability, vegetation cover change, and local topographic factors (Begueria *et al.*, 2006). Owing to their steep slope gradients and high intensity of rainfall, mountain streams are usually characterized by instantaneous and extreme peak discharges which are usually associated with destructive torrents and floods (Ruiz-Villanueva *et al.*, 2010). In this study, the peak discharge analysis based on the 322 events was in line with the findings by Garcia-Ruiz *et al.* (2008) and many other studies in mountainous areas. The results showed a strong positive linear relationship between rainfall and peak discharge events in all the catchments ($R^2 = 0.32 - 0.94$). On the other hand, an exponentially negative relationship was observed between catchment-specific peak discharge coefficient and percentage of vegetation cover (forest and grass) ($R^2 = 0.85$, $p < 0.01$) (Tesfaalem *et al.*, 2015a). Unlike in many flat lands, the catchment-specific peak discharge coefficient was also negatively related to relative distance of vegetation cover from the thalweg ($R^2 = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$) (Figure 10) and with a combined index of vegetation cover and its relative distance from the thalweg ($R^2 = 0.76$, $p < 0.01$). This shows that, in such steep catchments, if the steepest parts of the catchments are reforested, runoff is effectively buffered long before it reaches in the thalweg, hence, both the percentage of vegetation cover and its location on the upper steeper slopes have significant impact on runoff response of steep mountain catchments.

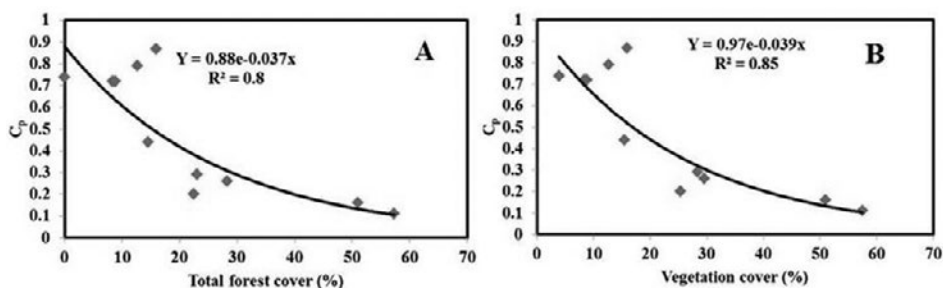


Figure 10: Negative exponential relationship between (A) percentages of total forest and (B) vegetation cover, with catchment-specific discharge coefficient (C_p).

Variability in bedload supply and movement in relation to rainfall variability and land cover change

Variability in the supply and movement of stream bedload is the other hydro-geomorphologic characteristic of mountain catchments usually associated to storm events. In this study, variability in bedload supply and movement was analyzed along with the peak discharge event by field measurements of the median diameter of the 10 coarsest bedload particles (Max10) moved in each event ($n = 332$) and by measuring the D50 and D84 of the bedload particles using Wolman's stream bed particle sampling method ($n = 100$) before and after the rainy seasons (July - September) over the last three years (2011-2014). Moreover, hydraulic competence analysis was carried out using peak discharge, stream power and critical shear stress approaches.

Generally, in this study it was demonstrated that the supply of stream bedload in steep mountains is determined negatively by forest cover ($R^2 = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$) or vegetation cover ($R^2 = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$) and positively by the average density of scar networks in the sloping catchments ($R^2 = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$) and catchment size ($R^2 = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$) while the movement of bedload particles in the stream channels is highly controlled by peak discharge (Q_p) ($R^2 = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$, stream power (W) ($R^2 = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$) and critical shear stress (τ_c) with reference to D_{50} (r_{50}) ($R^2 = 0.96$, $p < 0.01$) and D_{84} (r_{84}) ($R^2 = 0.93$, $p < 0.01$) (Tesfaalem et al., 2015b) (Figure 11).

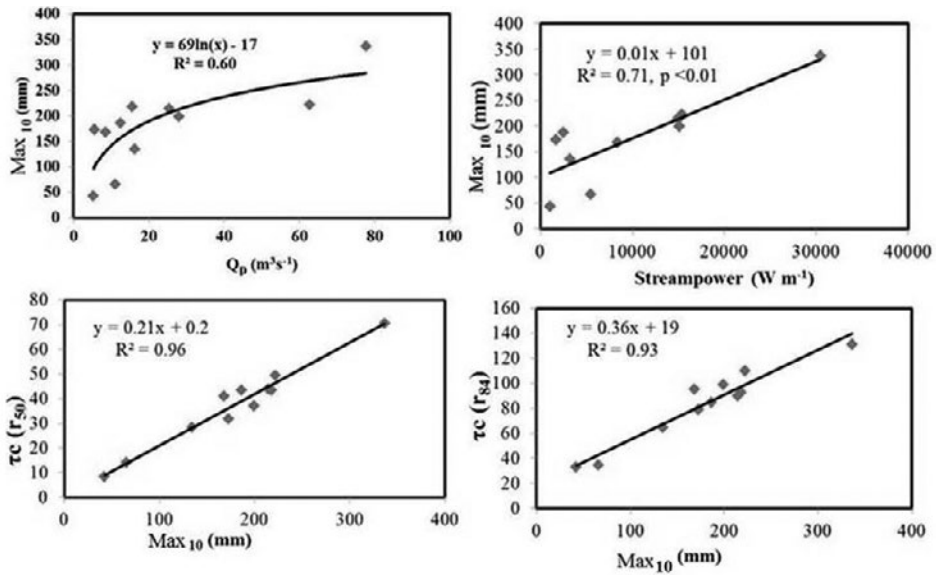


Figure 11: Relationship between average diameter of the 10 coarsest bedload particles moved (Max_{10}) and Peak discharge (Q_p), Stream power (W), critical shear stress with a reference of D_{84} ($\tau_c r_{84}$) and critical shear stress with a reference of D_{50} ($\tau_c r_{50}$).

Adjustment of mountain stream channels in response to discharge and sediment supply

In line with the Schumm's (1956) theoretical work, the spatio-temporal variability in peak discharge and bedload occurred over the last eight decades was strongly associated with stream geomorphologic adjustments. In the 1930s, stream channels were relatively narrow, sinuous and stabilized with vegetation. Due to higher peak discharge and bedload supply, stream channels became wider, straight and braided between 1965 and 1986 whereas after the second half of the 1980s, the channels gradually returned to being narrow, sinuous and single thread due to reductions in discharge and bedload supply in relation to restoration of the vegetation cover. Between 2012 and 2014, the streams incised (Figure 12) on average by 6 cm year^{-1} . Stream bed incision was positively related to average peak discharge ($R^2 = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$, $n = 11$).

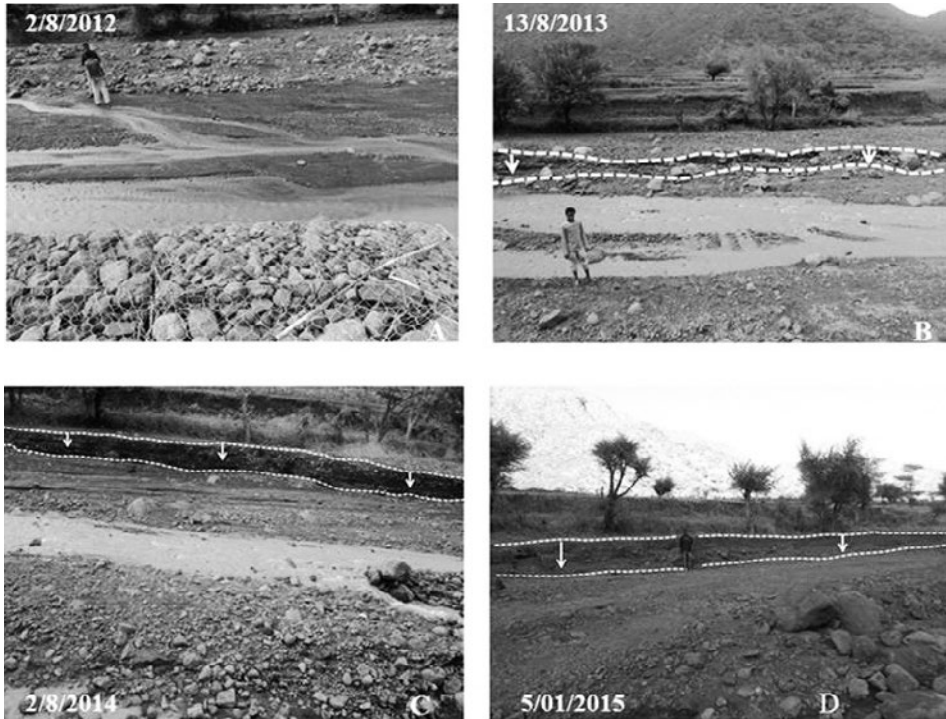


Figure 12: The river Hara stream bed at station was incised on average by 26 cm between 2/8/2012 and 13/8/2013 and by 73 cm between 2/8/2012 and 05/01/2015. The capacity of the stream flow is now weak to transport the big boulders (D).

The positive relationship between stream incision and peak discharge as well as the negative relation between peak discharge and vegetation cover implies that nowadays, the peak discharge flow is carrying less bedload and hence, the relatively clear water is degrading the stream bed (Boix-Fayos *et al.*, 2007). By 2014, the width of the active channel of 4 of the 11 streams narrowed to 39% of the width of the flood plain. Moreover, most of the bars which were mainly formed by the supply of big boulders up to the first half of the 1980s are now stabilized by vegetation.

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusions

Overall, based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. Catchment reforestation in the steep mountain catchments of the western Rift Valley escarpment of northern Ethiopia has led to a remarkable stabilization of the slopes in less than 30 years, as well as to a narrowing and incising of rivers that should be interpreted as signs of resilient catchments.

In steep mountainous catchments where it is difficult to directly measure peak discharges using the conventional techniques, given that daily rainfall events generally occur as

short intensive storms, the hydrological behavior of such mountains could be successfully understood using simple measurements of daily rainfall and peak discharge events. The hydrologic behavior of reforesting steep mountain catchments is determined by precipitation events and strongly by percentage of vegetation cover and its strategic location; farther from the thalweg in the sloping sides of the catchment where vegetation cover buffers volume and velocity of run off before it reaches a drainage line. Daily rainfall events strongly determine peak discharge but its relative influence decreases with increasing vegetation cover.

The availability and supply of bedload in steep mountains is determined negatively by forest or vegetation cover and positively by the presence of scar networks in the steepest part of the catchments. The movement of bedload in the stream beds is highly explained by peak discharge, stream power and strongly by critical shear stress.

In steep mountain streams where direct measurement of bedload transport is difficult, field measurement of the coarsest bedload particles moved after every peak discharge event enables the analysis of variability of bedload flux.

Analysis of variability in bedload supply and movement using simple in situ measurement of the coarsest bedload particles moved in each peak discharge event allows reconstructing historical flood events, if bedload transport conditions are understood.

Steep mountain stream channels quickly adjust to changes in vegetation and associated peak discharge and bedload supply.

Recommendations

In line to the findings of this research, we make the following recommendations.

Reforestation interventions in steep mountain catchments could strongly decrease flooding and transport of bedload to fertile and densely populated lower areas; this control of deforestation-related environmental calamities occurred furthermore in a relatively short time. Hence, the reforestation activities should continue in the catchments which still have insufficient vegetation cover. Moreover, the strict follow-up of the already reforested areas should continue so that the sustainability of the reforestation process continues.

As recommended previously by Nyssen *et al.* (2008) and Descheemaeker *et al.* (2006) based on their studies in a nearby area and as confirmed in this study, priority in reforestation interventions should be given to the steepest parts of catchments, where runoff can be buffered before it enters the drainage system.

In case of catchment management and reforestation activities, down river cutting in the lower part of the catchment may lead to bank failures. Infrastructure planning should anticipate such hydrogeomorphological changes.

The study area is very suitable for the demonstration of the effects of rehabilitation, particularly the Gira Kahu catchment that is easily accessible and where vegetation changes were strongest. Available material, historical photographic documentation, strong correlations and directly observable field evidence can be the base for educational tours. Equipping the Gira Kahu catchment with didactic boards could be another component of such a demonstration programme.

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MEDIATING MATONGE: RELOCATIONS OF BELGIAN POSTCOLONIALITY IN FOUR FILMS

Karel Arnaut

Interculturalism, Migration and Minorities Research Centre, KU Leuven, Belgium
Former vice-president of the Ghent Africa Platform (GAP)

In this paper I look at the Matonge neighbourhood of Brussels as a locus of postcolonial and diasporic imagination and activism by different groups and individuals most notably people who identify as Africans, Belgians with African roots, or 'Black' in Belgium. Within a longer historical narrative that starts in the late 19th century, I focus on the period beginning in the late 1980s when new migrational flows from Africa and other southern countries into Brussels make the Matonge quarter increasingly visible in an otherwise hesitantly globalizing Belgian/European metropolis. This issue is taken up by several filmmakers who, over the last thirty years, have situated their critiques of the Belgian postcolonial condition in 'Matonge'. In this paper I briefly present four of these films in order to illustrate the ways in which 'Matonge' features in changing discourses concerning inequality, cultural affirmation, and diasporic activism.

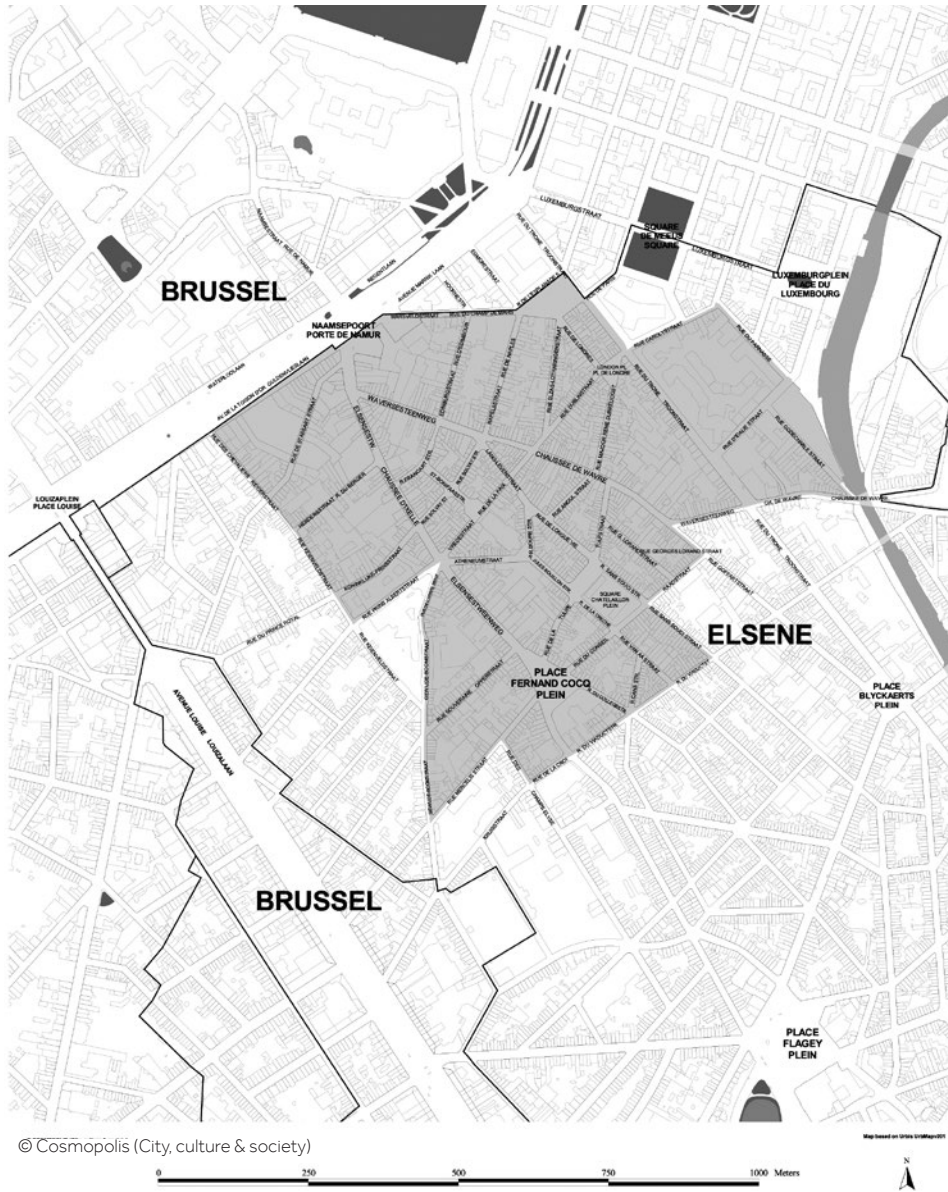
KEYWORDS: MATONGE, BRUSSELS, POSTCOLONIAL CONDITION, MEDIA AND MEDIATION

Introduction

In this paper I aim to present the city quarter called Matonge in Brussels as a locus of postcolonial diasporic imagination and activism in the fifteen years following the early 1990s.¹ Stated otherwise, I seek to spell out how Matonge as a physical and discursive place has been reimagined, renegotiated or reconstructed in relation with the changing ways in which larger-scale entities such as Ixelles, Brussels Capital Region or Belgium have been decolonising themselves. By 'decolonising' I mean reworking their postcolonial condition, staging their migration-driven cultural diversity as well as the predicament of their migrant and diasporic communities, more particularly the sub-Saharan ones. More precisely, I will examine a number of films that were produced between the early 1990s and the mid-2000s, mostly documentaries with the exception of one fiction

1 This article was first presented as a paper at the *African Perspectives Conference* (6-8/12/2007) at TU Delft (The Netherlands). Since then it has led a public life on the internet but was never formally published. While transforming it into a paper, I have not tried to completely erase the style of oral presentation of the paper. Neither have I tried to update the paper. Matonge surely continues to be mediated in novel ways and continues to feature in contemporary relocations and reworkings of Belgian postcoloniality. These would deserve a profound description and analysis but are entirely beyond the scope of this article. Nevertheless I have no knowledge of post 2006 films that focus on Matonge to the degree that the four films presented here do.

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film. In these films ‘Matonge’ appears as a place which exemplifies changing discourses of inequality, cultural affirmation, and diasporic activism with respect to Africans and/or ‘blacks’.

Matonge is part of the commune of Ixelles and located in the south-eastern part of Brussels, just outside the old city centre, behind the Porte de Namur, about five hundred me-

ters from the royal palace and in between two upmarket zones: the European ‘Leopold’ quarter and the Avenue Louise. Customarily, the shopping mall *Gallérie d’Ixelles* is considered to be the (hidden) heart of Matonge, while the adjacent *Chaussée de Wavre* and the traffic-free section of the street *Longue-Vie* (*Langlevenstraat*) are now seen as the city quarter’s main arteries.

‘Matonge’ as a name for an urban neighbourhood is a postcolonial phenomenon in itself. The name emerged in Brussels shortly after it had been introduced to rename the Camp Renkin neighbourhood in the Kalamu commune of Kinshasa (then Zaire). Under Mobutu’s zairisation programme of the early 1970s the colonial label Camp Renkin – named after Jules Renkin, the first Belgian Minister of Colonies (1908 – 1918) – was replaced by ‘Matonge’, the name of a local herb. Within years, ‘Matonge’ made its appearance in the Porte de Namur neighbourhood as the name of a bar. In the course of the 1980s this name was increasingly popularized to indicate the “the focal point of Kinshasa’s diasporic mirror [...] both a simulacrum of Kinshasa and a reinvention of Brussels” (De Boeck 2012 : 61; see also Shungu 1986) a meaning that continues today.

Films are not the only media formats in which Matonge has been represented. The painting “Matonge-Ixelles: Porte de Namur – Porte de l’Amour” by Cheri Samba, is certainly one of the most well-known representations of Matonge. Until the fall of 2007 – and after an interval of several years – a photographic blow-up of the painting measuring 15 by 12 meters decorated the façade of a department store at ‘the entrance of Matonge’ near the Porte de Namur. Mounted in 2002 this gigantic painting could be seen mediating Matonge to itself: its residents and shopkeepers, café owners and travel agents, as well as to its many regular and occasional visitors. Moreover, given the public-private partnership which made this possible, this canvas also epitomized the combination of official recognition of Matonge and its commercial attractiveness.

Similar to Cheri Samba’s intervention in Brussels’ public space, the four films can be seen as mediating ‘Matonge’ in different ways. For starters, the films present images of the urban neighbourhood, while they capture, quote, refract or contest existing (often stereotypical if not downright racist) representations or imagery of Matonge. Also the filmmakers, their collaborators and informants, their official supporters and their financiers function as mediators in providing and circulating new representations of Matonge.

Four movies

1. *Sango Nini, quoi de neuf?* (Anne Deligne & Daniel De Valck, 1991)

Anne Deligne & Daniel De Valck are both Brussels-born directors and have been involved in the relatively small film company, Cobra Films, whose choice of projects shows a clear commitment to socially or culturally marginalised groups or individuals, particularly in Africa. The first film produced by Cobra films was *Zaire, maîtres des rues* (*Zaire, masters of the streets*, 1989). In this documentary Dirk Dumon (scenario: Jean-Pierre Jacquemin) dealt with popular culture in Kinshasa’s and Kisangani’s public spaces, more particularly popular painting and new (Pentecostal, charismatic) churches. In this film one meets a relatively young, but already well-known Cheri Samba. The same directors recently wor-

ked together as producers for the film *Le Cercle des Noyés* (Drowning in Oblivion, Cobra Films, 2006) about the victims of the 1980's Mauritanian repression of the pro-black movement Forces de Libération Africaines de Mauritanie (African Liberation Forces of Mauritania). Sango Nini, *quoi de neuf?* (hereafter *Sango Nini*) claims to portray how people in Matonge “search continuously for their country through music, colors and words”. Moreover, the release note specifies: “They live with us, they walk in our streets. They dream [behind] our walls. [and yet], our eyes rarely meet.”

In evocative phrases such as these, it becomes clear that this film sees itself as dealing with a typical diasporic situation: a strong orientation of diasporic groups towards the home ‘country’ combined with a parallel, partly invisible existence elsewhere – to the extent of being considered ‘out of place’ or living a ‘double absence’ (Sayad 1999). Such diasporic condition results, according to Clifford’s well-known phrase, in “alternate public spheres, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference” (Clifford 1994: 308).

2. *Changa-Changa, Rythmes en Noirs et Blancs* (Mweze Ngangura, 1992)

Mweze Dieudonné Ngangura is a Congolese filmmaker who has been based alternately in Zaïre/Congo and in Belgium since he finished art school in Brussels in 1975. He has made many films, short films and documentaries. His first documentary dates back to 1980 and features Cheri Samba, who was then a young relatively unknown popular painter in Kinshasa. In 1986 Ngangura made *La vie est belle* which starred the musician Papa Wemba – a collaboration which was repeated in his latest film *Les habits neufs du Gouverneur* (2006). In 1998 Ngangura released his widely celebrated film *Pieces d'Identité*, about Congolese immigration to Belgium and partly situated in Matonge. In between both fiction films Ngangura made *Changa-Changa*, a documentary about the lively international, and above all intercultural music scene in Brussels from the late 1950s onwards.

The film opens with scenes shot in Matonge in which Manu Dibango tries to locate the place of the now defunct music clubs *Black and White* and *Les anges noirs* (both located in the Stassaert street on the margins of present-day Matonge). For Dibango, these clubs were the places where music from Africa and ‘black’ music from the New World enjoyed each other’s company and reached a mixed audience in late colonial Belgium and a rapidly decolonizing Brussels. In *Changa Changa* Ngangura presents this moment as the onset of the musical globalisation of Brussels/Belgium – a process which was carried on by the likes of Victor Lazlo, Khadja Nin, Zap Mama, and Toots Thielemans. One of the most remarkable aspects of *Changa Changa* is the cosmopolitan framing of (part of) Matonge in combination with the fact that he is marking Belgium’s colonial projects in Africa as the origin of – what Abdoumalig Simone (2001) would perhaps call – the ‘worlding’ of the metropole.

3. Matonge, un quartier africain au cœur de l'Europe (Patoma Gboya & Abel Pulusu Homban, 2002)

Both Abel Pulusu Homban and Patoma Gboya (alias Pat Patoma) are audio-visual entrepreneurs as well as journalists at a Brussels city radio station. The latter is called *Radio Air Libre* and caters for a number of special interest groups such as the gay and lesbian communities, the anti-globalisation movement, prisoners, anti-militarists, fans of different music genres (such as hiphop, *chanson*, and heavy metal), several language communities (Spanish and Portuguese, e.g.), and a number of regional communities (Latin-American, and indeed, also African) or a combination of the two, such as the Africa-related Lingala-spoken weekly programme *Afrika Djamaa*, for which Pulusu and Patoma both work.

As the title indicates, the documentary *Matonge, un quartier africain au cœur de l'Europe* (hereafter *Quartier africain*) focuses on the spatial dimensions of the Matonge city neighbourhood in a number of quite dramatic episodes which predict nothing less than the imminent demise of the 'African quarter'. In addition, it strongly engages with the temporal dimension, the history of Matonge and, above all, the memories of those who have lived to see the African city quarter carve itself an urban space in a country in which Africans have remained generally speaking quite invisible. The central actors who embody respectively the beginning and the end of this time line are women – older women, some of whom set up their businesses in Matonge back in the 1970s – and (male) youngsters. In the film the latter are somehow taken under the wings of both the women and the filmmakers in order to protect them against the allegedly false accusations voiced by local authorities and which typecast them as mere drug dealers and violent trouble makers.

4. Juju Factory (2006 - Balufu Bakupa-Kanyinda)

Balufu Bakupa-Kanyinda is a writer and filmmaker. He was born in Kinshasa but resided mainly outside the country after finishing his studies in Sociology, Philosophy and History in Brussels. Among his documentaries, *Thomas Sankara (1991)* is one of his first while *Afro@digital*, a UNESCO-sponsored documentary on the digital revolution in Africa is among his more recent efforts. So far, Bakupa-Kanyinda has gained high praise for his film *Le Damier (1996)*. This film is a captivating story of the surreal interactions between an African dictator-draughts player and his adversary, a simple, hungry and subaltern citizen.

Juju Factory is a fiction film built around – what one critic called – a “kaleidoscopic narrative” about a writer named Congo Kongo (played by the late Dieudonné Kabongo) who sets out to write a book about Matonge, the Brussels town quarter where he lives with his wife. One of the other main characters is his tyrannical editor, Joseph Désiré – clearly referring to the late Zairian dictator Joseph Désiré Mobutu (1930-1997). In the film, the editor insists on Congo Kongo writing a light-hearted exotic travelogue entitled *Matonge Village*, while the writer gradually opts for a project and a book named *Juju Factory*. Both in its historical, psychological and conceptual scope, *Juju Factory* is more grand and sophisticated than the three other Matonge films. Above all, this film carries a heavy load of diasporic desires and anxieties. As the film maker explains himself, the idea of the film came during a trip to the slave castles Elmina in Ghana. This idea, objectified in the shape

of juju, Bakupa-Kanyinda tells us, he brought to bear on the Matonge city quarter. The concrete Belgian past which the film brings into view harks back to 1897 when around 250 Congolese men and women were shipped to Belgium to feature in the colonial section of the Universal exhibition, but the film also recalls the murder of Lumumba in 1961 (see Couttenier 2005 and De Witte 1999, respectively). Psychologically and conceptually, the film maker displaces the diasporic ‘double consciousness’ and explores the multiplicity of attitudes and identifications of Congolese and Africans which he explicitly defines as ‘in exile’ in Belgium.

Matonge as locus of postcolonial imagination and activism

In this section I look into the four films as instances of the different ways in which ‘Matonge’ is a locus of postcolonial imagination and activism. Overall, I try to make the point that Matonge is not in any straightforward, natural, physical, or demographic way, a city quarter. Over time and in different discourses and practices, I argue, ‘Matonge’ emerges as a different thing altogether. In the analysis that follows, I distinguish between ‘Matonge’ (a) as a geographical ‘point’ of reference in an emerging discourse of diversity and emancipation, (b) as a ‘place’ (spatio-temporal unit) occupied by a community, and (c) as a ‘site’ of multiple identity formations and multi-scalar political activism. In each of these cases, I am interested in how references to, representations of, and interventions in the social and discursive space of ‘Matonge’, offer some insight into the changing post-colonial condition of Brussels/Belgium and into diasporic or exilic agency of Africans therein.

The invention of Matonge as a geographical point of reference in an emerging discourse on cultural diversity and emancipation

The Matonge that appears in *Sango Nini*, the oldest of the four films, is above all the city quarter that a small group of insiders recognise as the place of African/Congolese ambience – reminding us that the 1990s were the heyday of the SAPE (*La Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes élégantes*) movement (see Amponsah & Spender 2003; Gondola 1999). This ambience flourished largely under the radar of mainstream Brussels, in the relatively hidden Porte de Namur shopping mall and a number of clubs/cafés in its vicinity. It is important to point out that from the late 1980s onwards this relative invisibility diminished rapidly.

The early 1990s was a turning point in the founding of Matonge when it became the destination and place of contact of Africans/Congolese who were part of the post-Cold War ‘new migration’. By then, the era of gradual immigration and partial return of students, merchants, etc. from Congo and a few other African countries, was largely over. Together with the rapid breakdown of what Abdelmalek Sayad (1999: 114) calls “the myth of the temporary and short-term nature of migration” people started to realise that hundreds of thousands of migrants residing in Belgian cities and towns were there to stay and were claiming a place in Belgian society.

Parallel to this recognition of the presence of a substantial migrant population residing in

Belgium in the late 1980s, one observes the rise of anti-migrant political parties (mainly in Flanders). Parallel with this, new institutions – such as the Koninklijk Commissariaat voor het Migrantenbeleid (KCM) – are created in order to monitor and manage migrant groups residing in Belgium, also in the hope of mitigating widespread anti-migrant feeling. At this stage, there was (and to a large extent still is) a rather ambivalent attitude according to which it is accepted that migrants be given full access to amenities such as schooling, housing, jobs, etc., but it proves more difficult to allow cultural diversity at least in the public sphere (Blommaert & Verschueren 1998; Arnaut, Ceuppens & Delanote 2007).

In one passage of *Sango Nini* shows, the film makers try to address both the socio-economic and the cultural side of the acceptance of African migrants in Belgium, when they show the wife of a Congolese doctoral student in Brussels trying to find a flat. The passage is commented upon by an African ‘griotic’ voice-over (of the Congolese actor Maurice Boyikasse Buafomo).

The early nineties was the time when Africans, together with other European and non-European migrant groups were slowly gaining visibility. This triggered recognition and appreciation by some Belgians, but contempt from others. *Sango Nini* clearly takes a positive attitude and generously expresses its cultural appreciation. One of the ways in which this is done is by foregrounding, so to speak, the voice-over, explicitly marking it as ‘African’, while granting the griot the privilege of announcing that ‘nothing (scandalous) will be concealed’. This is the onset for revealing that African residents find it very difficult to gain access to the Belgian housing and job market. Thus, the griot and the film claim that Africans in Brussels – to paraphrase Virginia Woolf – deserve to earn money and a room of their own. The extent to which the filmmakers see the installation of Africans in Brussels in terms of multicultural juxtaposition or of intercultural collaboration, is difficult to make out. The least one can say is that (a) bits of both options are present in this newly emerging discourse concerning cultural diversity and the emancipation of minority groups, and that (b) ‘Matonge’ serves as a geographical point of reference in this emerging and at times rather ambiguous discourse (see Blommaert & Verschueren 1998).

In his own subtle way Nganguira in *Changa Changa* (1992) joins this emerging discourse by using ‘Matonge’ as a geographical reference point and springboard. One of his important contributions to the formation of this new discourse of diversity is that Nganguira adds a historical dimension which leads back to (late) colonial times. With the help of Manu Dibango, Nganguira asks attention for a short period of racial interaction and the breakdown of colonial barriers in the years preceding the independence of Congo. This intercultural renaissance is presented as one that was short-lived. It is in full swing in 1958, the year of the World Exhibition and the foundation of ‘Les Amis de Présence Africaine’ bookshop and small conference centre near the Porte de Namur. Two years later this ‘renaissance’ comes to an end with the debacle of the decolonisation of Congo which results in the partial re-enclavation of Africans in Brussels (and the move of Dibango back to Africa and then to Paris). A further important element is that through the story about the nightclubs of the Stassaert street in which American, Caribbean and

African artists and music meet, the element of ‘black’ (diasporic) culture is brought in, indeed, never to disappear again as one of Matonge’s key cultural components (see also *Juju Factory*).

In sum, in both documentaries Matonge is not so much presented as a place in its own right, but rather as a geographical point of reference for an emerging discourse of cosmopolitanism lost and (expectantly) refound, of postcolonial amnesia and misrecognition or at least disregard for cultural diversity and of the future presence and belonging of migrants in Belgian society.

Matonge as a spatio-temporal unit or place occupied by a community

As mentioned, the Matonge town quarter presented in the film *Quartier africain*, has definite borders, a history, and is populated/occupied by a community of Africans, represented (and reproduced) by women and youngsters. Arguably, this invention of Matonge as a proper place is the outcome of suffering or at least the perception/experience of suffering undergone by Africans and more often than not in and around Matonge.

Several authors have observed that victimisation can be a strong factor in processes of identity formation. In his seminal text on diaspora and identity, Gilroy (1997: 319) speaks of Afro-American “identity defined [...] by [...] histories of unspeakable suffering.” (see also Broch-Due 2005: 19). In general one could say that the film constructs history, space, and community out of three aspects of this suffering: a history of repression (as *Sango Nini* has shown, still very present in the 1990s), a present in which the boundaries of Matonge are under threat from property developers who serve the elites living in the up-market zones bordering Matonge (‘Louise’ and ‘Leopold’), and a future which is compromised by the fact that the youngsters of Matonge are discredited as unruly and indolent if not inherently violent and criminal.

Indeed, in the early 2000s Matonge looked back on a distressing decade of bitter antagonism and a series of violent confrontations with the city council and the security forces (state and communal police). Simply stated, this was related to the arrival of migrants and city dwellers with a more precarious profile. These people (not in the least youngsters) faced an often defensive, if not inimical community of locals as well as offensive security forces. In the film, the defensive attitude of the locals is epitomized by that of the city council which at the time (late 1990s) was led by a right-wing mayor (who is shown several times in the film).

The film indicates that these white elites reacted against the expansion of Matonge and thus the perceived ‘Africanisation’ of an erstwhile upper class white urban quarter. The hostile attitude of the security forces at that time involved them operating outside any schemes of dialogue or consultation, and seeing violent repression in the form of *razzia*’s and other large-scale interventions, as the only adequate means of action. In the 1990s, apart from youngsters, down-market shops and restaurants were also the target of city council inspection and retribution.

Moreover, from the year 2000 onwards, people in and around Matonge became more aware of this situation of suffering because in 2000 a new city council was elected and

a left-wing coalition came into power. As is pointed out in the film at least twice, the new council effected a sea-change. One of its first projects was a quite radical change in dealing with the issue of Matonge by opting for collaboration, dialogue, joint projects of security, and of community policing. The official recognition that came with the creation of an official Matonge policy and of Matonge policing, went hand in hand with a large number of ‘grassroots’ and PPP-initiatives in which Matonge was said to show its potential and its positive qualities.

One passage from the film reminds us that the invention of Matonge as a proper or ‘full’ place or territory, is based on a trajectory of suffering which forms the basis for empowerment and the rejection of any paternalism or the infantilisation of Africans. The passage shows two instances of confrontations between Africans and white elites: first students versus the management of the *Maison Africaine* student house followed by confrontations between shop keepers and the mayor Yves De Jonghe d’Ardoie.

In a particularly trenchant way, these confrontations show the two faces of what is seen as the depreciation of African presence in Brussels, and Matonge. First the film confronts the current management of the *Maison Africaine*, which since the early 1960s has provided accommodation for Africans studying in Brussels. In the way the *Maison Africaine* is presented, one easily senses the colonial character also exhibited by the paternalist words of its manager. The passage on the *Maison Africaine* is immediately followed by a passage in which the negative judgements of the erstwhile mayor De Jonghe d’Ardoie are contradicted. Finally, both passages are commented upon by the same person, Kungu Luziamu, president of Interface Culture, and one of Matonge’s main mediators/gate keepers. Through his voice the entire sequence appears as if the liberation from (neo)colonial paternalism is a source of empowerment for defying right-wing intolerance embodied by the former mayor.

Stated otherwise, the ‘Matonge’ of the early 2000s portrayed in this film, seem to arise out of the debris of a long-overdue decolonisation of African-Belgian relationships, and of the repressive regime of the city council in the 1990s. From this, Matonge emerges as a genuine place – a spatial unit with a history occupied by people who guarantee its reproduction, and in the process, makes a name (‘Matonge’) for itself.

It helps here to remind ourselves of what Doreen Massey said about the invention of what she calls “the coherence of a place”: “The invention of tradition is here about the invention of the coherence of a place, about defining and naming it as a ‘place’ at all.” (Massey 1995: 188). The ‘place’ called Matonge emerging here is very much the place in which Heatherington (1999) after de Certeau (1984) saw: “the capacity [...] to naturalize existing social relations and the ability of people to carve out spaces and moments of cultural engagement in which those relations could be recast and recontextualized.” (Heatherington 1999: 316).

Perhaps not coincidentally, in 2002 – also the year the film was released – Matonge received the photographic blow up of the painting by Cheri Samba (Figure 1). Put in the discourse of the film, this gigantic canvas was employed to display the name of Matonge, signal its vital existence, mark its territory and show its human capacity to whoever

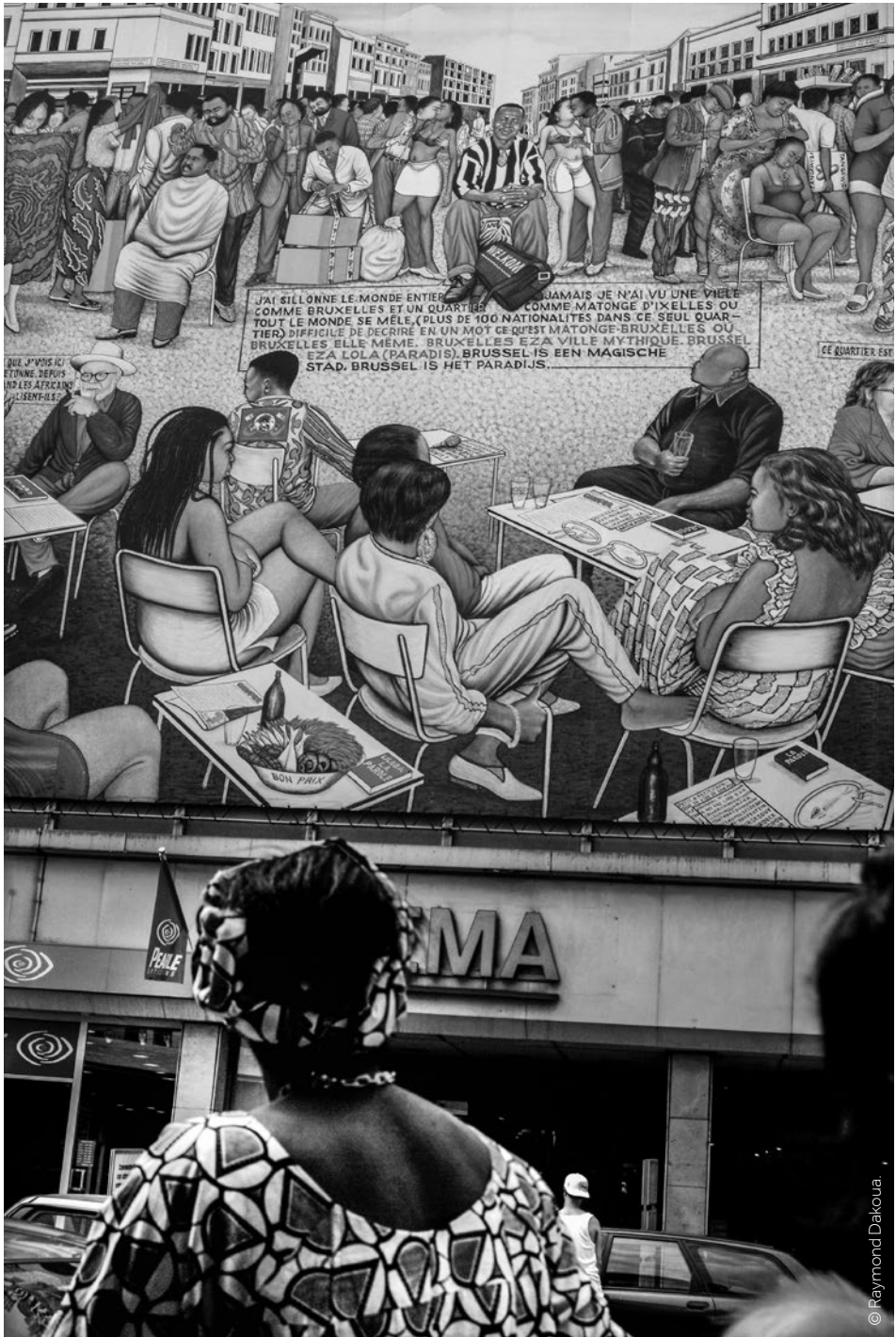


Figure 1: Photographic blow up of the painting by Cheri Samba in Matonge.

approached it from the Brussels' city center. In the same year the makers of *Quartier africain* – to paraphrase Heatherington – carved out a named place called Matonge in recast Afro-Belgian relations which were suffering from both undeconstructed colonial attitudes and new-style post-Cold War intolerance and xenophobia.

Matonge as a site of multiple identity formations and glocal alliances

The 'Matonge' that appears in *Juju Factory* in 2006 is firmly established as a city quarter. By 2006 Matonge was enjoying official recognition from the different authorities that intervene in Brussels, that is, the Ixelles city council, the Brussels regional government and the governments of the Flemish and Francophone communities. Moreover these authorities found local and regional organisations ready to collaborate in manifold projects of multicultural emancipation and affirmation.

Since 2001 Matonge has staged its annual feast *Matonge en Couleurs*/*Matonge Gekleurd*. The latter is organised with ample financial support from the Ixelles city council by an organisation called *Interface Culture* which is presided over by the Congolese cultural entrepreneur Kungu Luziamu – the voice-over in the film of Gboya and Homban. *Interface Culture* has the explicit goal of "promoting a positive image of the Matonge neighbourhood". In 2004 Matonge also had a radio station called *Radio Matonge* that broadcasted intermittently. By 2006 Matonge proudly accommodated a socio-cultural centre *Espace Matonge* financed by the Brussels Capital Region (Ministry of Mobility) and a cultural shop *Afrikamali* set up by the city council in collaboration with local commercial organisations. Soon also Matonge would have a 'Flemish-African House' funded by the Flemish Minister of Culture, Sport, Youth and Brussels Affairs.

In sum, in the years between the 2002 Matonge film and *Juju Factory* anno 2006, 'Matonge' had been officially recognized and to some extent institutionalized. Also it had its own marketable profile as "colourful", cosmopolitan, and exotic. With this official and commercial objectification Matonge emerged as a complex, multi-scalar space of identification and positioning (see Hall 1990; Li 2000). This space comprised not only global relations such as those between Europe and Africa or between Belgium and DR Congo, but also subnational relations such as the ever problematic cohabitation of the Flemish and "French" (Francophone) Community in Belgium both of which have their say in matters of education and culture in the (officially bilingual) Brussels Capital Region. Some aspects of this institutionalised ethno-nationalist *problematique* can be found in a passage of *Juju Factory* in which an undocumented traveller – played by the anthropologist Ken Ndiaye, one of Matonge's most well-known residents, cultural entrepreneurs and, more recently, communal politicians – is arrested by the police. Much to the amazement of the (French-speaking) Ixelles' police, the 'illegal' migrant identifies as "a storyteller", and 'Dutch-speaking African'. A declaration which leads to his repatriation to South-Africa ("where Dutch is spoken").

Before we look into the matter of multi-scalar identification and positioning in this scene, let us first note the way in which *Juju Factory* deals with violence, repression and suffering – the phenomenon that was thematised so strongly in *Quartier africain* and that was of central

importance in the invention of Matonge as a ‘place’ in *Sango Nini*. In the excerpt the confrontation with the police of Ixelles is presented in two forms. First ‘repression’ is presented as ‘real’ in the ‘reality-tv’ type of footage from a grassroots film maker shooting images of how an undocumented fellow African is treated. Second, the historical despotism of the Mobutu era reappears in *Juju Factory* in the form of the dictatorial publisher Joseph Désiré. The latter’s insistence on publishing only mellow and easily digestible literature, embodies market despotism. The way in which suffering is dealt with in this passage is rather typical of the way Balufu tells a multiplex narrative using a mix of genres and styles of narration. This opens up ‘Matonge’ as a complex space of identification and positioning in which the opposition between Flemish-Francophone is refracted.

The scene described above is by no means the only one in which the Flemish-Francophone opposition is presented. Brussels’ bilingual predicament is personified by the central character of the film, the writer whose name is Kongo Congo. This oddly repetitive name is contextualised earlier in the film when the writer walks the streets of Brussels and repeatedly zooms in on the typical bilingual Brussels street signs, in one case, that of the “Rue Congo/Kongostraat”. The larger picture is that, once recognized as a territorialized community, the Belgian-Africans cannot help but enter the complex play of Belgian communitarian politics. In this play of identification and positioning internal divisions within the African community are articulated in terms of pro-Flemish or pro-Francophone stances.

During that same period one could witness several political articulations of this opposition. One instance of this has been the rise of strong anti-Kabila constituency in Belgium and Brussels. It accused former Belgian foreign secretary and then European commissioner Louis Michel, his fellow party member, then Minister of Development Cooperation, Armand De Decker of conspiring with president Kabila of DR Congo in order to continue the (neo-colonial) plundering of Congolese natural resources. Using the rhetoric of the Flemish economic success (see Ceuppens 2011), some anti-Kabila protesters had pleaded for closer Flemish-Congolese collaboration. This was recently documented by Bambi Ceuppens who interviewed Mariyus Noko Ngele, a Belgian-Congolese of the anti-Kabila movement who demands that Francophone Belgian politicians and entrepreneurs stay away from DR Congo. Moreover, he invites “the Flemish” to take the lead in a future Congo-Belgian economic union. The name of his movement is *L’alliance des Réformateurs Kongolais*. Needless to say the spelling of ‘Kongolais’ with a K can be seen as an attempt to emulate Flemish orthography and its preference for ‘k’ instead of ‘c’ (Ceuppens 2007; see also Arnaut 2011).

In conclusion: three locations of postcolonial diaspora

I set out to present how in a number of films Matonge emerges as a locus of postcolonial and diasporic imaginary and activism. Here I wish to spell out the different ways in which this ‘locus’ called Matonge brings out three dimensions of diaspora under conditions of postcoloniality.

In *Sango Nini* one finds most clearly represented what Safran (1991: 83) saw as one of the

main conditions of diasporic communities, namely that “they believe that they are not [...] fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it.” Arguably, in *Sango Nini* this insulation is shown from within the ‘host society’ whose exclusionist attitude is revealed and deplored.

In *Changa-Changa* a similar voice is heard from a ‘Gilroyan’ in-between position (Gilroy 1995). Ngangura does not so much denounce the marginalisation of a half-hidden African ‘parallel society’ in the metropole, as he flaunts the diaspora’s cultural authenticity and creativity as well as its saliency for the cosmopolitan music scene in a Brussels that globalises with the help of its former colony. Within the “alternate public spheres” (Clifford 1994: 308) of diasporic communities, more particularly in the late colonial, parallel public sphere of ‘black’ nightlife and popular culture in Brussels, Ngangura situates the beginning of the musical globalisation of Belgium – perhaps a continuation of the gradual opening of the Black public sphere of the Harlem Renaissance in the United States. *Quartier africain* further thematises the emblematic diasporic theme of “...a shared history of displacement, suffering, adaptation, or resistance” in a process of “identification and differentiation” (Broch-Due 2005: 19). The sense of pan-Africanism that pervades this film is identified by Gilroy as one of the possible effects of diasporic identification: the fact that one easily forgets that “identity is the compound result of many accretions. [It] does not defer to the scripts of ethnic, national, ‘racial’ or cultural absolutism” (Gilroy 1997: 323).

Without therefore abolishing the issues of historical suffering, present discrimination, or parallel lives, *Juju Factory* seems to transcend easy antagonisms and recomposes diasporic identities around the concept of ‘exile’ as de- and re-territorialisation. Although Gilroy (1997: 330) would perhaps not have chosen the word exile, the exilic identities in the film exemplify how diaspora “provides valuable cues, and clues for the elaboration of a social ecology of cultural identity and identification” (ibid: 332). Interestingly enough, in Gilroy’s view ‘exile’ evacuates the complexity of “yearning and ambivalence” that resides in the concept of diaspora. ‘Exile’, for him implies a reconciliation either with the place of sojourn or with the place of origin, and this taming of diasporic subjects is accomplished when the nation-state disambiguates diasporic identities in a logic of either full inclusion or exclusion. Resignifying exile or diaspora for that matter in terms of de-territorialisation/re-territorialisation may help us move beyond the homogenous and monolithic nation-state, and face the fragmented nation-state called Belgium which Balufu encountered. With sharp irony *Juju Factory* evokes the complex multi-level governance of Belgium which finds its apex in the Brussels Capital Region where the federal government, the two languages communities, and the 19 different communes share and divide power (see Favell & Martiniello 1999; Arnaut 2006). This multi-scalar governance situation offers a number of opportunities, particularly to the exilic or diasporic groups, Favell and Martiniello (1999: 19) argue:

‘[The latter] have often found the cleavages and ethno-national conflicts inherent in the Brussels situation, and the institutional structure of city and communes useful to their goals; the declining role of the state in Brussels has helped free them to pur-

sue economic and cultural activities which escape state control and regulation, and permit strong territorial ambitions in the city. Certain new activities and channels have thus become effective, and immigrant groups have been creative in reconfiguring their collective identities around the opportunities as presented, even connecting up on occasions with unlikely allies such as the Flemish right or the EU elite.'

All this is put in a rather dramatic tone, but it basically boils down to prosaic processes of networking and alliance building in an ongoing process of positioning and identification as described by Hall (1990:30) when he alleges that: "cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning. Hence, there is always a politics of identity, a politics of position,..."

This politics of position reveals what Cohen sees as the peculiarity of the relationship between diasporic groups and the nation state, namely that "for such diasporas the nation-state is being used instrumentally, rather than revered affectively" (Cohen 1996: 518). Thus, Cohen (ibid.: 520) concludes "seen as a form of social organization, diasporas have predated the nation-state, lived uneasily within it and now may, in significant respects, transcend and succeed it." This is what the four Matonge films allegedly accomplish, mapping ways in which diasporas help metropolises to decolonize themselves.

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Filmography

Sango Nini, quoi de neuf?

1991 – Anne Deligne & Daniel De Valck Changa-Changa, Rythmes en Noirs et Blancs 1992 - Mweze Ngangura

Matonge, un quartier africain au cœur de l'Europe

2002 – Patoma Gboya & Pulusu Homban

Juju Factory

2006 – Balufu Bakupa-Kanyinda

The importance of being elegant

2003 – George Amponsah & Cosima Spender, UK

LA LITTÉRATURE MUSICALE CONGOLAISE: LA FÊTE DES MOTS

Lye M. Yoka

Institut National des Arts (INA), Kinshasa, République Démocratique du Congo

Résumé Il existe bon nombre d'écrits sur la musique congolaise moderne, notamment sur le plan de l'histoire et de la sociologie. Mais pas d'écrits spécialisés sur la littéralité des textes des chansons en termes stylistique, parémiologique et thématique. Il faudrait en plus prendre en compte les survivances tenaces des traditions orales avec cette culture épicée de l' "éristique" qui est l'art de la dispute et de la palabre, assorti des artifices de la satire et de circonlocutions plus ou moins subversives. Finalement ce que les critiques "puristes" considèrent comme "paralittérature" (terme passablement dépréciatif!) c'est de la littérature en bonne et due forme.

MOTS CLÉS: LITTÉRATURE MUSICALE, ODYSSEE ET ÉPOPÉE DE LA RUMBA CONGOLAISE, CARACTÈRES TRANSPHRAS-
TIQUE ET SYNTAGMATIQUE, TRAVESTISSEMENT DES PROFÉRATIONS THÉMATIQUES, RÉINVENTIONS
PARÉMIOLOGIQUES

Abstract Much has been written on modern Congolese music, particularly in terms of its history and sociology. However, there are no studies dedicated to the literary qualities of the song texts in stylistic, paremiological and thematic terms. In addition, when considering this body of music, the tenacious survival of oral traditions should be taken into account. Such traditions take in the vivid culture of the "eristic", the art of dispute and energetic discussion, accompanied by satirical turns and more or less subversive circumlocutions.

Finally, assert that what "purist" critics consider as "para-literature" (a rather deprecating term) is literature both in terms of its thematic and formal concerns.

KEYWORDS: MUSICAL LITERATURE, ODYSSEY AND EPIC OF THE CONGOLESE RUMBA, TRANSPHRASTIC AND SYNTAGMATIC
CHARACTERS, DISGUISE OF THEMATIC PROFFERED, PAREMIOLOGICAL REINVENTIONS

Mise au point

C'est un évènement exceptionnel que le Prix Nobel de Littérature accordé le 13 octobre 2016 à l'artiste musicien américain Bob Dylan, 75 ans, « pour avoir créé, selon Sara Danius, Secrétaire Générale de l'Académie suédoise, dans le cadre de la grande tradition de la musique américaine, de nouveaux modes d'expression poétique ». Bien entendu, comme il se doit à chaque prix Nobel, et plus spécialement à ce dernier, la controverse a été vive, les plus hostiles reprochant fondamentalement à l'Académie une sorte de confusion des genres...¹

1 Elie ARIE, « Pourquoi le prix Nobel à Bob Dylan est une grossière erreur », dans *www.marianne.net/agora_blog*, 16 novembre 2016: « ... Il ne s'agit pas de nier que certaines chansons, certains films sont des œuvres artistiques: il s'agit de nier que ce sont des œuvres littéraires. Bien sûr, il y a évidemment des relations entre la chanson, la poésie, la littérature, la musique et la danse, mais des rapports qui ne signifient pas identité: s'il y avait,

Qu'à cela ne tienne : ce prix Nobel est pour nos littératures d'Afrique influencées de près ou de loin par les traditions orales, une aubaine, autrement dit la reconnaissance de la concrescence intime entre la parole, en tant que signe verbal diversifié, et la musique, en tant que poésie vivante.

N'est-il pas vrai que notre musique, la musique congolaise moderne, s'impose de plus en plus, et pas toujours là où on l'attend naturellement, c'est-à-dire dans les « ambiances » des discothèques, des bars, des concerts ou des shows. Cette musique a, depuis une cinquantaine d'années, pris d'assaut les cénacles des savants et les amphithéâtres des universitaires. Et quand nous écrivons « littérature congolaise », nous pensons bien évidemment aux deux Congo. S'il existe en effet des liens particulièrement forts, s'il existe de vrai « pont » (naturel et culturel) entre les deux pays, ce sont le fleuve et la musique. Au-dessus, au-delà des conjonctures et des conjectures souvent compliquées, toxiques et politiques des gouvernants.²

Habituellement, les critiques d'art, dans leur majorité, considèrent les prestations et les pratiques littéraires de la musique congolaise moderne, notamment les textes de la rumba, comme faisant partie de la « para-littérature », réservant le terme de « littérature » aux œuvres sanctuarisées des classiques français ou francophones. Par ailleurs, cette « para-littérature » a généralement été rangée dans le lot exotique de la « tradition orale ».³

Autant d'écarts, voire d'excès de langage ! Les textes qui rythment la musique congolaise moderne, lorsqu'ils sont vraiment inspirés et travaillés, sont de l'ordre de la littérature à part entière, composante et préfiguration d'un art potentiellement « en totalité ». Est-ce pour autant de la « littérature orale » ? Non, cette littérature à part entière, prélude à la totalité de l'œuvre, est un va-et-vient dialectique et harmonique entre « littérature orale », « littérature manuscrite » (objet de l'analyse génétique et résultat de palimpsestes porteurs d'indices), littérature écrite, et chantée (par exemple sur des supports audiovisuels qui sont une nouvelle forme et force d'oralité mais électronique, ou dans des concerts qui sont des spectacles complets).

Rumba congolaise : langages en folie

On ne peut donc comprendre l'énergie et le génie de la rumba congolaise qu'à travers les mille facettes de cette épopée qui rythme l'après Deuxième Guerre Mondiale. 'Epopée' au sens premier d'une saga, d'une tradition orale vivante, effervescente, subliminale.

Les thèmes de la littérature musicale, empruntés souvent aux airs glamours de l'après-

en plus du prix Nobel de Littérature, un prix Nobel de Musique, lequel des deux aurait eu droit à Bob Dylan ? » Plus loin l'auteur reconnaît néanmoins avoir été « impressionné par le fait que trois grands romanciers qui sont Alain Mabanckou, Salman Rushdie et Joyce Carol Oates (tous trois nobélisables !) soient d'un avis diamétralement opposé » au sien... Lire aussi : Antoine JACOB, « Les fissures du prix Nobel », dans L'Express, Paris, Nos 3414 du 7 au 13 décembre 2016, pp. 76-79.

2 Lye M. YOKA, « Pont sur le Congo : littérature et musique congolaises, même combat ? », dans *Combats pour la culture*, Brazzaville, Les Editions Hemar, 2012, pp. 118-121.

3 Sur l'odyssée de la rumba, lire : MANDA TCHEBWA, *Les apports de l'imaginaire dans la conquête des droits humains, de l'harmonie sociale et de la liberté : le cas des esclaves bantous de Cuba sous la colonisation espagnole (du XVe siècle au XXe siècle)*. Thèse de doctorat, Chaire de l'UNESCO, Université de Kinshasa, 2009.

guerre en Europe, notamment en France (Tino Rossi, Patrice et Mario, Line Renaud, Trenet, etc.) sont empreints de romantisme pétillant et du culte de la femme. Jamais le lingala, langue des deux capitales congolaises, Brazzaville et Kinshasa, n'a été autant la manifestation et l'expression populaires et sulfureuses faites de séduction et de fantasia (« Mino na yo pawuni penza », chante Kallé Jeeff) (« Tes dents ont l'éclat d'une pierre précieuse »); « Majos moke ya motema/ Yo fololo ya mabanzo/ Butu na moyi nakotuna/ Epayi okeyi nayebi te », chante Franco) (« Petite Majos de mon cœur/fleur de mes pensées/ Nuit et jour je cherche / où tu as disparu »).

D'un autre côté cependant, le lingala a évolué sensiblement en un discours d'anomie, à travers sa parémiologie et ses « mbwakela », sorte de circonvolutions et de périphrases satiriques, comme une dynamique souterraine de résilience, de résistance populaire face aux rapports sociaux et sociétaux de plus en plus éprouvants.

Peut-être faudrait-il noter ici, depuis les années 1950 jusqu'à aujourd'hui, le thème récurrent du « voyage » comme idéal d'évasion, mais par ailleurs comme description réaliste, initiatique des exodes compliqués vers ce que les habitants de 'l'arrière-pays' considèrent comme l'eldorado du Pool Malebo, Brazzaville et Kinshasa. Exemple, Antoine Moundanda : « Poto-poto mboka monene, solo Kinshasa, mpoto moindo » (« Poto-poto est certes une grande agglomération mais Kinshasa est une 'Europe noire' »); autre exemple, Antoine Wendo Kolosoy : « Wendo akomi Kinshasa », ballade sentimentale où le poète, ex-batelier, passe en revue et en souvenirs fredonnés, tous les confluent du fleuve Congo. Cette thématique du « voyage » inspiré principalement par une sorte de mystique du fleuve Congo a également connu ses jours de gloire avec des « tubes » à succès comme « Masuwa » (de Pamelou Mounk'a) ou « Ebale ya Zaïre » de Lutumba Simaro, autant de poèmes empreints de nostalgie des « départs » ainsi que des « adieux » mélancoliques des bateaux, avec toujours en toile de fond les amours disloqués...

Enfin, cette épopée prend de temps en temps des allures philosophiques radicales sur les fondamentaux mythologiques et historiques négro-africains, avec des accents profonds de doute métaphysique ou de militantisme mobilisateur. Exemples : « Nakomitunaka » de Kiamwangana Mateta Verckys, série d'interrogations sur les malentendus des enseignements bibliques inadaptes par rapport aux réalités bantoues. « Pouvoir noir de Franco » est une ode à l'énergie et au génie négro-africains. « Mi Angola » de Sam Mangwana vante le combat héroïque pour la libération de l'Angola ; de même que « Congo monene » de Franklin Boukaka, hommage au 'grand Congo de Lumumba' (c'est-à-dire les deux Congo ensemble), etc.

Une littérature de la totalité

Cette littérature qui s'énonce totale, « joue » la musique, au sens plein de « mise en scène », avec ses personnages, ses rituels, ses célébrants, ses intrigues et ses mythes, ses gesticulations... Il s'agit d'une littérature musicale contextualisée, chorégraphiée, scénographiée, scénarisée, théâtralisée même : à force de signes verbaux et non-verbaux, à force de travestissement et de jeux de rôles, à force de signes kinésiques et proxémiques, à force des va-et-vient de la fiction à la réalité et vice versa ; bref, avec des figures de styles

à la fois classiques et spécifiques, conventionnels et recréés ; et donc avec ses oxymorons propres. On pourrait décrire ces figures de style de la façon détaillée suivante :

Travestissement diégétique : il s'agit, au cours de l'énonciation, de l'ambivalence du « JE » : le travestissement des rôles prête habituellement la parole et la voix aux hommes afin de dénoncer des leçons morales, en lieu et place des femmes elles-mêmes. Exemple : la chanson « Bina na ngai na respect » ('Danse avec moi avec respect') composée et chantée par Ntesa Daliest, au cours de laquelle une femme seule sur la piste de danse d'un concert, repousse les avances empressées et maladroites d'un courtisan.

« Liboso ya kosala likambo bangaka makambo/ Naye kobina naye kosepelisa nzoto/ Nazali mwasi ya bato (...)/Opesi ngai mbote ngai nandimi/ Ekomi lisusu tobina (...) ngai naboya te/ Oluki ngai makango wana nde 'jamais' »

(« Avant d'agir, réfléchis et prends garde/ Je suis là pour m'éclater et faire plaisir à mon corps/ Mais je suis l'épouse d'un époux/ Tu me salues, je te salue/ Tu m'invites à danser, pourquoi pas?/ Tu dragues et harcèles, je dis 'jamais !' »)

Substitution paradigmatique : c'est le remplacement des signes verbaux par des signes non-verbaux ; la palabre est remplacée par la pantomime. Exemple : « Catherine ndoki » (« Catherine sorcière ») de Franco Luambo. Une rivale dénonce les manœuvres dilatoires d'une concurrente qui s'en est allée consulter en cachette un féticheur pour que le concubin commun l'abandonne au profit de l'intrigante. Après un couplet narratif sur ces funestes manœuvres, la voix de la rivale lésée, par le biais du chanteur-narrateur, se transforme en imitation du féticheur avec des formules sous forme de borborygmes énigmatiques et hiératiques.

En fait, en observant de près toutes ces pratiques théâtralisées, on se rend compte combien elles nous rapprochent des techniques du conte africain avec un même rôle, celui généralement du narrateur-actant, à la fois protéiforme et multiforme sur scène.

Ici, le cas le plus connu est celui de la chanson « Course au pouvoir » de Franco Luambo ; c'est une sévère diatribe de Franco, à la première personne du pronom et du sujet, contre l'un de ses collaborateurs qui l'avait traité d'escroc et de « faux millionnaire ». Si la première partie de la chanson est un propos incendiaire, à la limite de la trivialité (« Opolaki olumbi solo/ Obimaki soyi ya mobesu ») (« Toi tout vivant, tu étais déjà en putréfaction nauséabonde/ tu déversais même des saletés de crachats »), la seconde partie met en scène l'affrontement direct, à travers les sons et les tons martiaux des instruments de musique comme autant d'armes brandis : la guitare-solo entre les mains de Franco d'une part, et le saxophone de Kiamwangana d'autre part. Franco et Verckys « jouent à se faire peur », au figuré. Guitare et saxophone « croisent le fer » dans une comédie musicale burlesque...

Apposition transphrastique et juxtaposition syntagmatique : il s'agit d'une expérience de la troupe théâtrale de l'Institut National des Arts en 2000.⁴ Dans un processus

4 Mise en scène de Nzey van Musala, professeur d'art dramatique à l'Institut National des Arts.

inédit de réécriture scénique, le metteur en scène a collé bout à bout, sur base des différents répertoires de l'artiste Koffi Olomide : des textes, des airs, des aphorismes, des figures chorégraphiques, des saynètes reliées, tout cela extrait des compositions musicales originales, pour une intrigue refaite sur le thème de l'amour impossible d'un couple de jeunes kinois. Titre du spectacle : « Koffi-Papa-Tout ».

« Parodie » et « jeu de masques ». Il faudrait prendre « parodie » au sens premier et au sens dérivé : celui d'une part d'un « texte composé pour être chanté sur une musique connue »,⁵ et celui d'autre part d'une imitation satirique, d'un discours parallèle, indirect, rusé et oblique. La procédure, dans certaines versions musicales congolaises, consiste à louer les services d'un « commissionnaire-mercenaire » parmi les artistes compositeurs les plus doués, et lui commander une chanson suffisamment « létale » en termes de mbwakela empoisonnés. Et donc, à défaut d'une confrontation directe entre rivales, chacune de son côté se camoufle derrière ce « commissionnaire-mercenaire », cet épouvantail, et fait lancer des piques assassines. Exemples : la première rivale ayant décoché, via l'artiste compositeur Lutumba Simaro, une salve particulièrement empoisonnée dans la chanson « Bisalela »

(« Gesticulations »), l'adversaire répliqua aussitôt avec la même vigueur et la même verveur, par le même « porte-parole » et à travers des répliques venimeuses, par exemple « Ngai namoni kaka », « Bodoutaka » (de la racine « douter ». Traduction : « avez-vous besoin de douter encore ? »). Par exemple encore : « Faute y a commerçant » (« C'est la faute du commerçant »).⁶)

Recours à la parémiologie éristique : la parémiologie, dans ce contexte-ci, est l'usage des proverbes, souvent inventés ou actualisés pour les besoins de la cause, comme techniques de provocation, comme leçons morales ou comme choc des mots (« l'éristique » étant, dans la tradition rhétorique grecque, « l'art de la dispute »). Exemples :

- « ve dire toza na système ya lifelo ; kasi motu akozika te » (A vrai dire, nous sommes au cœur du système de l'enfer ; mais il n'y a, pour personne, le risque d'être brûlé) : Koffi Olomide ;
- « Mvula epanzaka matanga kasi zando te » (La pluie disperse une veillée de deuil mais pas un marché) : Papa Wemba ;
- « Bikela-kela ezali lokola mapapu ya kipungu-pungu ; soki oluki okanga ye na mapapu, okotikala kaka na putulu ya langi na maboko » (« L'œuvre d'art ressemble aux ailes de la libellule : c'est vain que vous cherchez à attraper l'insecte par ses ailes ; il ne vous restera sur les mains que de la poussière colorée » : Lutumba Simaro.

5 Cf. Wiktionnaire, <http://wiktionary.org>

6 « Faute ya commerçant » : le commerçant est la métaphore du concubin commun à deux rivales : il partage et il est partagé à égalité entre les deux. Le commerçant vend, sans état d'âme, les mêmes pagnes des mêmes motifs et des mêmes tarifs aux mêmes clientes. D'après le compositeur Lutumba, le concubin, l'« ambianneur » 'vend' et 'partage', sans état d'âme, ses sentiments à prix égal...

« Lire la musique »⁷ : l'état actuel des approches descriptives et critiques

n peut se féliciter aujourd'hui de l'émergence de nombreuses recherches scientifiques sur la musique congolaise moderne. Or les tendances habituelles de ces analystes et critiques ont été ou sont consignées encore soit sur la synchro-diachronie (Michel Lonoh, Sylvain Bemba, Manda Tchewwa, Mfumu⁸), soit sur des monographies biographiques (Mfumu, Mayengo, Nimy, Tshonga Onyiumbe⁹), soit sur les interférences ethno-musicologiques (Philippe Kanza¹⁰), soit encore sur la sociologie (Tshonga Onyiumbe, Léon Tsambu¹¹), soit enfin sur les théories et les enquêtes concernant l'écoute et la réception (Bob White et Lye Yoka, Ribio Nzeza¹²). Peu de chercheurs se livrent à une analyse littéraire proprement dite de cette musique dans ses formes et styles, dans ses marqueurs locutoires, illocutoires, et perlocutoires ; mais aussi dans ses prolongements sémiotiques et spectaculaires.

La tâche du sémiologue devant un spectacle justement, n'est-elle pas, ainsi que le décrit Anne Ubersfeld à propos de la représentation dramaturgique, « de faire éclater par des pratiques sémiotiques et textuelles le discours dominant, le discours appris, celui qui interpose entre le théâtre et la représentation tout un écran invisible de préjugés, de personnages, et de « passions », le code même de l'idéologie dominante ».¹³

Y a-t-il meilleure façon de décrire justement l' « ambiance » festive, insolite, pétillante, entre l'instant de composition du texte et son éclosion, son explosion en concert public ? Y a-t-il meilleure approche de cerner le concept de « discours dominant » ou d' « idéologie

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- 7 Toutes proportions gardées, « Lire la musique » pourrait être mis en comparaison par rapport à l'essai d'Anne UBERSFELD, *Lire le théâtre*, Paris, Editions sociales, 1977. L'auteur écrit, à propos de théâtre : « ...C'est la spécificité du texte de théâtre qui est la première question posée, la question essentielle ; trouver les éléments de réponse, c'est peut-être échapper à la fois au terrorisme textuel et au terrorisme scénique, à ce conflit entre celui qui privilégie le texte littéraire et celui qui, aux prises avec sa seule pratique dramaturgique, fait fi de l'instance scripturale ».
- 8 Lire entre autres publications :
 – Sylvain BEMBA, *Cinquante ans de musique du Congo-Zaïre (1920-1970). De Paul Kamba à Tabu Ley*, Paris, Présence Africaine, 1984.
 – MANDA TCHEBWA, *Terre de la chanson, la musique zaïroise : hier et aujourd'hui*, Louvain-La-Neuve, DUCULOT-Afrique Editions, 1996.
 – MFUMU, *La musique congolaise du XXe siècle*, Brazzaville, Beau D Pro, 2006.
- 9 Lire « Musique rétro », dans la revue *Rétro*, Nos 1 et 2, Brazzaville, Atelier Beaudley, 2013.
- 10 KANZA MATONDO, *Musique zaïroise moderne. Situation actuelle et perspectives*, Kinshasa, Publications du Conservatoire National de Musique et d'Art Dramatique (CNMA), 1972.
- 11 Lire par exemple :
 – Yvon Laurier NGOMBE, *Rumbissimo. Rumba, droit et business*, Paris, BOD/ Books-On-Demand, 2013.
 – Léon TSAMBU, *Luttes symboliques et enjeux de domination sur l'espace de la musique populaire à Kinshasa. Critique praxéologique des sociabilités de la scène musicale kinoise*. Thèse de doctorat, Faculté de Sciences sociales. Université de Kinshasa, 2012.
- 12 – Bob WHITE et Lye M. YOKA, *Musique populaire et société. Une ethnographie de l'écoute*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2010.
 – Ribio NZEZA, *Réception des chroniques musicales télévisées à Kinshasa (RD.Congo). Du divertissement à la construction des perspectives d'identités socioprofessionnelles chez les jeunes*. Thèse de doctorat, Faculté des Communications sociales. Université Catholique du Congo, 2016.
- 13 Anne UBERSFELD, op.cit.

dominante», autrement dit de « soft power »¹⁴ à travers le pouvoir politique de la musique populaire, au service ou à contre-courant des gouvernants ou des régimes en place.

La tâche de l'Institut National des Arts-Kinshasa

C'est d'ailleurs pourquoi, depuis près de cinq ans, autour du Festival Rumba Parade (en partenariat avec l'Agence EALE CMCT, et la Délégation Wallonie-Bruxelles à Kinshasa), les chercheurs et les praticiens de l'Institut National des Arts (INA) procèdent à la promotion de la musique congolaise moderne comme patrimoine culturel immatériel, par des opérations suivantes :

1. identification des chansons emblématiques du répertoire congolais ;
2. identification des paramètres originaux d'analyse et de sélection ;
3. traduction en langue française des textes littéraires de ces chansons en langues nationales ;
4. transcription en partitions musicologiques des textes originaux ;
5. publication des anthologies sur des morceaux ainsi choisis ;
6. réorchestration et exécution publique, par l'orchestre de l'INA, des morceaux choisis, avec des instruments à la fois classiques (occidentaux) et traditionnels ; mais aussi, dans la mesure du possible, avec des danses et des « ambiances » reconstituées.

Que vise l'INA par cette démarche mémorielle et re-créative ? D'abord, à court et à moyen terme, conserver et revaloriser ce patrimoine culturel immatériel et essentiel ; ensuite, à moyen et à long terme, arriver, pourquoi pas, à constituer des anthologies de haute référence, du point de vue à la fois littéraire et musical. Mais arriver en même temps à inscrire la rumba congolaise sur les listes respectives du patrimoine culturel national et mondial.¹⁵

En fin de compte, le rêve des chercheurs de l'INA est de capitaliser toute cette créativité artistique totale et intégrée, en termes de valeur ajoutée : valeur du devoir de mémoire, valeur de l'éducation nationale (au sens plein du terme, et pas seulement celle de 'l'ins-truction publique'), ainsi que valeur du dialogue interculturel et de la cohésion nationale.

14 Lire à ce propos:

- Frédéric MARTEL, *Mainstream. Enquête sur la guerre globale de la culture et des médias*, Paris, Flammarion, 2010.
- Lye M. YOKA, « Musique congolaise et pouvoir », dans *Combats pour la culture*, op.cit., pp. 149-162.

15 En date du 3 août 2016, le Ministre de la Culture et des Arts de la RD.Congo a signé deux Arrêtés, l'un No 032/CAB/MIN/CA/DIRA/SA/2016, et l'autre No 036/CAB/MIN/CA/DIRA/YMM/2016, portant respectivement :

- d'une part, création de la « Commission Nationale en charge de la Promotion pour l'Inscription de la Rumba sur la Liste du Patrimoine Culturel Immatériel de la RD.Congo, et sur la Liste du Patrimoine Culturel Immatériel de l'Humanité (CNIPR) ; et
- d'autre part, nomination des membres de cette Commission, avec comme Président Pr Lye M. YOKA.

PLAIDOYER POUR DES NON-ÉVÉNEMENTS : UNE RÉFLEXION SUR LE CENTRE D'ART WAZA

Patrick Mudekereza

Waza, Centre d'art de Lubumbashi, République Démocratique du Congo

Lorsque je parle du travail du centre d'art Waza en dehors du Congo, vient souvent une série de questions auxquelles je peine à répondre : quel moment est le plus propice pour venir vous rendre visite? Avez-vous un festival ou quelque chose de la sorte? La réponse induite dans la deuxième partie porte à croire que l'organisation d'un événement crée un moment propice pour découvrir une ville et le travail d'une organisation. S'il est vrai que la plupart des biennales et des festivals d'art public mettent un point d'honneur à travailler leur ancrage dans la société, il est tout aussi vrai que la manière dont cette offre est « emballée » pour les visiteurs étrangers crée une distance, une sorte de bulle, qui leur impose une lecture « mondialisée » du contexte plutôt qu'une rencontre profonde et sincère avec ses acteurs. Si le centre d'art a été dans son ancienne forme et sous notre ancienne appellation, l'hôte de la deuxième et de la troisième édition de la Biennale de Lubumbashi en 2010 et 2013, sa quête de pertinence s'est tournée depuis vers d'autres préoccupations.

La réponse que j'ai envie de donner est celle de faire un plaidoyer pour un non-événement. Pas un événement qui part en vrille, qui ne répond pas aux attentes du public et de la presse, mais un non-événement minutieusement préparé en tant que tel, qui pose les bases d'une rencontre, ose être flexible, se crée avec ceux qui le vivent et se prolonge dans leur quotidien.

Le travail de Waza se trouve à l'intersection entre la création artistique, la recherche et les dynamiques communautaires. Il pose de nouvelles questions à chaque composante. Le défi pour un centre d'art est celui de confronter le processus de la création artistique à l'écosystème qui lui donne naissance, sans tomber dans la tentation de nier ses propres contingences liées au monde de l'art. Il s'agit alors d'équilibrer, comme le ferait un DJ devant une piste de danse, les différentes pulsions comme autant de sonorités qui donnent au public un rôle plus actif dans l'expérience de l'exposition.

Les derniers mois, l'équipe du centre d'art Waza, assistée par la muséologue Sari Midernacht, les artistes et opérateurs culturels partenaires, ainsi que des organisations amies comme le centre d'innovation de Lubumbashi avons réfléchi au sens qu'on pouvait

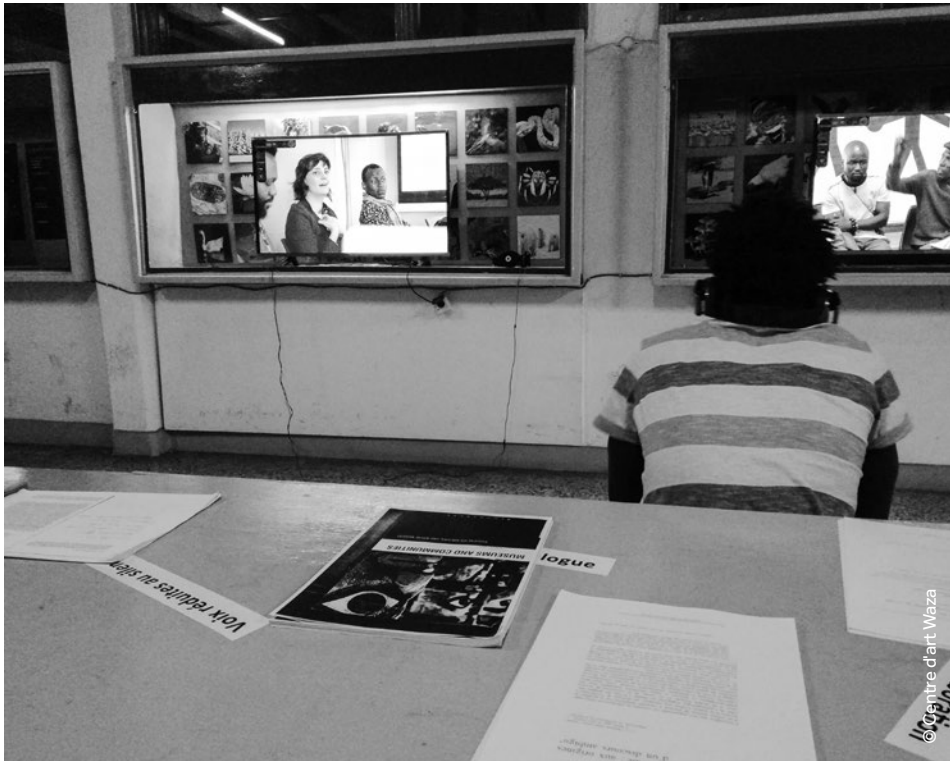


Figure 1: Exposition "Disolo, convers(at)ions avec les collections du musée", Musée National de Lubumbashi, 15 octobre 2018..

donner à un programme qui s'inspire de cette démarche. Entre collecte d'histoires et design thinking, nous avons conçu un nouveau programme en s'inspirant de nos actions passées.

L'expérience de Revolution Room, programme mené en collaboration avec Visual Art Network South Africa de 2013 à 2016 a permis de tester une méthodologie de travail qui part de l'expérience des habitants en partageant l'autorité curatoriale avec eux dans le choix des objets, le sens qui leur est donné. L'exposition *Waza chumba Wazi* qui a investi pendant un mois une maison du quartier Gécamines a été un élément important du programme à Lubumbashi. D'autres expériences de travail avec les communautés de créations artistiques, de recherche et de présentations publiques ont été réalisées à Fungurume, à Moba pour la partie congolaise et à Cosmo City, un nouveau quartier de Johannesburg pour le volet sud-africain. Plusieurs projets de recherches de création ont été réalisés dans chaque ville comme le projet *Misambwa*, les ancêtres cosmopolites du sculpteur Agxon, devenu chef coutumier dans un village Tabwa au bord du Lac Tanganyika. Une publication retrace les réflexions critiques et les résultats du projet. Cette publication et le projet ont reçu le prix d'excellence d'African Architecture Award, dans la catégorie

Critical dialogue en septembre 2017 au Cap, en Afrique du Sud.

Pour Waza, ce projet a participé à une véritable transformation de notre position. Cette transformation a donné lieu à une forme d'hybridation qui rejoint l'idée de Charles Esche d'un espace qui est en partie un centre communautaire, en partie un laboratoire et en partie une académie en réduisant les besoins d'une fonction de salle d'exposition. Dans les activités des dernières années, l'accent a été mis sur le travail collectif: les bédésistes du collectif Les Mines Lushoises, fondé par Daniel Sixte Kakinda, les beatmakers de Mite Empire autour de DJ Spilulu, ou le mouvement de danse contemporaine autour du chorégraphe Dorine Mokha, ont façonné une ligne de programmation et un principe de fonctionnement basés sur l'idée de réimaginer le travail salarié, par des dynamiques collaboratives. Nous avons appelé ce principe de fonctionnement Kazi 2.0, en alliant le concept de Kazi (travail en swahili, qui reprend aussi une certaine idée du monde moderne) à l'idée de l'interactivité du web 2.0 pour contrer les logiques paternalistes des entreprises minières publiques de notre région.

Si cette ouverture a permis de mieux ancrer nos actions en faveur des jeunes artistes lushois, deux éléments ont manqué dans cette configuration : le rythme qui permet de se fixer des étapes pour faire le point de ce qu'on a appris ensemble et une programmation publique qui présente de manière cohérente des artistes locaux et des travaux réalisés par nos partenaires internationaux (artistes ou organisations). Pour ce faire, Waza a mis sur pied un cycle de deux ans qui alterne d'une année laboratoire, Kazi 2.0, revue comme un cadre de partage de connaissance, suivie d'une année de médiation avec le public, Mitaani Moments.

Depuis août 2018, et pour les 12 mois à venir, Waza s'engage donc dans une série de moments ouverts au public, à Lubumbashi ou ailleurs. Mitaani signifie « dans les villes » ou « dans les quartiers » exprime la volonté de sortir d'une attente d'un lieu culturel formel pour expérimenter d'autres formes de rencontre avec le public, d'autres expériences artistiques. Ces expériences sont des « moments » pour lesquels l'accent est davantage sur le contenu plutôt que sur la visibilité, sur la nature de l'expérience plutôt que sur le nombre de participants. Ces moments se veulent un marqueur interne qui parle aux gens plus qu'un surgissement externe qui les éblouit. Ils se déroulent sous le thème des convers(at)ions urbaines, pour exprimer le potentiel de transformation (conversion) contenu dans un dialogue franc et équitable (conversation) dans l'espace urbain.

Ces conversations se développent sur 4 séquences trimestrielles : *archive* sur la culture matérielle contenu dans les musées, *class* sur l'éducation artistique, *digital* sur le numérique comme outil de diffusion de l'art et enfin *mapping* sur les cartographies des espaces physiques ou imaginaires. Ces séquences qui se prolongent les unes dans les autres sont des dispositifs qui testent des méthodes d'interactions, des outils de travail et produisent des idées dans la rencontre avec le public. C'est de cette rencontre que se définiront les projets artistiques ou de recherche qui feront l'objet de l'année Kazi 2.0.

La séquence *archive* a consisté en une série d'activités à Lubumbashi et à Kinshasa en parallèle du cours de Curating Exhibition du département d'histoire de l'art de Wits School of Arts (université de Witwatersrand de Johannesburg). Au Musée National de

Lubumbashi, l'exposition *Disolo, convers(at)ion avec les collections du musée* a été organisée du 13 au 20 octobre 2018, et a présenté les œuvres de Rita Mukebo, Gulda El Magambo, Paul Malaba, Agxon, Hilaire Balu Kuyangiko et Denise Maheho. Cette exposition placée dans le parcours de visite du musée en prolongement de la salle d'ethnographie, questionnait les savoirs sur les objets des collections d'art classique africain conservé au Congo et en Afrique du Sud en intégrant d'une part les interprétations des artistes d'aujourd'hui sur leur sens, et d'autre part en s'engageant à détrôner les savoirs ethnographiques par les réinterprétations des communautés sources. Une salle de documentation, conçue comme une photocopithèque et non comme bibliothèque, rassemblait des photocopies d'articles sur lesquels les annotations, les ratures ou simplement la copie des documents étaient encouragés. Cinq moniteurs présentaient des discussions avec les « papas » Kanteng, Nshimba et Kapenda qui parlaient de leur expérience dans les cultures ruund, luba et tshokwe, les commissaires sud-africains posait le problème de l'interprétation de leur collection d'art congolais qui est conservé en diaspora alors que Philippe Mikobi et Henry Bundjoko expliquaient comment ils naviguent comme anthropologues et historiens de l'art entre les savoirs vivants de leur culture kuba et leele et les interprétations parfois erronées de leurs collègues occidentaux. La salle de projection a aussi servi de salle de discussion, avec la conférence du vernissage qui rassemblait Nontobeko Ntombela (Wits School of Arts), Sarah Van Beurden (Ohio State University) et Philippe Mikobi (Musée National de Lubumbashi). Les débats ont été prolongés au cours d'un atelier sur les perspectives congolaises, sur la restitution des biens culturels et sur la transformation des pratiques muséales en Afrique, organisé par le Centre d'art Waza, à la demande de Goethe Institut Kinshasa.

Les derniers mois, l'équipe du centre d'art Waza, en collaboration avec le projet *Another Roadmap for Arts Education*, alimentera la séquence *class de Mitaani Moments* avec les travaux de la commissaire Andrea Thal, de la photographe Rana El Nemr (toutes les deux sont membres du *Contemporary Image Collective* du Caire) et de l'artiste Christian Nyampeta (Rwanda/Pays-Bas). Les recherches sur l'éducation artistique alternative et les projets qui relatent l'histoire des productions de pensées radicales dans plusieurs contextes en Afrique, en Amérique latine et en Europe seront présentées à des étudiants en pédagogie de Lubumbashi.

Qu'est-ce que ces projets en cours disent de la quête de pertinence du Centre d'art Waza ? Ils expriment d'abord une volonté de voir la création artistique dans un spectre plus large, où les questions des savoirs, de justice sociale et de réappropriation de l'imaginaire ne sont plus de simples corollaires, mais font partie intégrante du travail du centre d'art. Ils s'inscrivent ensuite dans une volonté d'adéquation entre les ressources disponibles dans notre modèle économique construit sur des subventions venant du Nord et les actions envisagées dans leur pertinence locale. Ils souhaitent enfin tenter rompre plusieurs formes d'hégémonie dans la manière de penser et de mettre en œuvre les actions artistiques en Afrique. Organiser des non-événements, ou exprimer de manière positive des « moments », est pour Waza une invitation à considérer la création artistique du continent africain non pas dans ce qui fait l'événement, et qui, dans le contexte de l'attrait encore

exotisant pour l'art africain se cantonnant au différent et au dissonant, permet de révéler beaucoup d'aspects, de luttes quotidiennes, de parcours sensibles dans une diffusion artistique qui devient une expérience de vie. Vu sous cet angle, tous les moments sont des bons moments pour découvrir le travail de Waza à Lubumbashi, parce qu'ils constituent autant de possibilité de « conversation » au sens étymologique de « vivre ensemble ».

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La publication Revolution Room est consultable sur le lien :

<http://www.centredartwaza.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Revolution-Room-Final-for-situ.pdf>

URBAN NOW: CITY LIFE IN CONGO

Sammy Baloji (1) and Filip De Boeck (2)

(1) Photographer, Belgium, Democratic Republic of the Congo

(2) Institute for Anthropological Research in Africa, KULeuven, Belgium

In ongoing discussions about the nature of the African city, architects, urban planners, sociologists, anthropologists, demographers and others devote much attention to the built form, and more generally to the city's material infrastructure. Architecture has become a central issue in western discourses and reflections on how to plan, engineer, sanitize and transform the urban site and its public spaces. Mirroring that discourse, architecture has also started to occupy an increasingly important place in the attempts to come to terms with the specificities of the African urban landscape and to imagine new urban paradigms for the African city of the future. Very often these new urban futures manifest themselves as 'cities yet to come'¹ in the form of billboards and advertisements. Through an aesthetic display of modernization as spectacle, and inspired by urban models from Dubai and other recent urban hot spots from the Global South, these images foster new dreams and hopes, even though the new city they propose invariably gives rise to new geographies of exclusion, as such a city often takes the form of gated communities and luxury satellite towns for an often still rather hypo-

thetical local upper middle class.

In sharp contrast to these – often violent-neoliberal re-codings of earlier colonialist modernities, the current infrastructure of Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, is of a rather different kind. The built colonial legacy has often fallen into disrepair. Its functioning is punctuated by constant breakdown, and the city is replete with disconnected infrastructural fragments, figments, reminders and echoes of a former modernity that continues to exist in a shattered form, but no longer has the content that originally went with it. These fragments are embedded in other historical rhythms and temporalities, in entirely different layers of infrastructure, land ownership rights and social networks. Failing material infrastructures and an economy of scarcity physically delineate the limits of the possible in the city. At the same time however, they also generate other possibilities and enable the creation of new social spaces by means of which breakdown and exclusion are bypassed and overcome.

In a collaborative effort between anthropology and photography, a project that has

1 Simone, A., 2004. *For the City Yet to Come. Changing African Life in Four Cities*. Durham: Duke University Press.

resulted in a book and an exhibition², the present authors, visual artist Sammy Baloji and anthropologist Filip De Boeck reflect on these various – different but simultaneous – narratives of urban place-making. In this joint work we offer a visual study of elements that defy verbal narration: the city's affective landscapes and moods. As such we consider changes in how cities and territories are imagined by different kinds of people in the DRC today.

Essentially, our ethnographic, photographic and filmic exploration of the city's landscape offers an investigation into the qualities of the 'hole'. One could say that, today, the notion of the hole (*libulu* in Lingala, the *lingua franca* in large parts of Congo) fully captures the essence of the city's material quality. It defines the generic form of Congo's postcolonial urban infrastructure. Indeed, the surface of the Congolese city is pockmarked with potholes, while unstoppable erosion points constantly eat away at the urban tissue. Similarly, the surface of the Congolese landscape is disfigured by artisanal mining holes and the holes of (often unmarked) graves. In fact the concept of the 'hole' has become a kind of meta-concept that people use to reflect upon the material degradation of the city's colonial modernist infrastructure and to rework the closures and often dismal quality of the social life that has followed the material ruination of the colonial city.

What our work reflects upon, then, is basically the question of how this 'reworking' takes place, and how in terms of the experience of Congolese urban residents, this postcolonial hole is filled. What possible

answers does urban Congo offer in response to the challenge posed by the hole? If the city has transformed into a hole, how can this hole be 'illuminated' to become the something else that enables living, and *living together* in the city? The notion of *living together* can only exist where the whole, the assemblage is not fully formed and is not yet closed. Living together always implies a contestation of how a social body, a collective, completes itself – it is a process that is never completely closed, summed up or fully identical with itself.

As family, kinship and neighbourhood solidarities are often stretched to the limit, and residents search, sometimes desperately, for a viable experience of being together, we have tried to understand what new forms are emerging, and how to understand these new forms. What is investigated here are the closures and openings through which this *living together* in the city is made possible or is rendered impossible. In this sense, our collaborative effort can be read as an attempt to discover where and how people stitch together their lacks and losses and 'suture' the folds, gaps and holes of the city. Sutures here suggest the possibility of closing wounds, generating realignments and opening up alternatives, thereby pointing to new kinds of creativity with (spatial and temporal) beginnings, and new forms of interactivity and conviviality. We investigate these gaps and sutures by means of a number of urban acupuncture, in other words, investigations of specific sites within (and often beyond) the city of Kinshasa – particular buildings, horticultural sites and fields in the city,

2 De Boeck, F. & S. Baloji, 2016, *Suturing the City. Living Together in Congo's Urban Worlds*. London: Autograph ABP. Our exhibition *Urban Now. City Life in Congo* opened in WIELS in 2016, and subsequently traveled to Open Society (New York, 2016), The Power Plant (2017), and Galeria da India (Lisbon, 2018).

specific graveyards, mountains, potholes, new city extensions, and so on – into which we insert our analytical needle, the instruments of pen and photographic lens, in order to understand what happens in all of these places that form important, though sometimes materially barely visible, nodes within the city. These are sites where the city switches on and off, where quickenings and thickenings of goods, people are generated and the various lines of connec-

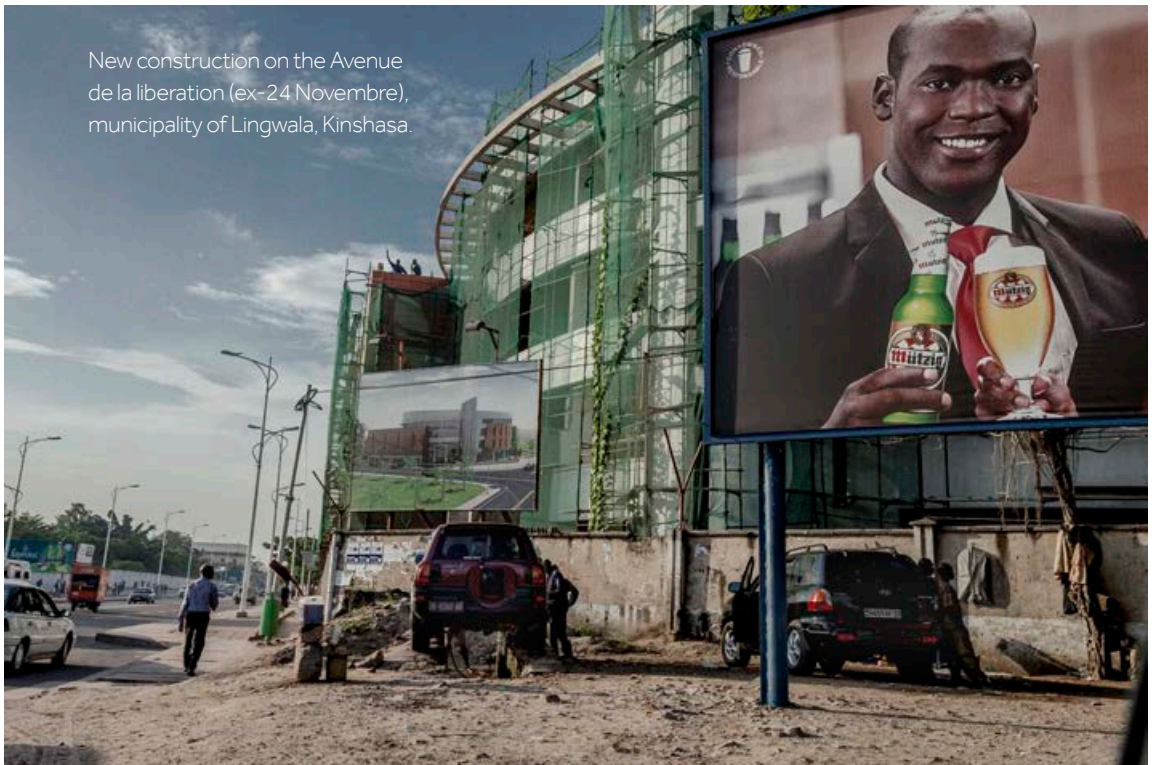
tion between them become visible.

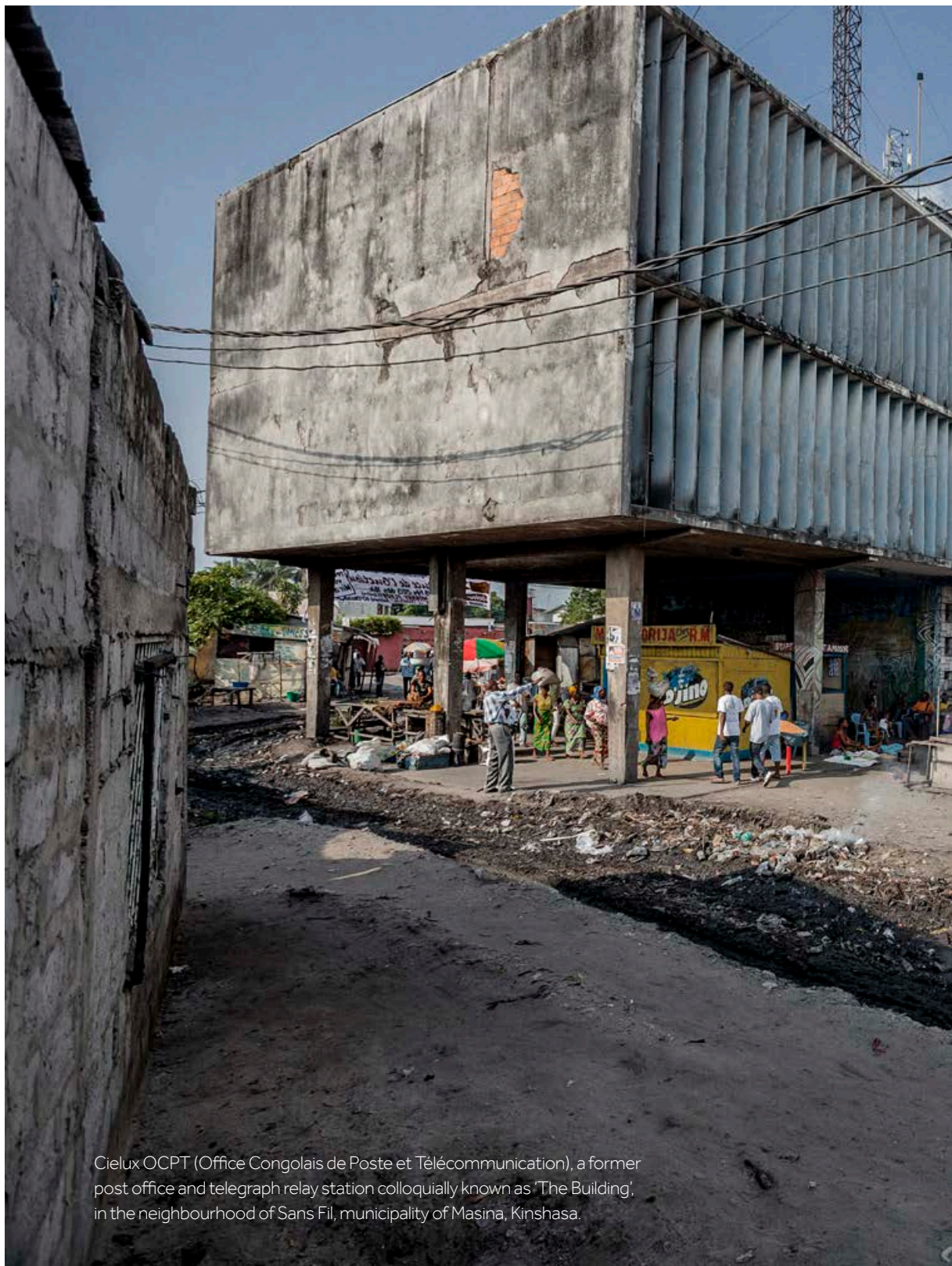
In our combination of two ways of ‘seeing’ that bring together ethnography and photography, we have attempted to develop a form of ‘photo writing’ to delve into the realities of everyday urban living and the different kinds of – colonial and postcolonial – histories that it reflects and sometimes transcends in its attempt to construct more tangible and liveable, inhabitable urban lives and futures.

Filip De Boeck is a Belgian anthropologist, writer, filmmaker and curator. He holds a Professorship at the Institute for Anthropological Research in Africa, a research center of the University of Leuven.

Sammy Baloji is a photographer and visual artist from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He currently works between Lubumbashi and Brussels. The recipient of many awards, his work has been exhibited in important museums and artistic venues across the world.

New construction on the Avenue de la liberation (ex- 24 Novembre), municipality of Lingwala, Kinshasa.





Cielux OCPT (Office Congolais de Poste et Télécommunication), a former post office and telegraph relay station colloquially known as 'The Building', in the neighbourhood of Sans Fil, municipality of Masina, Kinshasa.





Urban expansion at the foot of Mangengenge mountain, on the eastern outskirts of Kinshasa.



Boulevard Lumumba before its renovation, with Mount Mangenge in the distance. March 2013



Remains of pedestrian bridge along Boulevard Lumumba, municipality of Masina, Kinshasa





'The impossible is not Congolese', municipality of Lemba, near the campus of the University of Kinshasa (ex-Lovanium).



Street view, municipality of Kimbanseke, Kinshasa.



Maquette of Kinkole City, one of the last fully planned zones of Léopoldville. The plan was only partly implemented in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Today the maquette gathers dust in a corridor of the municipal house of Nsele.





Urban expansion on Kinshasa's southwestern periphery, municipality of Mont Ngafula.



Night club Le Grand Libulu (the Big Hole), Avenue Lieutenant Colonel Lukusa, Rond Point Forescom, municipality of Gombe, Kinshasa.



New construction at the roundabout of Lemba Super, in the municipality of Lemba, Kinshasa.









'Our dreams of yesterday, today's realities, tomorrow's better future': A 'Cinq Chantiers' billboard advertising the government's infrastructural renewal project (Kabila's '5 Public Works'), Place de l'échangeur, municipality of Limete.

REVIEW // COMPTE RENDU

TRACES OF THE FUTURE: AN ARCHEOLOGY OF MEDICAL SCIENCE IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AFRICA

Paul Wenzel Geissler, Guillaume Lachenal, John Manton,
Noémi Tousignant

University of Chicago Press
Chicago, 2017

Browsing through *Traces of the Future: An Archaeology of Medical Science in Africa* is a tactile experience. Thick and fibrous, beige pages introduce the five medical sites the book investigates, localizing these on a stylized map of Africa that neatly corresponds with a beautiful, colour-coded table of contents overleaf. The book continues with its introduction, a conclusion in disguise that explains what the book has set out to do. Printed on thin, standard paper, the sections of scholarly text feel far more familiar to readers of academia, but again this gives way to prosaic polaroids and stylized still lives, an artist's impression of the medical infrastructure's interiors on smooth photographic paper. The rugged fibre pages return, unfolding in five separate but identically structured chapters on the five case-studies: Uzuakoli, a former leprosy research centre, Ayos, a renowned Cameroonian hospital, Amani, a medical research station, Niakhar, a medical and demographic observation centre and Ki-

sumu, a city dotted with several research stations. Each chapter begins with a brief chronology of the case: when, why and under which conditions the centres founded and how they evolved. Then, an audacious composition of reflective text, quotes, fieldwork notes, video stills, doodles, drawings, plans, black and white portraits and aerial photographs, grouped around a few case-specific themes, invites the reader to "think with" and construct one's own interpretation of the historical and present realities of these cases. It is not clear whether this is truly an academic publication, an artistic collage or just some well-selected field notes and souvenirs put together, the reader is challenged and baffled. One thing is clear however: with its textures, its incredibly rich variety of sources and its delicate feel to make archives come alive and tangible, this book is all about materiality.

As the title of the book reveals, the authors have a "lust for traces" (p. 16), which they

straightforwardly define as “what remain of past action” (p. 15). Traces can be objects, marks, ruins, as well as records, archives, and even memories. Africa, they argue, is replete with them: abandoned colonial vestiges, crumbling infrastructures, postcolonial ruins that once were the hope and pride of independent African nations, but also still functioning (post)colonial constructions and facilities, sometimes fully renovated or expanded, more often refurbished with the limited budgets available. Within these African “wastelands of the aftertime,” it is no coincidence that the authors have chosen to trace five medical infrastructures. Such “sites of twentieth century medical and biological science” (p. 17) embody the many contradictions of the (post)colonial political reality: scientific reverie and mirage, colonial subjugation and welfare, violent racial or social inequalities and hopes for a better future. Because such contradictions stretch across different decades, these medical stations at once materialize different temporalities, from past memories to future possibilities. It is precisely these temporal layers, simultaneously present in each of the five cases, that the authors have traced in the book.

However, rather than taking an evidential (Ginzburg, 1980) approach, trying to fully reconstruct these places’ histories, they have taken an ethnographical one. Deploying material debris as method (Hunt, 1999) the authors use concrete objects and places not just to mine for and unearth lost histories, but also as entry points for (self-)reflection and as conversation

starters, sparking inhabitants or (former) employees of these stations to recollect old memories, tell anecdotes, or intimate hope and nostalgia. In Ayos for instance, a rusty Citroën truck which used to bring medicines to remote villages, not only offers insight into the former colonial *réseau pharmaceutique*, but also engenders nostalgic memories of free healthcare, African trust in western medicine that French doctors had introduced and reflections on the current precarious state of the hospital. Another example: a hole in the concrete floor of one of Amani’s old German buildings turns out to have been made by treasure hunters, who all over Tanzania, are digging for German gold or relics. This quest for treasures – be it profitable or not – lays bare topical myths of colonial riches, German spirits protecting these, and economies of traditional healers protecting treasure diggers against such ghosts. Many more traces, including architectural plans, yellowed portraits and old passports, feature in the book, all of which bring to life the different narratives of these five medical sites. As such, without being complete or exhaustive, the authors sketch fragmentary biographies of each of these cases, much like the concept of “landscape biographies” of Kolen, Renes and Hermans (2015).¹ Like a biography, they pay particular attention to the evolving nature of these sites, and the transformations that have taken place over the years and across colonial and postcolonial temporalities. Moreover, by explicitly visualising and collaging objects and debris, they illustrate how material traces

1 This notion of “landscape biography”, although not present in the book, is used explicitly in an article that Paul Wenzel Geissler co-authored on Amani and which aims at presenting – and critically reflecting on – a mapping of the research center and its surroundings.

echo and elicit these temporalities. The material is the object of inquiry, but has, at the same time, become a rhetoric form in its own right.

Using these visual, non-discursive narratives, the authors not only follow the material turn social sciences have started to take since the 2000s, they push it to the extreme. Challenging “history as form” (Simmel, 2004), they question and expand the boundaries of the anthropological and historical disciplines. This “rejection of the historicist” (p. 11) is of course a result of the methodological approach, of tracing as a process. Criss-crossing and blending timescales, the authors treat traces not just as historical sources but as contemporaneous artefacts that exist in the present and still engender memories, nostalgia, hope and wonder. This is reflected in the book’s provocative lay-out that deploys material objects as visual narratives, as well as in its innovative structure. In contrast to the chronological introduction, the chapters discard any classical historicist sequential format. Rather, they are thematically structured, based simply on whatever topics emerged during the fieldwork. Pictures of colonial tombstones, an old map indicating African graveyards and informants walking past and commenting on quarries that used to be mass graves, are, to give an example, bundled in the topic “Death and dust in Ayos” (p. 101); similar themed mixes include the topic on the Citroën truck, “Present absences” (p. 79), the piece on “Treasure diggers” (p. 163) in Amani and many others. Audacious and vulnerable at the same time, as the authors put the material sources encountered and their private reflections completely in the open,

such an anachronistic structure is innovative and indeed rethinks classical forms of narrating history.

Provocative as this book is, its strength may also carry with it a significant weakness. The authors explicitly search for an “affective encounter” with material objects that not just sparks reactions from informants and interviewees, but generates a “shared historical sense,” “intertwining subjectivity and exterior materiality” (p. 22). From personal field notes and self-portraits to a polaroid picture showing the authors bathing in an Amani rock pool where some of the informants used to bathe in the late 1950s, this affective approach glows throughout the book, but is perhaps epitomized by the re-enactments. These staged events, where some informants play human bait to catch mosquitoes just like they did some sixty years ago, not only give insight into the sometimes violent repetitiveness and *sérieux* of colonial work, but, as the authors indicate, they also “shed light on the ethical and political tensions in our relationship with the past” (p. 153). However, while the re-enactments of European researcher as employer, and former African scientific staff as make-believe employees, certainly do so, they also raise very real and practical questions – how much does one pay the actors? How many performances are demanded before the actor has done his or her job? Such questions can create, and certainly do for me, a certain moral uneasiness.

As *Traces of the Future* pushes the limits of wide-ranging disciplines and domains, ranging from medical anthropology to colonial history, the book is of course bound to cross some boundaries and venture into

wild, uncharted academic territory. Some of its provocative approaches, methods of visualisation, and affective re-enactments may be a step too far for some readers, but in doing so, the book does achieve what the authors had set out to do: raise thought-provoking questions about nostalgia, temporality and the affective through a cunning lay-out of combined texts and material traces. This pioneering book, at once an academic publication, an artistic

collage and well-selected field notes and souvenirs, leads the way beyond classical forms of history and opens up the field of inquiry.

Simon De Nys-Ketels

Department of Architecture and Urban Planning

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REVIEW // COMPTE RENDU

GOMA: STORIES OF STRENGTH AND SORROW FROM EASTERN CONGO

Theodore Trefon and Noël Kabuyaya

Zed Books

London, 2018

Goma – Stories of strength and sorrow sheds light on how Goméens, the inhabitants of Goma, perceive and breathe life into the city that offers them many opportunities, but that is also a potential source of insecurity. It tells the history of Goma, roughly between the 1980s and today, using the individual stories of twelve of its inhabitants. This life-history approach works well in most places and materializes Goma through the eyes of its inhabitants in all its contradictions. The twelve live-histories present a rich and diversified tapestry of experiences, as the protagonists are well chosen and representative of Goma’s urban composition. Centring people’s experiences, and their resilience in dealing with difficulties – actively (re)shaping the urban environment, is refreshing. That their stories form the core of the book makes it an engaging and accessible read, one unhindered by jargon or an overload of theory.

The selected live-stories capture the contradictions of living in Goma, ‘strength and sorrow’ in the subtitle of the book, or ‘danger and opportunity’, as emphasized

well in the introduction. Yet, the framing of these contradictions by the authors is sometimes less elegant. The opening-paragraph of the introduction for example reads: “Suffering, ethnic hatred, poverty and violence are idioms commonly used to describe the social context of Goma and its North Kivu hinterland both by local people and by the swarms of international do-gooders struggling to bring about peace and security. Jealousy, mistrust and fear are other sentiments commonly expressed.” While they propose to contrast such “dominant discourses of violence” by stories of resilience and agency, at times they still come close to reiterating the eastern DRC as a kind of “heart of darkness”. Some sweeping statements further reduce complex realities to catchy one-liners. The prose which sometimes has a journalistic feel, reinforces this. What to think about this statement for example: “The physically unthinkable and the morally reprehensible have become commonplace in the fight to stay alive in this environment, where no one knows what new trauma

tomorrow may bring. Why worry about a hypothetical sickness that could be caused by drinking unsafe water or eating spoiled food? Recourse to prostitution and therefore potential exposure to HIV/AIDS in order to buy food for dinner follows the same logic.” While such phrasing might catch the reader’s attention, it offers little insight into the complex choices people make. Moreover it makes it difficult for the reader to distinguish whether the authors are perpetuating the narrative tropes often used to characterize the Congo, or actively writing against it.

The more fundamental critique however pertains to the use of story-telling in this book. Centring people’s experiences is necessary and important, and I wish it happened more often in the academic production on the eastern Congo. Yet, this book also shows the potential downsides of such an approach. The authors claim that the book is “the first urban sociology of this unsettling danger-fraught social crucible”. While it certainly offers an interesting insight into the social texture of Goma, the claim that this is an urban sociology is open to question.

The authors chose to let the stories speak for themselves. Taking people’s stories at face value is not without its perils. This is clear when it comes to the way the authors deal with ethnicity and identity. Several life histories make reference to ethnicity. In chapter 4 for example (‘A stonemason’s paradise’) Celestin and Mituga explain they are happy they overcame ethnic divisions “that complicate this city where tribalism reigns”. The authors do not – here, and in other places in the book – contextualize or nuance such statements, reproducing images of Goma and the wider

eastern DRC plagued by tribalism and ethnic antagonism.

Ethnicity plays a significant role in social interactions, and often plays an important role in conflicts, both in Goma and the wider eastern DRC. Yet, from a book claiming to be an urban sociology one expects that the role of identity in the urban context would be dealt with more carefully. Why not emphasize ethnicity has been mobilized politically by politicians during and even before the conflicts in the DRC, or elaborate more on the historical production of ethnic identities? The authors call Rwanda for example the “land of the brothers we don’t like”. Relationships between Rwanda and Congo have been, and still often are, fraught with tension. However, not explaining where this enmity comes from, depoliticizes relations between the two countries and ignores that this has not always been the case, but is the outcome of specific historical processes and years of conflict.

To give another illustration, explaining in the glossary that Banyamulenge is “a term used to identify ethnic Tutsis of questionable Congolese citizenship” [own emphasis] is equally problematic. Do the authors agree that Banyamulenge citizenship is questionable – a very political statement? While some have cast doubt on the citizenship of the Banyamulenge within specific historical and political contexts in which citizenship was (ab)used as a political tool, Banyamulenge citizenship is recognized by law. This book is praiseworthy because it puts the experiences of the inhabitants of Goma centre stage, and gives a rare insight into their lives. At the same time, allowing these life-histories to speak for themselves raises problems. They are not

merely individual stories, but also the product of a social and political present. Not addressing the context in which they have been produced, and failing to make the link between perceptions and the impact they have on lived social realities risks reproducing politicized accounts of Goma's history. The interpretation of these live-stories should not be left entirely to a(n) (uninformed) reader.

Thus, *Goma – Stories of strength and sorrow* raises an important question. How are we to write (hi)stories that privilege people's lived experiences, contextualize them

within the context that has produced them, without delegitimizing these experiences? How do social scientists give voice to these experiences, frame them, without overriding the voices they interpret, but also without reiterating damaging tropes and stereotypes? This book raises fundamental questions, but it does not go far enough to effectively address them.

Gillian Mathys

Department of History, Ghent University

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Office Location – Bureau

Dominique Godfroid
Faculty of Bioscience Engineering
Dpt. of Plant Production
Campus Coupure, Coupure Links 653
B-9000 Gent, Belgium
T: +32 9 264 61 28 – M: +32 0 471 85 01 19
E-mail: AfrikaFocus@UGent.be – <http://www.AfrikaFocus.eu>

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Databases & Indexes

DOAJ, Agris (FAO), ProQuest

ISSN: 0772-084X

ISBN: 9789090313825

E-ISSN: 2031-356X

Editor – Editeur responsable

J. De Smedt, Koophandelstraat 28, 9160 Lokeren

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