African Identities and Community Participation in the Time of 'Nation'

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The idea of "nation-ness" as "the most legitimate value in the political life of our time" (Anderson, 1991) is rarely reflected upon. Our political identities as individuals and as members of different social groups in society are shaped by how we relate to the nation and by what we imagine the nation to be. Indeed, wars, conflicts, and great sacrifices have been made in the name of the 'nation'. As Africans, we imagine that we share a common African heritage and African-ness. At the same time, national differences between Africans are institutionalized through state policies, and objectified in very tangible national borders that create a physical distinction between 'us' and 'them'. In turn, these institutional processes become everyday experiences that shape what we think, what we do, and who we are. Questions of identity in the aftermath of independence across Africa have often surfaced through national concerns in the form of ethnic conflicts, genocide, and the displacement of millions into neighboring countries. In this paper, I argue that the representations and meanings attributed to African identities are key for understanding patterns of conflict and for unlocking African potentials. The values of collective self-reliance, unity, and pan-Africanism which have historically guided our liberatory framework must engage with shifting notions of African identities. Through examples of case studies of participatory community empowerment and mobilisation, I will highlight the racial, gendered and classed constructions of African identities that open up and close down possibilities for critical consciousness, social change and social justice. These examples will be drawn from the findings of Photovoice projects from different contexts. Photovoice is a participatory action research method that engages social groups to tell stories about their lived realities – the assets and challenges they face in their everyday lives in their communities – and what changes they want to see. The value of Photovoice as a tool for creative action research and consciousness will also be discussed. Ultimately, the values beliefs and institutional practices that define what it means to be African will determine to a large extent the possibilities, limitations, and forms that socio-political organizing can take in an ever-shifting national context.

Reconsidering South African TRC in the Current Context of Transitional Justice Studies

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South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has affected the rise and development of the transitional justice (TJ) framework, leading to the implementation of many related policies as well as establishment of new university courses around the world. In such a general context, the South African case has been repeatedly referred to as a model case to promote national reconciliation in a post-conflict/transitional society, while many locals as well as scholars have accumulated critical views on it.

Yet when comparing the South African case to other TJ cases, such as Rwandan gacaca and the international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the former still shows a uniqueness regarding the social reactions in the post-TRC (TJ) period. More specifically, that uniqueness has been witnessed in local actions organized by several external bodies to the TRC that might have been spontaneously supplementing the incomplete aspect or *unfinished business* of official activities of the TRC.

Rita Kesselring (2017) analyses one such organisation, the Khulumani Support Group, which originally began its work during the TRC period, yet has developed its own programmes in contacting victims. Her work reassesses the TRC's legacy in an indirect manner through the lens of external organisation to the TRC although the linkage in terms of ideal and objective among them could be recognised. This presentation takes a similar direction with Kesselring's work to reconsider the social influence of the TRC, yet pays more attention to an idea that such *derivatives* may have been realised because specific incompleteness of the official body (the TRC) functioned as an indirect condition.

One possible theoretical hint for this argument can be provided by James Scott's *Seeing Like a Sate*. His discussion on the relationship between a modern state project and locals' resilience explains that the former is destined to fail while the latter might often recover the social *ruin* after the formal failure as the case of autonomous suturing by local inhabitants in Brasilia after the failure of governmental urban planning.

On the other hand, I assume that a specific incompleteness/failure of official TJ project might elicit unexpected action of collective recovery in such an official failure. Put differently, this idea addresses indirect influence of insufficient governmental/political control both of the official programme and the society, that did not clearly observed in other TJ cases such as Rwandan gacaca, that many criticisms have been focused on the excessive state control to the process and locals, and the ICTY, that has totally been under judicial control in a physically remote area—the Hague—from the place of conflict, followed by a complete indifference from locals. Further, the present argument attempts to consider a strategic sense in policy making to leave an incomplete space for successive actions that should be provided by external bodies to the original institution, although the happening cannot be planned. This idea simply opposes an ordinary policy making that should be based on an objective cause-effect explanatory logic.

In such an argument, the South African TRC would be referred to as a predecessor that embodied a unique failure or an institution with specific incompleteness rather than as a simple text-book reference. Such an argument has merit to analyse a TJ policy beyond success/failure scheme, covering wider social aspects as well as long-term influence of the policy. An official presupposition for supporting and implementing a TJ options, which is crucial when appealing to donors, takes a shape of the following scenario: locals would change their mentality particularly among former enemies, heal their trauma, be subject to promote rule of law, and form a reconciled nationhood under sufficient control of an official TJ body. It is one of recent universal basis to an engagement into a post-conflict/transitional society, however, an argument over post-TRC context provided in this presentation would open another path to think of in a more locally oriented manner.

Scott, James. 1998. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Kesselring, Rita. 2017. *Bodies of Truth: Law, Memory, and Emancipation in Post-apartheid South Africa*. Stanford University Press.

The Traditional Debate in South Africa: What is the Fuss All About?

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In this paper, I look at three aspects of Traditional Leadership debate and legal framework in South Africa. Firstly, recognition of the institution of Traditional Leadership is important in a plural society, such as hours. However, we must explore what we mean by 'recognition', what role should be played by traditional leaders and their powers.

Secondly, I explore the role of the state and try to look at the complex power relations, rent seeking and rentier Capitalism. This is borne out by attempts to develop legislation and policies which entrench traditional leaders' powers. In particular, I will focus on the problematic Triad of state, traditional leaders and industry, especially extractive and agriculture. Using case studies, I will show how this dislocation and dispossession of communities and denial of their customary rights to land.

Thirdly, I will look at creation, recreation and manipulation of identity as a political project. This is linked to patriarchy, ethnocentric chauvinism and nativism.

This concludes with discussion of possible options, struggles in rural South Africa and the constitution. The paper is located within a feminist critique of codified customary and legacy of colonialism. Why do South African government, traditional leaders and other key players in society reproduce colonial constructions of identity and customary law?

Signs of Spontaneous Democratization in Mozambique:
Special Focus on the Opposition Party and Its Ex-Soldiers

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This study provides a new interpretation of the role of opposition parties in democracy in Africa. It attempts to present the shift from heteronomous democratization in the 1990s realized by the initiative of international organizations to spontaneous democratization led by domestic actors by focusing on the tensions among the weakening opposition party and its supporters, the latter mainly composed of ex-soldiers of the civil war in Mozambique.

The first part examines the mechanism of recent political violence between the government and the military wing of the opposition party in Mozambique, during the years between 2013 and 2016. This part identifies two main causes of political violence: (1) the insufficient power of the opposition party to take responsibility for its supporters; and (2) the tension between the party and its active supporter ex-soldiers, this being the main cause of military wing's reactivation, resulting in political violence.

In the second part, the study makes comparative and analogical inferences from Zimbabwean cases. The first case is the political violence against the opposition party's military wing, called the *Gukurahundi*, in 1983–1987. The second case concerns the protests by war veterans against the misappropriation of pensions by the Zimbabwean government in 1997, resulting in the democratic treatment of land distribution in the 2000s. The first comparison indicated that close-run elections motivated the dominant party to attempt total defeat of the opposition by force. The second comparison confirmed the crucial role of ex-soldiers as a pressure group in the politics of a post-conflict society.

The study concludes that the contemporary situation in Mozambique shares common elements with Zimbabwean cases, and whereas the latter cases happened in different phases, the Mozambican case occurred in a single period. The author suggests that spontaneous democracy develops from tensions not only between political parties, but also between a party and its supporters. In the Mozambican context, the main agenda of the ongoing peace agreement negotiations presented by the opposition party includes reforming the election system in order to realize power sharing and decentralization.