Volume 55 Number 1 April 2020

GIGA | Africa Spectrum

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Research Article

GIGA | Africa Spectrum

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 3–32

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720916087
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
SAGE

Measuring the Middle Class in Africa – Income Versus Assets Approach

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Abstract

Traditionally, economists measure middle class from the income perspective. Considering quality of data for many African countries, relying solely on income may, unfortunately, lead to an incorrect picture. This article compares and analyses the African middle class measured by income and by ownership of assets. Results indicate that middle class sizes differ significantly in some countries, while in others they are more or less the same. Regression analyses performed to investigate potential correlates of the African income and assets middle class sizes indicate that the African assets middle class size is positively associated with income per capita and negatively with assets inequality. To a lesser extent, it is positively affected by education and negatively by ethnic fractionalisation. The African income middle class size depends positively on income per capita and education, while negatively on income inequality.

Keywords

Africa, middle class, income, assets

Manuscript received: 5 August 2019; accepted: 31 January 2020

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Introduction

The debate on how large the middle class is in developing countries, or in Africa in particular, has been going on for some time. The worldwide interest has been provoked mostly since the 1990s with the rapid evolution of the middle class in some Asian and Latin American countries. Another factor was the rising number of studies underlying the role of the middle class in economic development (e.g. Chun et al., 2017). This development has further encouraged research on how to eventually define the middle class and how to measure its size in developing countries' context, especially when the measurements applied in developed countries fail to provide a correct picture.

Despite the recent interest and development, there is no single widely held definition of the middle class. Sociologists have paid much attention to conceptualise it in relation to other social classes. Neo-Weberian and Neo-Marxist theories of class represent two influential perspectives on the middle class. Both emphasise the importance of market capacities in shaping life opportunities and how the middle class differs from the working class and the upper class in this dimension (Fitzpatrick, 2012). However, while Max Weber and his followers attempt to answer the question of 'in the middle of what' the middle class is, Neo-Marxists tend to explain the relationship between the means of production and the middle class structure. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu is to some extent linking these two. While examining the French educational system and introducing the concept of 'cultural capital', Bourdieu argues that middle- and upper-class students were more likely to persist in school, attain credentials and become part of the middle or upper class themselves upon adulthood, reinforcing stratification in society. According to Bourdieu, it is indeed the educational system which reproduces the existing social class and does not serve, as naturally expected, as a social mobility factor (Dumais, 2015).

Economists tend to simplify the concept of middle class in order to be able to measure its size. Typically, they measure middle class using income (or expenditure on consumption) of households or individuals as a particular (middle) section of an income distribution or as a certain interval around the mean or median income. The size of the middle class is then measured as a proportion of households or individuals that fall into such a section or interval. However, narrowing down the middle class to merely income (flow) measures does not reveal much about the actual material living conditions of households (stock) in the relevant income (consumption) brackets (Wietzke and Sumner, 2014). Unfortunately, the available evidence on middle class in developing countries so far has been based largely on per capita income (or consumption expenditure) collected through large budget surveys (Shimeles and Ncube, 2015). In case of Africa, this is even more precarious since (income) data of many African countries are either unavailable, or inconsistent (Jerven, 2013). Various attempts to measure the middle class by other than income measures exist (Shimeles and Ncube, 2015; Thurlow et al., 2015, etc.), but these focus rather on creating new measures of the middle class in different developing countries and regions, than on comparison of various approaches and investigation of differences between them. Similarly, the existing research does not explain why results among different measures vary, and what the implications are for policies.

Our research aims to fill this gap. We acknowledge that the middle class could (and should) be measured by a multidimensional set of criteria. In order to explore disparities between a differently measured middle class, we have decided to compare the African middle class measured by income and ownership of assets. The selected approach allows us to anchor the discussion about differences in results of middle class measurements into a more clearly defined framework. Our aim is to investigate to what extent the middle class measured by income and by ownership of assets vary in size. As a sample, we have chosen all African countries for which data are available.

For the purpose of our research, we construct and work with *income middle class* (measured by households' income) and *assets middle class* (measured by households' assets ownership). We explore in which African countries assets are more or less equally distributed when compared to income, how this affects the size of the middle class according to these measures and whether there is an association between inequalities and the income- and assets middle class size. We also identify countries where large shares of people are classified as income middle class while they do not belong to the assets middle class (and vice versa). We also investigate to what extent the composition of income- and assets middle class differ according to the three main middle class subcategories defined by the African Development Bank (AfDB, 2011): the floating, lower- and upper-middle class and how the differences in both middle class sizes change when the floating middle class is excluded. And last but not least, we explore potential correlates of (1) the assets middle class size, (2) the income middle class size and (3) the differences between them. For this reason, we work with variables such as the quality of governance, GDP per capita, education, ethnic fractionalisation, population, income inequality and assets inequality. We believe that analysing such differences between various measures of the middle class could have significant policy implications.

The article is organised as follows. First, we review literature that deals with various approaches to measuring middle class. This is done to point at some methodological concerns when measuring the middle class, especially in low-income countries such as Africa where the most challenges prevail in this regard. Then we describe the data we work with and the methods and procedures we use to construct the African income middle class and the African assets middle class. The subsequent section presents and discusses the results of our comparative and regression analyses. The final section summarises our main conclusions.

Literature Review

Typically in economics the middle class is measured by income (or expenditures on consumption) within some interval. Unfortunately, there is no agreement among scholars on such an interval (see discussion on this issue for example, in Melber, 2017 or Southall, 2018). For example, Ravallion (2009) prefers to use the income median per capita (and not the mean income) and the symmetric interval in the income space around it. Such an approach has been applied by Thurow (1987) and Birdsall (2010) who both define the space around from 75 per cent to 125 per cent of the country's income median

per capita. Others, such as Barro (2000) defines the space between the second- and fourth-income quintiles, and Alesina and Perotti (1996) define the space between the third- and fourth-income quintiles. Applying relative approach may, however, cause some problems.

As shown in the research by Banerjee and Duflo (2008), such an approach can bear the risk that the middle class defined in relative terms can be so poor in absolute terms (in some low-income countries) that it may entirely fall under the international poverty line. Therefore, some researchers incline to construct absolute thresholds of income to measure the middle class in low-income countries, usually with a minimum level of income per capita of USD 2 per day. Again, there is no agreement on such interval. Banerjee and Duflo (2008) define the range of USD 2–10 per day, while Ravallion (2009) uses a definition of USD 2–13 per day. Considering international standards, a thus defined middle class is actually very poor. In most developed countries people with USD 2–10 per day would be considered extremely poor. This led others, for example, Birdsall (2010), to measure the middle class in developing countries with the minimum income per capita bound to USD 10 per day. At the same time, Birdsall set the upper threshold at the 95th percentile of the income distribution of a country, since setting an absolute upper threshold bears the risk that there may be no upper class in countries with very low income.

Unfortunately, methodological and measurement issues are not the only challenges researchers on the African middle class face. There are also problems with availability and reliability of income (or consumption) data for African countries (Jerven, 2013). This situation has led some researchers to explore alternative approaches to measuring the middle class. One of them is the self-identification approach used as a supplementary technique by HCP (Le Haut Commissariat au Plan) in Morocco. It assumes that each head of a family associates himself/herself with a given social class (Boufous and Khariss, 2015).[1] However, for example, as outcomes of a research study from Soweto in South Africa indicate, people often tend to identify themselves as middle class as they see themselves richer than the poor and poorer than the rich (Alexander et al., 2013). Because of this, some researchers prefer to apply other criteria to measure the middle class.

For example, Thurlow et al. (2015) choose the three following criteria: (1) head of the household or her spouse has finished all levels of secondary education, (2) they all reside in housing with decent amenities and (3) head of the household or her spouse is employed in a skilled, non-farm sector. Another perspective presented by Shimeles and Ncube (2015) calls upon the fact that the middle class owns certain assets which the poor people do not have access to. They introduce the concept of measuring the middle class based on evaluating a 'decent housing environment', which differentiates poor people from the middle class. They construct an assets index based on responses to the following questions: (1) sources of water for households (such as pipe water, tap water, water kiosk, well, etc.), (2) conditions of housing (number of rooms, floor material – parquet, cement, ceramic, earth – roof material – bricks, tin, grass, earth, etc.), (3) access to electricity and (4) ownership of durable assets (radio, television, refrigerator, and car). Generally,

ownership of assets (housing, durables, etc.) is often used to measure welfare of households (or individuals). In the developing countries' context, the ownership of assets has also been applied to concepts of poverty and pro-poor growth (see, for example, Ezzrari and Verme, 2012; Oyekale and Oyekale, 2013 and Cardozo and Grosse, 2009).

Measuring the Middle Class: Methods, Data and Procedures

The aim of our research is to investigate to what extent the middle class measured by income and by assets differ in size across individual African countries. To construct the African income middle class, we use income data available from the World Bank's PovcalNet (2018). To construct the African assets middle class, we create our own assets index inspired by Shimeles and Ncube (2015) using data from the Demographic and Households Surveys (DHS) (United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2018). On both types of data, we subsequently apply the same absolute thresholds to measure the middle class.

To set the absolute thresholds, we have found inspiration in the African Development Bank (AfDB) classification which measures the middle class as people living on between USD 2 and 20 per person per day (2011). The Bank further splits the middle class into three sub-categories: (1) the floating middle class with income between USD 2 and 4 per person per day, (2) the lower-middle class with income between USD 4 and 10 per person per day and (3) the upper-middle with income between USD 10 and 20 per person per day. The AfDB defined these thresholds in 2011; however, the World Bank changed its absolute definition of extreme poverty from USD 1.25 per person per day to USD 1.90 in 2015 and also adjusted all income data in the PovcalNet database from 2005 constant prices to 2011 constant prices. Therefore, for the purpose of our research we have adjusted the AfDB thresholds accordingly, multiplying them by 1.52 (i.e. 1.90/1.25). This means that after the adjustment we work with the following sub-categories of the middle class: the floating middle class with income between USD 3 and 6 per day, the lower-middle class with income between USD 6 and 15 per day and the upper-middle class with income between USD 15 and 30 per day. For comparison, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) works with USD 5.50–13 per day for *vulnerable* middle class and USD 13–70 per day for middle class in Latin America (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2019). So, even if the range of USD 6–30 per day for the lower- and upper-middle class might seem high for Africa, the thresholds are rather low even for the developing countries standards. We apply these absolute thresholds for both income and assets data (see below).

It is important to stress that by applying these thresholds, we get the *all-African middle class*s rather than the actual middle class in individual countries (which is more of a relative nature). Therefore, the size of the middle class that we calculate should be interpreted as a proportion of people in an individual country that belongs to the all-African middle class. To reflect this distinction, we use the designations of *African income middle class size* and *African assets middle class size* (in an individual country). When

referring to (African) middle class without any attributes, we mean people with income between USD 3 and 30 per day (and corresponding thresholds in the assets approach).

African Income Middle Class Across African Countries

To construct and calculate the African income middle class, we use the most recent data on aggregate income distributions for 50 countries in Africa for which the data are available in PovcalNet (2018).[2] It is important to note in this regard that these most recent data for African countries include a large span of years: the most remote year is 2003 (Gambia) and the most recent year is 2015 (Togo, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Egypt), with an average year of the most recent surveys being 2010/2011 (with the standard deviation of 2.68 years).

The PovcalNet database provides us only with the aggregate income distribution data (i.e. population deciles, vigintiles or percentiles and their cumulative income shares) for each of the 50 African countries. To be able to calculate the size of the income middle class for individual African countries, we must first disaggregate the data to the household level. Using the Distributive Analysis Stata Package, we perform the disaggregation procedure assuming a log-normal shape of the income distribution with the optional adjustment to ensure that the initial distribution matches the aggregated data (see Araar and Duclos, 2007). We repeat this procedure by countries to obtain the (disaggregated) income vector of each country. This vector for each country is then multiplied by the corresponding mean income value which is available in the PovcalNet database. Thus, we obtain the actual income distribution data for all 50 individual African countries (see also Harmáček et al., 2016 or Harmáček et al., 2017). We then use the middle class threshold values to calculate the proportion (per cent) of people that belong to the above defined subcategories of the African middle class in each African country.

African Assets Middle Class Across African Countries

To construct and calculate the African assets middle class, we develop our own assets index using DHS data. We first identify all African countries for which the most recent issue of DHS data (ranging from 2010 to 2014) are available – this is thirty countries in total. Subsequently, we choose all indicators which measure ownership of assets. We exclude some of them for several reasons: (1) some indicators reflect ownership of assets of an extremely low financial value (e.g. bed nets), (2) some indicators display ownership of assets with limited usage in many areas (e.g. having a motorboat is irrelevant for people living far from the coast), (3) some indicators represent ownership of assets which are not increasing welfare per se (e.g. having a hectare of agricultural land hardly creates any benefit; it is beneficiary indirectly only as it produces income). Lately, we exclude some indicators due to insufficient data availability for African countries and some observations (households) with incomplete data. The aim is to optimise the number of categories for those indicators having more than three to simplify the structure of the composite assets index. The merging of categories has been done in a way which allows the qualitative alignment of categories (e.g. a finished roof is better than a

rudimentary roof which is better than a natural or another roof). Finally, we end up with 13 indicators of ownership of assets for which data for all thirty African countries are available (Table 1). They can be grouped into three sub-categories: (1) housing, (2) in-house equipment and (3) other property. For comparison, Shimeles and Ncube (2015) work with eleven indicators.

The most challenging part usually comes with the determination of weights of indicators. For example, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2008) lists seven methods which can be classified into two categories: (1) weights determined by statistical models, or (2) by expert/participatory assessments. Methods of statistical weighting are based on characteristics of data and therefore may be less arbitrary than expert/participatory weighting. Many options exist such as the multiple correspondence analysis (e.g. used by Boccanfuso et al., 2009; Ezzrari and Verme, 2012), the polychoric principle component analysis (e.g. used by Cardozo and Grosse, 2009) or the fuzzy analysis (e.g. used by Oyekale and Oyekale, 2013). However, their disadvantage lies in the fact that they do not assess the importance of variables from a theoretical perspective. On the contrary, expert weights may better reflect the theoretical relevance of variables, but their credibility depends on selection of experts and their understanding of the process. We use multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) and rescale the results linearly in a manner which assigns zero points to households with the worst set of assets (i.e. households that are in the last category for each indicator) and 100 points to households with the best set of assets (i.e. households that are in the first category for each indicator). Table 1 presents the final structure of our assets index together with (rescaled) weights of each category.

After all calculations, we undertake a sensitivity analysis of the index which confirms that the outcomes of the index are robust and relatively insensitive to the normative decisions we have made during the process of its construction.[3] The last step is to project the absolute measure of income middle class (USD 3–30) into the assets index. This is not a straightforward task because the assets index and income have different units of measurement. Therefore, we base the calculation on the average proportions of people who live below and above the middle class as defined by the absolute income thresholds. We calculate the (unweighted) average proportions of people below the USD 3 and 6 thresholds and above the USD 15 and 30 thresholds. These average proportions are used then to set thresholds for the assets data. Specifically, we calculate thresholds of 43.17 (analogy of USD 3 income), 70.39 (USD 6), 90.31 (USD 15) and 97.09 (USD 30). Subsequently, we employ these thresholds to compute the assets middle class sizes for each country.

Limits of the Middle Class Quantifications

The availability of data on African countries poses the most serious challenge to our research. First, we are left with a set of only thirty African countries to analyse (the final sample consists of countries for which data on both income and assets are available). Second, due to insufficient data for all pre-selected indicators, we have to limit the number of indicators used in the assets index as well as the number of observations

Table 1. Indicators and Weights of Our Assets Index.

Indicators		Weights
Category 1: Housing		
(1) Type of roof	Finished (e.g. made of zinc, metal)	0.000
	Rudimentary (e.g. wood planks)	3.116
	Natural or another	7.192
(2) Type of toilet	Flushing	0.000
	Pit toilet	7.841
	Other, or no toilet	10.810
(3) Type of cooking fuel	Electricity, gas and kerosene	0.000
	Coal	4.145
	Other (e.g. firewood)	9.824
(4) Type of water	Piped water	0.000
	Tube well water	4.001
	Another source (e.g. unprotected well)	6.186
(5) Access to electricity	Yes	0.000
	No	8.907
(6) Finished floor	Yes	0.000
(e.g. cement and parquet)	No	7.910
(7) Finished walls	Yes	0.000
(e.g. bricks and concrete blocks)	No	6.780
Category 2: In-house equipment		
(8) Radio	Yes	0.000
	No	4.099
(9) TV	Yes	0.000
	No	8.931
(10) Fridge	Yes	0.000
	No	10.179
Category 3: Other property		
(11) Motorbike	Yes	0.000
	No	2.912
(12) Car/Lorry	Yes	0.000
	No	9.743
(13) Phone	Yes	0.000
	No	6.526

Source. Authors.

(households) included in the analysis. Third, the 'most recent data' for African countries that are available in PovcalNet encompass a large span of years, covering the period from 2003 (Gambia) to 2015 (Togo, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Egypt). On the contrary, the survey years in the most recent issue of DHS data range between 2010 and 2014. This may pose a challenge particularly for our comparative analysis. Finally, we are aware that we focus only on cross-country comparisons of the most recent available data, without considering changes over time.

Research Outcomes of the Comparative and Regression Analyses

In this section, we perform comparative and regression analyses and present and discuss their results. First, we focus on the African income and assets middle class across countries. We calculate their sizes and compare them across countries. We also deal with the composition of the middle class across countries in terms of the various categories (floating, lower- and upper-middle class). Second, we analyse and compare the influence of the same set of selected factors on the size of both African income and assets middle classes as well as on differences between them.

Size of the African Income and Assets Middle Class Across African Countries

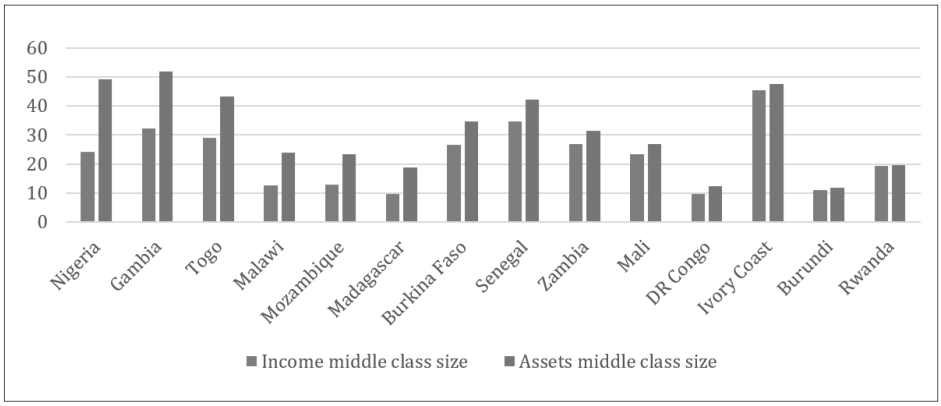
Based on the most recent data and methodology described earlier, we first calculate the size of African income middle class and African assets middle class for thirty countries for which data are available (using corresponding thresholds discussed above). Table 2 displays the summary statistics. It is important to stress that these results are not weighted by population size of the respective countries (each country has equal weight).

Table 2 shows that the range for both middle class sizes differs slightly. The maximum for African income middle class is observed for Gabon. The value of 75.27 per cent means that the vast majority of Gabonese live with income between USD 3 and 30 per day and therefore belong to the African income middle class. On the contrary, only 9.67 per cent of citizens in the DR Congo belong to it, too. A similar interpretation also holds

Table 2. Summary Statistics for African Income and Assets Middle Class Sizes.

	African income middle class size (shares on population, %)	African assets middle class size (shares on population, %)
Minimum value	9.67 (DR Congo)	11.76 (Liberia)
Maximum value	75.27 (Gabon)	63.10 (Ghana)
Mean	33.33	32.65
Median	28.85	30.17
Standard deviation	17.69	15.30

Source. Authors.

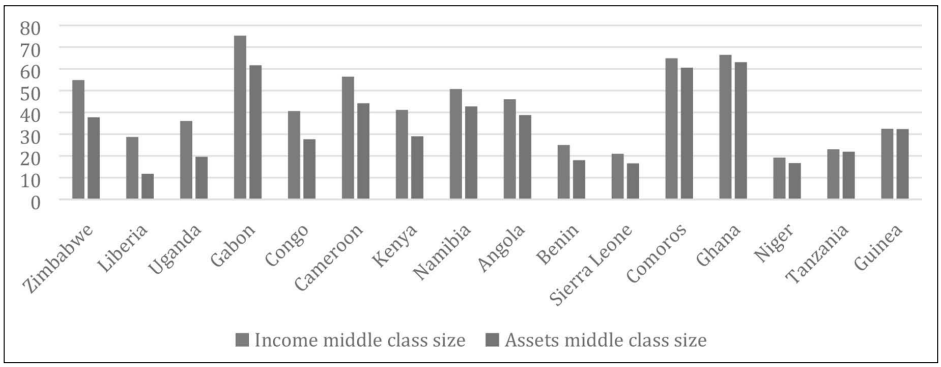


Graph 1. The Middle Class Sizes (%) for Countries with Larger African Assets Middle Class. Source: Authors.

for the African assets middle class where the maximum observed for Ghana is lower in comparison to income middle class (63.10 per cent), while the minimum observed for Liberia is higher (11.76 per cent). See Appendix 1 for details.

In our sample, the means of both middle class sizes are basically the same. This is an obvious consequence of derivation of the assets middle class thresholds from the income data (we discuss this above). However, despite the large similarity in setting the thresholds for both types of African middle class, it is apparent that the differences between the middle class sizes can be very substantial for some countries. Graph 1 presents all countries (14) whose African assets middle class is *larger*. They are ranked from left to right according to the difference calculated as the African income middle class size (per cent) minus the African assets middle class size (per cent) across individual countries. Nigeria is the most lopsided country in our sample, as it has the largest difference (−24.85 p.p.) in favour of the assets middle class. This means that only 24.26 per cent of Nigeria's population belongs to the African income middle class but more than 49 per cent fall into the African assets middle class. The following four countries (Gambia, Togo, Malawi and Mozambique) have differences larger than −10 p.p. The most balanced countries in this regard are Burundi and Rwanda which have a difference smaller than −1 p.p.

Graph 2 presents the remaining 16 countries as having the African assets middle class *smaller*. They are ranked from left to right again according to the size of difference calculated in the same way as above. Zimbabwe is the most lopsided country, with the largest difference (+17.09 p.p.) in favour of the African income middle class. This indicates that 54.85 per cent of Zimbabwe's population belongs to the African income middle class, while only 37.76 per cent fall into the African assets middle class. Seven countries have a difference larger than + 10 p.p. Besides Zimbabwe, it is also Liberia, Uganda, Gabon, Congo, Cameroon and Kenya. The most balanced country is Guinea with a difference of only + 0.13 p.p.



Graph 2. The Middle Class Sizes (%) for Countries with Larger African Income Middle Class. Source: Authors.

To check whether the differences between the African income and assets middle class sizes across individual countries are statistically significant, we use a mean comparison test for dependent samples (paired t-test) at the 5 per cent significance level and the related 95 per cent confidence intervals for the differences. We perform the comparative analysis with all observations that are available (30): the test statistic is 0.35 and the *p*-value is 0.731. The results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the size of the African income middle class and the size of the African assets middle class across individual African countries.

Another relevant question concerns the (in)equality of assets and income distribution in individual countries and whether there is an association between them. To compare the inequalities, we calculate and contrast Gini coefficients for our income and assets distributional data. The (unweighted) mean of the assets Gini coefficient for the thirty African countries is 0.3982 (standard deviation is 0.097). The mean of the income Gini coefficient for the same set of countries equals 0.429 (with a standard deviation of 0.066). The small difference is also confirmed by the paired t-test which is not significant (*p*-value is equal to 0.205). To investigate an association between the inequalities, we use Pearson's correlation coefficient. We also test whether it is statistically significant. The correlation coefficient (−0.23) and the *p*-value of the significance test (0.222) indicate that there is a negative but insignificant relationship between the two inequalities (see Appendix 3 for details). This suggests that similar cross-country analyses should focus not only on the distribution of flows (income), but also on the distribution of stocks (assets).

Composition of the African Middle Class Across African Countries

As already mentioned, the African middle class can be further divided into three subgroups: the floating middle class (with income between USD 3 and 6 per person per day, or its equivalent), the lower-middle class (USD 6–15) and the upper-middle class (USD 15–30). We are interested to know to what extent these sub-categories differ in both

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Groups of the African Income and Assets Middle Class.

	African income middle class size (shares on population, %)				African assets middle class size (shares on population, %)			
Descriptive statistics	Floating	Lower	Upper	Without floating	Floating	Lower	Upper	Without floating
Mean	21.74	9.93	1.67	11.59	21.81	9.85	0.99	10.83
Median	21.8	7.21	0.85	7.95	18.33	8.17	0.65	8.81
Standard deviation	8.60	8.01	1.85	9.77	10.41	6.16	0.79	6.76
Minimum	7.62	1.50	0.04	1.6 (DR Congo)	7.61	1.41	0.04	1.45 (Liberia)
Maximum	38.34	30.77	6.165	36.93 (Gabon)	45.75	21.41	2.70	23.34 (Namibia)

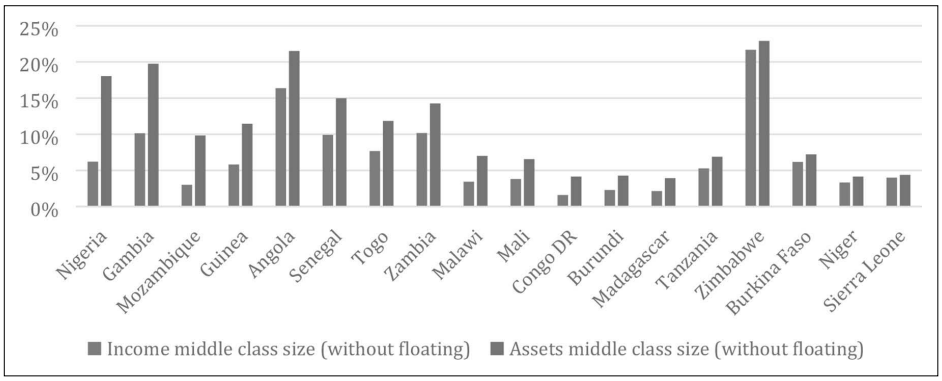
Source. Authors. *Note.* Only thirty countries included for which both income and assets data are available.

income and assets middle classes and how the differences between both of them change when the most vulnerable sub-group (floating class) is excluded. Table 3 presents descriptive statistics for the composition of African income and assets middle class in terms of the three sub-groups. Appendix 2 presents the composition for individual African countries. It is important to stress that these results are not weighted by population size of the respective countries (each country has equal weight).

Results show that the largest part of the African middle class across countries is represented, on average, by the floating middle class. The upper-middle class is very thin and in some countries negligible. These results hold both for the income as well as the assets dimension. The maximum value for the floating income middle class is lower than for the floating assets middle class, while for the lower- and upper-income and assets middle class it is vice versa. Interestingly, the floating and lower-income middle class maximums are relatively balanced (38.34 per cent and 30.77 per cent), but the maximum value for the floating assets middle class (45.75 per cent) is about twice higher than the maximum for lower-assets middle class (21.41%). How this reflects on individual countries, we can make an example of Gabon. We have already noticed that Gabon is the country with the largest proportion (75.27 per cent) of population belonging to the African income middle class. In terms of its composition, 38.34 per cent of Gabonese belong to the floating middle class, 30.77 per cent to the lower-middle class and 6.16 per cent to the upper-middle class. Interestingly, Gabon has the largest shares of the population that belongs to all levels of African income middle class. But in terms of the African assets middle class, the composition of Gabonese middle class differs: 45.75 per cent of the population belongs to the floating assets middle class, 13.22 per cent to the lower-assets middle class and 2.7 per cent to the upper-assets middle class. This means that in terms of the assets middle class, the Gabonese are much poorer. See Appendix 2 for details.

Since the floating middle class is still rather poor, we have decided to exclude it from the analysis in the next step to see how the results change. Table 3 shows that still, Gabon remains the country with the highest share of population belonging to the African income middle class and DR Congo the country with the lowest share. However, due to exclusion of the large floating middle class, the shares drop significantly to 36.93 per cent (Gabon) and 1.6 per cent (DR Congo). Concerning the African assets middle class, Namibia newly becomes (compared to Ghana before) the country with the largest share of population belonging to the African assets middle class, even though its share drops to 23.34 per cent. Liberia remains the country with the lowest share of 1.45 per cent.

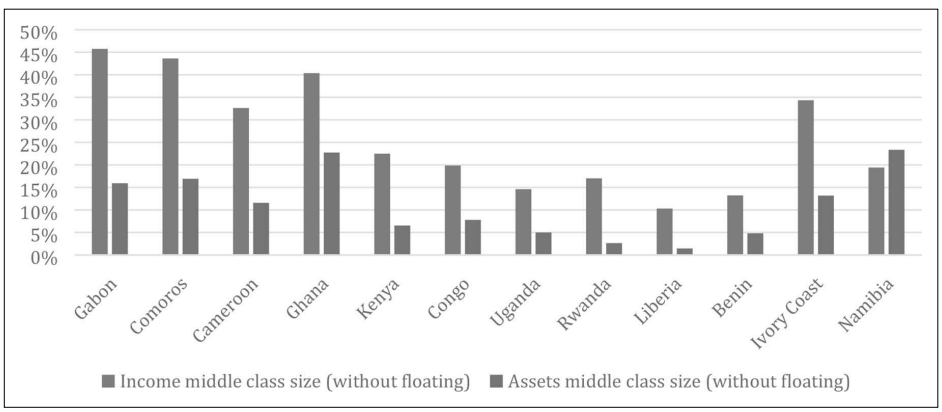
To investigate how differences between sizes of both middle classes change when the floating middle class is excluded, we calculate the difference between the African income middle class (per cent) and the African assets middle class (per cent) across individual countries in the same way as above but we exclude the floating middle class. Interestingly, the results show that the number of countries whose African assets middle class is *larger* than its African income middle class rises to 18 (compared to 14 before). Graph 3 illustrates these countries ranked according to the size of this difference. Nigeria remains the most lopsided country with the largest difference (−11.83 p.p.), five other countries have a difference over −5 p.p. (Gambia, Mozambique, Guinea, Angola and Senegal). The most balanced countries in this regard are Niger and Sierra Leone with differences lower than −1 p.p.



Graph 3. The Middle Class Sizes (%) for Countries with a Larger African Assets Middle Class (after Excluding the Floating Middle Class). Source: Authors.

Graph 4 presents the remaining 12 countries where the African income middle class is *larger* than the African assets middle class (after excluding the floating class). They are ranked from left to right according to the size of the difference. Gabon is now the most lopsided country (and not Zimbabwe as before) with the largest difference (+21.01 p.p.) in favour of the African income middle class. Six other countries have a difference larger than + 5 p.p. (Comoros, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Congo and Uganda). The most balanced country in this regard is Namibia.

These results show that the larger the differences between both middle class sizes in individual countries after the exclusion of the floating middle class, the larger the differences between the composition of both middle class sizes in individual countries. Take



Graph 4. The Middle Class Sizes (%) for Countries with a Larger African Income Middle Class (after Excluding the Floating Middle Class). Source: Authors.

the example of Nigeria, the most lopsided country in favour of the African assets middle class. In Nigeria, the share of the population that belongs to the floating income and assets middle class is 18.05 percent versus 31.07 per cent, the share of the population that belongs to the lower-income and assets middle class is 5.6 percent versus 15.4 per cent, and finally, the share of the population that belongs to the upper-income and assets middle class is 0.6 percent versus 2.64 per cent. On the contrary, Sierra Leone is one of the most balanced countries regarding the differences among both middle class sizes. At the same time, the composition of both its middle class sizes is balanced. The share of the population that belongs to the floating income and assets middle class is 16.98 per cent versus 12.19 percent, the share of the population that belongs to the lower-income and assets middle class is 3.91 percent versus 3.88 percent, and finally, the share of the population that belongs to the upper-income and assets middle class is 0.9 per cent versus 0.5 percent.

Potential Correlates of the African Income and Assets Middle Class Size Across Countries

In this section, we focus on finding the potential correlates of the African income middle class size and the African assets middle class size in individual countries. Our first concern, however, is to identify any association between these two sizes of middle class across African countries. As expected, the Pearson's correlation coefficient shows a strong and highly significant relationship between the variables ($r = 0.794$ and the p-value is 0.000) and this is also supported by the Spearman's rank-order correlation (rho = 0.748 and the p-value is 0.000). The strength of the relationship does not change when only those countries are included for which the difference in survey years is not greater than three.

We further investigate whether there are associations between the size of the African income middle class, the size of the African assets middle class and the differences between them on one side (our dependent variables) and some other variables measuring different dimensions of development on the other side. For this purpose, we perform three ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analyses with the same set of explanatory variables. These are the quality of governance measured by the Mo Ibrahim index (Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF), 2018), the index of ethnic fractionalisation (Alesina et al., 2002), GDP per capita in purchasing power parity at constant international dollars (World Bank, 2018), the lower secondary education completion rate (World Bank, 2018), the infant mortality rate (World Bank, 2018) and the total population size (World Bank, 2018). In some of the regressions, we also work with the income and assets inequalities that are measured by Gini coefficients calculated from our income and assets datasets. The majority of these variables were selected on the basis of research done by Shimeles and Ncube (2015) who investigated the main determinants of the size of the assets middle class in sub-Saharan Africa.

To look for associations, we create a cross-section of data separately for the income and assets middle class. This means that we take the survey year for which we have data

on the middle class size and then, for our explanatory variables, we calculate the average value over three years just preceding that survey year.[4] In cases where those data points are not available we calculate the averages from the data points which are the closest to (but precede) the survey years. Then, using the same set of independent variables (but with slightly different data points), we perform three regression analyses to find correlates for the size of the African assets middle class, the size of the African income middle class and for the differences between them.

In the first regression analysis, we investigate factors of the African assets middle class size. Our results are summarised in Table 4. The dependent variable is the size of the African assets middle class in individual African countries. Since it is expressed as a proportion that varies between zero and one, we first use a logit transformation of this variable to take its bounded nature into account and then apply the OLS technique (Baum, 2008). Results show that the level of income (as measured by the natural logarithm of the GDP per capita) is positive and significant in all specifications. In other words, the size of the African assets middle class increases with a higher level of income. Similarly, the level of education (the lower-secondary education completion rate) has a positive effect in most specifications as well, although these relationships are only marginally significant (at the 15 per cent level).[5] Conversely, the ethnic fractionalisation is a negative factor of the assets middle class size indicating that a higher degree of fractionalisation leads to a thinner middle class.

When the assets inequality (measured by the Gini coefficient of the assets index) is included in the last model, it is negative and highly significant suggesting that the African assets middle class is larger in size when the assets inequality is lower. The last specification is also the only one in which the level of governance is marginally significant, however with a negative sign. The population of African countries does not have any effect on the African assets middle class size. With one exception (the rather insignificant relationship between the level of governance and the size of the assets middle class), these results are generally in line with the findings of Shimeles and Ncube (2015), although it is important to note that their research was designed in a different way (most importantly, they used a pseudo-panel approach to explain the factors of the middle class size in African countries).

In the second regression analysis, we use the same variables to explain the size of the African income middle class. The dependent variable is the size of the African income middle class in individual African countries. Since it is a bounded variable, we use its logit transformation and then we employ OLS regression. Results in Table 5 show that the coefficient of income level is positive and highly significant in all specifications. It is also apparent that education is a positive and significant determinant of the income middle class size. Ethnic fractionalisation is negatively associated with the income middle class size; however, it is mostly clearly insignificant. The same is true for governance and population variables. On the contrary, the Gini coefficient that measures income inequality is a negative and highly significant factor: the lower is the income inequality (when the level of income is controlled), the higher is the size of the African income middle class across African countries.

Table 4. Factors of the African Assets Middle Class Size Across African Countries.

Dependent variable: lg_AI_mc_3_30_perc				
Variables/Model	1	2	3	4
ln_gdppc_ai	0.480***	0.489***	0.491***	0.377***
	(0.160)	(0.159)	(0.169)	(0.093)
educ_ai	0.011#	0.011#	0.011#	0.001
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.004)
ethnic	−0.973#	−0.990#	−0.888	−0.21
	(0.652)	(0.640)	(0.730)	(0.618)
govern_ai		−0.005	−0.006	−0.017#
		(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.011)
ln_pop_ai			−0.041	−0.028
			(0.124)	(0.080)
asset_gini				−5.014***
				(1.224)
_constant	−4.210***	−4.010***	−3.960***	−0.726
	(1.167)	(1.284)	(1.405)	(0.954)
R^2	0.395	0.398	0.401	0.6488
F-test	6.859***	5.982***	4.442***	6.50***
No. of observations	29	29	29	29

Source. Authors. *Note*. White's standard errors in parentheses. Regression coefficients are significant at the *** 1% level, ** 5% level, * 10% level and # 15% level.

The results do not change in substance when we perform the income regressions for those thirty countries for which the assets data are available. However, while the signs of the coefficients do remain the same, their significances predominantly drop. This is true particularly for the income level and the income inequality which both become insignificant even at the 15 per cent level. On the contrary, the significance of the education variable increases in all four models. These changes in the results are a consequence of excluding some income-rich African countries from the analyses (such as Seychelles, Mauritius, South Africa or Algeria) for which the assets data are not available.

To summarise the findings so far, we have used the same set of explanatory variables with the aim to compare their influence on the size of the African income middle class and the size of the African asset middle class. Our cross-country regression analysis of the assets middle class factors has confirmed to a large extent the results of Shimeles and Ncube (2015). The regressions of the African income middle class size have confirmed the expectations as income and income inequality are the leading factors. Education does play a role as well. To a lesser extent, some negative effect has the ethnic fractionalisation

Table 5. Factors of the African Income Middle Class Size Across African Countries.

Dependent variable: lg_INC_mc_3_30_perc				
Variables/Model	1	2	3	4
ln_gdppc_inc	0.675***	0.709***	0.694***	0.725***
	(0.245)	(0.249)	(0.250)	(0.233)
educ_inc	0.015#	0.018**	0.019**	0.019**
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Ethnic	−0.759	−0.774	−0.881	−0.518
	(0.648)	(0.647)	(0.643)	(0.552)
govern_inc		−0.016	−0.015	−0.007
		(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.011)
ln_pop_inc			0.058	−0.026
			(0.091)	(0.086)
income_gini				−5.285***
				(1.369)
_constant	−5.771***	−5.333***	−5.399***	−3.807***
	(1.651)	(1.574)	(1.630)	(1.399)
R^2	0.612	0.625	0.629	0.7235
F-test	19.714***	19.101***	16.939***	18.210***
No. of observations	46	46	46	46

Source. Authors. *Note*. White's standard errors in parentheses. Regression coefficients are significant at the *** 1% level, ** 5% level, * 10% level and # 15% level.
Note that in the above regressions, we use all available observations because we do not directly compare the income and assets middle class.

variable, although it is stronger and at least marginally significant in the assets middle class regression. The results of the regression analyses are compared in Table 6.

In the last regression analysis, we investigate the factors of differences between the size of the African income middle class and the size of the African assets middle class. By doing this, we try to explain why there are differences between the two middle class sizes. Since the dependent variable is a difference that may take negative values (for countries in which the assets middle class size is larger than the income middle class size), we do not transform the data by the logit transformation. Also, we include in the analysis only those countries for which the gap between survey years is not greater than three. The data for explanatory variables is averages over data from the previous two regressions (except for the two inequality variables). The results are summarised in Table 7.

There is a negative but statistically insignificant relationship between the level of income and the difference in African middle class sizes, meaning that African countries with higher GDP per capita have a weak tendency to display larger differences in favour

Table 6. Comparison of Factors' Influence and Significance in Our Regression Analyses.

Variables	African asset middle class size	African income middle class size
Per capita income	Positive, highly significant (1% level)	Positive, highly significant (1% level)
Education	Positive, marginally significant (15% level)	Positive, significant (5% level)
Ethnic fractionalisation	Negative, marginally significant (15% level) or insignificant	Insignificant
Quality of governance	Insignificant	Insignificant
Population size	Insignificant	Insignificant
Inequality (assets or income)	Negative, highly significant (1% level)	Negative, highly significant (1% level)

Source. Authors

of the assets middle class. Education is the only significant variable, meaning that African countries with a higher level of education show a tendency to have larger differences in favour of the income middle class. The level of governance has a weak negative influence indicating that countries with better governance tend to have larger differences in favour of the assets middle class. The remaining variables (i.e. ethnic fractionalisation, population, income inequality and assets inequality) are clearly insignificant.

It can be seen from the results that while our models perform rather decently in terms of the African income and assets middle class size, they do not explain the differences very well. To check the robustness of our findings, we have also repeated all our analyses for the African income and assets middle class, excluding the floating middle class. By doing this, we have focused on the more stable, but also rather thin components of the African middle class. However, the results do not practically differ, and all our findings remain unchanged.

Discussion of Results

Our results indicate that even though both the income and assets approach to measuring the middle class sizes provide a similar picture, as confirmed by both Spearman and Pearson's correlation coefficients, such measured middle class sizes can vary substantially in some countries. In some, noticeable differences exist. For example, in Nigeria, the proportion of population that belongs to the African assets middle class is more than twice as large as the one that belongs to the African income middle class (49 per cent vs 24 per cent). In Zimbabwe, it is vice versa (38 per cent vs 55 per cent). Simultaneously, in some countries both middle class sizes are more or less balanced (Guinea, Rwanda or Burundi). The same holds for middle class sizes after exclusion of the most vulnerable sub-group (floating middle class). But interestingly, in this case more countries show the African assets middle class to be larger than the income middle class (without the

Table 7. Factors of the Differences Between the Sizes of the Middle Class.

Dependent variable: diff_3_30_perc_3 year				
Variables/Model	1	2	3	4
ln_gdppc_avg	−.030	−.027	−.022	−.013
	(0.039)	(0.034)	(0.038)	(0.042)
educ_avg	0.002#	0.002**	0.002**	0.003*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Ethnic	0.049	0.046	0.010	−.013
	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.089)	(0.126)
govern_avg		−.003#	−.003#	−.003
		(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
pop_avg			0.001	0.002
			(0.001)	(0.002)
income_gini				−.313
				(0.313)
asset_gini				−.011
				(0.365)
_constant	0.128	0.248	0.210	0.267
	(0.251)	(0.205)	(0.233)	(0.363)
R^2	0.119	0.187	0.228	0.261
F-test	1.137	1.830	4.127**	3.210**
No. of observations	24	24	24	24

Source. Authors. *Note*. White's standard errors in parentheses. Regression coefficients are significant at the *** 1% level, ** 5% level, * 10% level and # 15% level.

exclusion it is vice versa). And also, the most lopsided countries in terms of the differences between both middle class sizes after exclusion of the floating middle class show the biggest differences in the composition of both middle class sizes. These results can be highly informative for policy-makers, yet the main issue is to understand why the middle class sizes in some countries differ, while in others not. And also, why in some countries the income middle class size is larger than assets middle class, while in others it is vice versa.

The variables included in the assets index (especially those under category 1: housing) are clearly influenced by the country's level of infrastructure, urban development and public policies (provision of electricity, water, or sanitation systems). Therefore, we can assume that countries lopsided towards the income middle class (i.e. countries whose income middle class is larger than its assets middle class) have weaknesses in these above-mentioned policies, or not a large share of their income middle class population has access to them.[6] Alternatively, such a disbalance could be caused by the economic growth cycle: naturally, when income rises, improvements in households assets lag behind (first, financial means are accumulated, then investment in assets is done). Yet,

for example, variables such as policy on the mortgage market for housing could play a role (shorten the time lag of assets improvement). Our research also indicates that countries with a higher level of education show a tendency to have larger differences between both middle class sizes in favour of the income middle class. Thus, educational policy can also play a role.

Countries lopsided towards the assets middle class could be relatively strong in their public investment policies (especially in infrastructure), as confirmed by our research indicating that countries with better governance (in general) tend to have larger differences between both middle class sizes in favour of the assets middle class. Yet, they can be weaker in economic policies. We can assume that income middle class in such countries could be undermined either by the inability of households to raise income high enough to be able to buy assets (low purchasing power), or by a large share of the floating income middle class, respectively. The imbalance can be also caused by stagnant or negative economic growth (households accumulate assets and still keep them even though the economic situation and consequently their income has deteriorated). Therefore, we can assume that the income middle class is more responsive to economic policies implemented in respective countries, while the assets middle class is more responsive to public investments in infrastructure and good governance in general. Also, we note that change in economic dynamics is captured faster by the income middle class rather than the assets middle class. Therefore, changes in the income middle class can be considered an indicator of successfulness of policies in the short-term, while changes in the assets middle class indicate long-term (or at least medium-term) successfulness of policies implemented in the country.

Conclusions

There is a rising interest in measuring the middle class in developing countries. Vast evidence of the African middle class has been so far based on income, even though most African countries still lack available and accurate income data. The picture of such a middle class may not be fully correct. In our research, we compared and analysed two different measures of middle class: the traditional one based on income, and the other one based on ownership of selected assets. To investigate to which extent results in middle class sizes in Africa for these two approaches differ, we have defined and constructed two main middle class categories – the *African income middle class* and the *African assets middle class*, both based on absolute thresholds initially used by African Development Bank (AfDB) (2011). We have measured sizes of both types of middle class and explored the differences between them across all thirty African countries for which data were available. We have also performed a set of regression analyses in order to investigate and compare the correlates of both types of middle class.

Our results indicate that both middle class sizes can substantially vary in some countries. Some countries show larger income middle class, the others vice versa. Some

countries have both middle class sizes balanced. When further analysing the composition, we can confirm findings of African Development Bank (AfDB) (2011) indicating that the majority of the African middle class belongs to the floating category. The upper income middle class is very thin, and in some countries negligible. These results hold for both the African income and assets middle class. Consequently, the share of the African middle class decreases significantly when the floating class is reduced. And interestingly, in this case the number of countries whose African assets middle class is larger than its income middle class increases. Results of our regression analyses show that the African assets middle class size across countries is positively correlated with income per capita and education and negatively correlated with ethnic fractionalisation and assets inequality. The African income middle class size across countries also depends positively on income per capita and education, while negatively on the income inequality. Quality of governance and size of population have not been found significant in either regression. Our models, unfortunately, perform rather poorly when explaining the differences between the middle class sizes.

We admit that, generally, differences in income and assets distributions or in sizes of the middle classes measured by income and ownership of assets can be partly caused by noise in data (especially by only cruel approximation of property ownership and also by differences in years of data collection). We also suppose that the absolute thresholds applied to measure the African middle class across countries produced lower differences in middle class sizes. If the relative approach was used, the factor of (un)even distribution - which is quite different for income and for assets – would have played a more important role. Nevertheless, our findings indicate that measuring the middle class solely by income does not sufficiently capture the reality. It is possible to assume that the same holds true for other social classes, such as poor or rich. This has serious implications for policy-makers, especially when designing social programs for those in need. We suggest that measuring the middle class (or poverty) should be as much as possible carried out from multiple perspectives (income and assets being only two of them). On a macro level, estimates of middle class sizes based on multiple criteria could be more accurate, especially in developing countries with generally higher levels of noise in data. Potential differences in results should always be analysed in depth to understand why they exist. Following our analysis, there is still space for further research. We suggest investigating how much the income and assets middle classes overlap in individual countries (data used in this article did not allow that). Moreover, testing the robustness of the results in various modified contexts, introducing comparisons over time, or analysing the most lopsided countries in a more depth could be other noteworthy directions of the subsequent research.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This article is result of the Metropolitan University Prague research project No. 74-02 (2020) based on a grant from the Institutional Fund for the Long-term Strategic Development of Research Organizations.

Notes

1. Interestingly, according to this method, half of Moroccan households identify themselves as middle class (55.8%), which does not reflect reality (as measured by income median). This is because 75% from the richest quintile identify themselves as middle class while 37% from the poorest quintile also identify themselves as middle class (Boufous and Khariss, 2015).
2. As indicated below in the text, in ourresearch we work with only thirty countries for which data on both income andassets are available.
3. In the first stage, we adjust weights of the indicators. We use equal weights for each indicator: score 1 is assigned to the best category, score 0.5 to the middle category, score 0 to the worst category. We find a very strong positive correlation (0.94) between our original and adjusted index. In the second stage, we focus on indicators used in the index. We continue using weights as in stage 1 and calculate three other adjusted versions of the asset index: firstly, we remove 'housing' indicators; secondly, we remove 'in-house equipment' indicators; thirdly, we remove 'other property' indicators. The correlation between these adjusted versions and the original one remains very high: 0.83 in case of the first one, 0.89 in case of the second one and 0.92 in case of the third one.
4. We have used the three-year averages to minimise the issue of missing observations as well as to reduce the data fluctuations.
5. It is not common to work with the 15% significance level; however, we have decided to analyse the results also at this level because of the lower number of observations that is available.
6. When the proportion of the urban population was included in our regressions, it was positive and highly significant when explaining both income and assets middle class size. However, it was clearly insignificant in the regression on the differences between the middle class sizes.

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Appendix 1

The Size of the African Income and Assets Middle Class Across African Countries.

Country	Size of the African income middle class (proportion of population)	Rank (income middle class)	Year of survey (income)	Size of the African asset middle class (proportion of population)	Rank (asset middle class)	Year of survey (asset)
Algeria	0.9631	1	2011	–	–	–
Angola	0.4604	19	2008	0.3877	11	2011
Benin	0.2500	36	2011	0.1804	25	2012
Botswana	0.5985	13	2009	–	–	–
Burkina Faso	0.2661	35	2009	0.3476	13	2010
Burundi	0.1106	48	2013	0.1188	29	2010
Cabo Verde	0.7267	9	2007	–	–	–
Cameroon	0.5643	15	2014	0.4419	7	2011
Central African Rep.	0.1745	44	2008	–	–	–
Comoros	0.6488	11	2013	0.6052	3	2012
Congo	0.4059	22	2011	0.2765	17	2012
Congo DR	0.0967	50	2012	0.1247	28	2011
Djibouti	0.5725	14	2013	–	–	–
Egypt	0.8580	4	2015	–	–	–
Equatorial Guinea	–	–	–	–	–	–
Eritrea	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ethiopia	0.2970	31	2010	–	–	–
Gabon	0.7527	8	2005	0.6166	2	2012
Gambia	0.3236	30	2003	0.5175	4	2013
Ghana	0.6644	10	2012	0.6310	1	2014
Guinea	0.3247	29	2012	0.3234	14	2012
Guinea-Bissau	0.1678	45	2010	–	–	–
Chad	0.3578	26	2011	–	–	–
Ivory Coast	0.4542	20	2015	0.4752	6	2012
Kenya	0.4115	21	2005	0.2902	16	2014
Lesotho	0.2283	40	2010	–	–	–
Liberia	0.2872	33	2014	0.1176	30	2,013
Libya	–	–	–	–	–	–
Madagascar	0.0976	49	2012	0.1894	24	2013
Malawi	0.1265	47	2010	0.2394	19	2014
Mali	0.2326	38	2009	0.2693	18	2012
Mauritania	0.7869	7	2014	–	–	–
Mauritius	0.9335	2	2012	–	–	–

(continued)

Country	Size of the African income middle class (proportion of population)	Rank (income middle class)	Year of survey (income)	Size of the African asset middle class (proportion of population)	Rank (asset middle class)	Year of survey (asset)
Morocco	0.8302	6	2006	–	–	–
Mozambique	0.1279	46	2008	0.2336	20	2011
Namibia	0.5076	18	2009	0.4275	9	2013
Niger	0.1923	43	2011	0.1669	26	2012
Nigeria	0.2426	37	2009	0.4911	5	2013
Rwanda	0.1945	42	2013	0.1964	22	2014
Sao Tome and Principe	0.3348	28	2010	–	–	–
Senegal	0.3480	27	2011	0.4228	10	2011
Seychelles	0.8326	5	2013	–	–	–
Sierra Leone	0.2098	41	2011	0.1657	27	2013
Somalia	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Africa	0.5623	16	2011	–	–	–
South Sudan	0.3720	23	2009	–	–	–
Sudan	0.6253	12	2009	–	–	–
Swaziland	0.3715	24	2009	–	–	–
Tanzania	0.2305	39	2011	0.2193	21	2012
Togo	0.2905	32	2015	0.4318	8	2014
Tunisia	0.9001	3	2010	–	–	–
Uganda	0.3604	25	2012	0.1959	23	2011
Zambia	0.2694	34	2015	0.3133	15	2013
Zimbabwe	0.5485	17	2011	0.3776	12	2010

Source. Authors. *Note*. The African income middle class is defined as the population living with incomes between USD 3 and 30 per person per day. The African asset middle class is defined in the same way using the thresholds derived from the income approach and applied on the asset index distribution.

Appendix 2

The Composition of the African Income and Assets Middle Class Across African Countries.

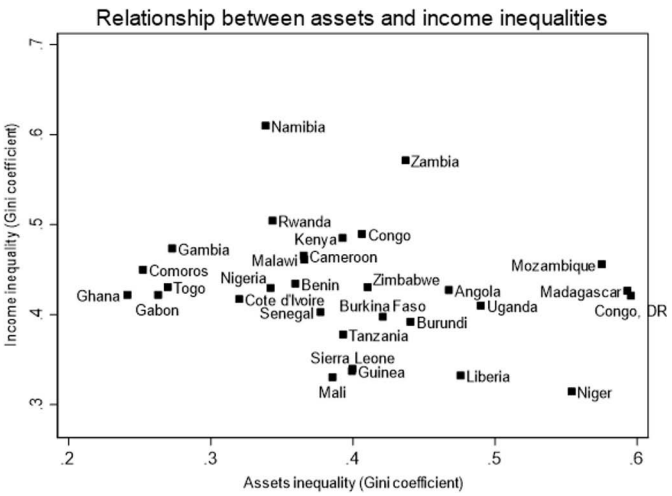
	African income middle class size (proportion of population)				African asset middle class size (proportion of population)			
Country	Floating	Lower	Upper	Without floating	Floating	Lower	Upper	Without floating
Angola	0.2967	0.1473	0.0164	0.1637	0.1725	0.1963	0.0188	0.2151
Benin	0.1678	0.0734	0.0088	0.0822	0.1323	0.0445	0.0036	0.0481
Burkina Faso	0.2044	0.0533	0.0084	0.0617	0.2754	0.0678	0.0044	0.0722
Burundi	0.0877	0.0213	0.0016	0.0229	0.0761	0.0313	0.0115	0.0428
Cameroon	0.3073	0.2151	0.0419	0.257	0.3262	0.1091	0.0066	0.1157
Comoros	0.3364	0.2624	0.05	0.3124	0.4362	0.1573	0.0117	0.169
Congo	0.2632	0.1221	0.0206	0.1427	0.1986	0.074	0.0039	0.0779
Congo DR	0.0807	0.015	0.001	0.016	0.0832	0.0383	0.0032	0.0415
Gabon	0.3834	0.3077	0.0616	0.3693	0.4575	0.1322	0.027	0.1592
Gambia	0.2222	0.0928	0.0086	0.1014	0.3201	0.1737	0.0238	0.1975
Ghana	0.3546	0.2614	0.0484	0.3098	0.4036	0.2039	0.0235	0.2274
Guinea	0.2665	0.0533	0.0049	0.0582	0.209	0.0992	0.0153	0.1145
Ivory Coast	0.3048	0.1321	0.0173	0.1494	0.3434	0.127	0.0048	0.1318
Kenya	0.2664	0.1254	0.0197	0.1451	0.2248	0.0591	0.0063	0.0654
Liberia	0.2351	0.05	0.0021	0.0521	0.1031	0.0141	0.0004	0.0145
Madagascar	0.0762	0.0202	0.0012	0.0214	0.1501	0.0344	0.0049	0.0393
Malawi	0.0921	0.0279	0.0065	0.0344	0.1692	0.0678	0.0023	0.0701
Mali	0.1945	0.0377	0.0004	0.0381	0.2037	0.056	0.0096	0.0656
Mozambique	0.0978	0.0237	0.0064	0.0301	0.1353	0.0894	0.0089	0.0983
Namibia	0.2567	0.1894	0.0615	0.2509	0.1941	0.2128	0.0206	0.2334
Niger	0.159	0.0313	0.002	0.0333	0.1254	0.0393	0.0022	0.0415
Nigeria	0.1805	0.056	0.0061	0.0621	0.3107	0.154	0.0264	0.1804
Rwanda	0.1261	0.0567	0.0117	0.0684	0.1701	0.0222	0.0041	0.0263
Senegal	0.2489	0.0906	0.0085	0.0991	0.273	0.1488	0.001	0.1498
Sierra Leone	0.1698	0.0391	0.0009	0.04	0.1219	0.0388	0.005	0.0438
Tanzania	0.1777	0.0459	0.0069	0.0528	0.1504	0.0643	0.0046	0.0689
Togo	0.2137	0.0707	0.0061	0.0768	0.3134	0.1086	0.0098	0.1184
Uganda	0.2521	0.0945	0.0138	0.1083	0.1461	0.0453	0.0046	0.0499
Zambia	0.1677	0.0848	0.0169	0.1017	0.1707	0.1309	0.0117	0.1426
Zimbabwe	0.3317	0.1789	0.0379	0.2168	0.1485	0.2141	0.015	0.2291

Source. Authors. *Note*. The African floating income middle class is defined as the population living with incomes between USD 3 and 6 per person per day. The African

lower income middle class is defined as the population living with incomes between USD 6 and 15 per person per day. The African upper income middle class is defined as the population with incomes between USD 15 and 30 per person per day. The African asset middle class categories are defined in the same way using the thresholds derived from the income approach and applied on the asset index distribution. Included are only countries that have both income and asset data available.

Appendix 3

Relationship between Assets and Income Inequalities.



Die Bemessung der Mittelschicht in Afrika – Einkommen versus Güter

Zusammenfassung
Traditionell messen Ökonomen die Mittelschicht mittels des Einkommens. In Anbetracht der Datenqualität für viele afrikanische Länder kann es jedoch zu einem verzerrten Bild führen, wenn man sich allein auf das Einkommen stützt. In diesem Artikel wird die afrikanische Mittelschicht anhand des Einkommens (*income*) und des Eigentums (*asset*) identifiziert. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass sich die Größe der Mittelschicht in einigen Ländern bei den zwei Erhebungsmethoden erheblich unterscheidet, während sie in anderen Ländern mehr oder weniger gleich ist. Regressionsanalysen zur Korrelation

beider Ansätze zeigen, dass die *asset*-Mittelschicht positiv mit dem Pro-Kopf-Einkommen und negativ mit Vermögensungleichheit korreliert. In geringerem Maße wird sie durch Bildung positiv und durch ethnische Fraktionierung negativ beeinflusst. Die Größe der *income*-Mittelschicht hängt positiv vom Pro-Kopf-Einkommen und der Bildung, aber negativ von der Einkommensungleichheit ab.

Schlagwörter
Afrika, Mittelschicht, Einkommen, Güter

Research Article

GIGA | Africa Spectrum

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 33–49

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720914311
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
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Mutualism Despite Ostensible Difference: HuShamwari, Kuhanyisana, and Conviviality Between Shona Zimbabweans and Tsonga South Africans in Giyani, South Africa

Tamuka Chekero[1] and Shannon Morreira[2]

Abstract

This ethnographic study explores forms of mutuality and conviviality between Shona migrants from Zimbabwe and Tsonga-speaking South Africans living in Giyani, South Africa. To analyse these forms of mutuality, we draw on Southern African concepts rather than more conventional development or migration theory. We explore ways in which the Shona concept of *hushamwari* (translated as "friendship") and the commensurate xiTsonga category of *kuhanyisana* ("to help each other to live") allow for conviviality. Employing the concept of *hushamwari* enables us to move beyond binaries of kinship versus friendship relations and examine the ways in which people create reciprocal friendships that are a little "like kin." We argue that the cross-cutting forms of collective personhood that underlie both Shona and Tsonga ways of being make it possible to form social bonds across national lines, such that mutuality can be made between people even where the wider social context remains antagonistic to "foreigners."

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Keywords
South Africa, mutualism, huShamwari, kuhanyisana, Zimbabweans, South Africans, conviviality

Manuscript received: 25 July 2019; accepted: 17 February 2020

Introduction: Navigating Relationships in Giyani

Giyani is a small town in the north-eastern part of Limpopo Province of South Africa. Created in the 1960s by the apartheid government as the capital of the Gazankulu Bantustan, Giyani was the administrative centre of the Tsonga people's so-called "homeland."[1] The town previously existed on the margins of South Africa's racialised capitalist economy and its economy remains predominantly rural, with small-scale cattle ranching and subsistence agriculture, historically supplemented by labour migration to other parts of South Africa, forming the basis for many livelihoods. However, recent years have also seen something of a retail boom, as Giyani has become an important trading centre in the district and has seen new development of shopping centres and the rise of multiple chain stores. As a result, the town has also become an important receiving town for migrants from neighbouring Zimbabwe and Mozambique. In this article, we focus on the experiences of Shona-speaking Zimbabwean migrants to Giyani, within this post-colonial, multi-cultural, and pluralistic context. While a great deal of the work on Zimbabwean migration to South Africa has centred around Zimbabweans in established urban areas such as Johannesburg or Cape Town (e.g. Kihato, 2013; Morreira, 2010, 2016; Sibanda, 2010) or as migrant workers on farms (e.g. Bolt, 2016), little work has been done on migration to semi-rural areas. Because it is a semi-rural area and because of its location, Giyani has gained a new geopolitical value, as it has become an immediate destination of Zimbabweans fleeing their home country, despite assumptions that most migrants head for cities (Chekero and Ross, 2018). As it is still developing, the area gives migrants and locals opportunities to improve their lives. Most studies on migration in South Africa have focused on rural-to-urban and urban-to-urban migration (Betts and Kaytaz, 2009; Morreira, 2010, 2016). Against that backdrop, the present research provides important insights into social engagement and survival of migrants within an everyday expanding semi-rural area such as Giyani. Work in Giyani enables new insights into the creation of everyday social relationships across ostensible difference in non-urban settings.

In this article, we examine how Shona migrants from Zimbabwe who settled in Giyani navigated the space and their relationships within it. Despite high incidences of xenophobia and the profiling of migrants as "outsiders" by the South African state, migrants in many everyday local contexts were able to create spaces for conviviality and mutuality across ostensible difference. Thus, "outsider" or "insider" status in semi-rural Limpopo is heavily influenced not only by documentation but also by sets of relationships. Establishing robust relationships enables belonging for migrants and facilitates access to healthcare services and livelihoods. The data we present demonstrates that social relationships (both structured, such as savings groups and churches, and

semistructured, such as *hushamwari* friendships that expand beyond these group settings) and the cultivation of conviviality play a pivotal role in migrants' lives in Giyani, despite both state-based and individually implemented processes of excluding and marginalising migrants, particularly undocumented ones.

The data we present here are qualitative, drawn from ethnographic work conducted by Chekero in Giyani in 2017 and 2018, as part of a broader project on migrants' access to healthcare and from Morreira's ongoing ethnographic work on Shona personhood conducted between 2010 and the present. Chekero worked particularly with Shona-speaking[2] Zimbabwean migrants who had been in South Africa for a period of not less than two years, and South Africans they encountered in Giyani who had been living there for much longer, often with familial links going back a few generations to the founding of the "Bantustan." Although our aim was to allow for the capturing of detailed experiences of Shona migrants from Zimbabwe in semi-rural South Africa, particularly with regard to access to healthcare, a side effect was that we were able to see the ways in which those migrants who had stayed in the country for a longer period of time were able to build convivial relationships with South African residents. In this process, ideas of *hushamwari* – that is, making formal, reciprocal friendship relations that are a little "like kin" – emerged.

Stories on access to healthcare form the backdrop of much of what we speak about here. However, our focus here is more on what these stories about accessing healthcare told us about how social relationships were formed and maintained and what that tells us about the concepts from the global South that we can use to theorise and to think with, in the global South and beyond. Nyamnjoh (2018), who we return to below in thinking through knowledge generation from the South, has argued that there is a pressing need for social science to move away from the dualisms and binaries that it has historically worked with and to recognise the "interconnections, relatedness, open-endedness, and multiplicities" (Nyamnjoh, 2018: 19) that are frequently at play in knowledge-making outside of universities in Africa. He argued that in order to rethink social science, there is a need "for African researchers and scholars to (re)immerse themselves and be grounded in endogenous African universes and the interconnecting global and local hierarchies that shape and are shaped by them" (Nyamnjoh, 2018: 21). In this article, through notions of *hushamwari* and *kuhanyisana*, we try to do just that as a means of moving away from the binaries traditionally at work in the social science of movement and migration: dualisms between locals and foreigners, legal and illegal, documented and undocumented, xenophobic, and welcoming. Instead, we begin with interactions on the ground between people in order to surface endogenous knowledge concepts through which to conduct social analysis. We explore the creative schemes that migrants employ to cushion and subvert the effects of their institutionalised exclusion. In particular, we explore the ways in which the Shona notion of *hushamwari* (which loosely translates as "friendship" but, as we show in the article, encompasses a deeper meaning that this English translation allows for) and the commensurate xiTsonga category of *kuhanyisana* (loosely translated as to help each other to live) allow for conviviality and social cohesion. Conviviality does not guarantee that xenophobia or other forms of structural

violence have been resolved, but rather gives us a frame for thinking through how social life is enacted with and through others (Nyamnjoh, 2018; Ross, 2015), despite structural violence, and for strengthening such ties across ostensible differences.

Background: Migration and Personhood

South Africa is a prime destination of choice for many Zimbabweans, for economic and geographic reasons, even though post-apartheid South Africa has not been particularly welcoming to migrants. Many Zimbabweans coming to South Africa tend to fall between state-based categories, in that they do not fit into the category of (legitimate, documentable) refugee or the category of (legitimate, documentable) economic migrant (Betts and Kaytaz, 2009; Morreira, 2016). As such, they are particularly vulnerable to a lack of documentation and consequently are at risk of socio-economic rights violations (e.g. being denied healthcare, as we discuss below; Crush and Tawodzera (2014: 1) described such "negative attitudes and practices of health professionals and employees towards migrants and refugees" as "medical xenophobia"). Thus, contemporary state-based policy and discourse are not welcoming to non-South Africans (Bloch, 2008; Morreira, 2015). As in other parts of the world, migrants also make convenient scapegoats for state failures, such that, for example, in the run-up to national elections in 2019, a great deal of anti-immigrant sentiment was propagated by prominent political figures in South Africa, across multiple political parties. There is currently an upsurge in the use of xenophobic sentiment for political reasons. However, fieldwork in Giyani shows the possibility of something different occurring in practice in actual day-to-day relationships between Shona-speaking migrants and South Africans.

We see *hushamwari* and *kuhanyisa* as concepts that embody what Nyamnjoh (2018) has referred to as the "conviviality" that lies at the heart of Southern African personhood. Nyamnjoh wrote that conviviality "emphasises the repair rather than the rejection of human relationships with fellow humans as well as with the non-human world. It is more about cobbling and less about ruptures. It is fundamental to being human – biologically and socially – and necessary for processes of social renewal, reconstruction, and regeneration" (Nyamnjoh, 2018: 21). At a time when difference and exclusionism is on the rise globally (whether through border walls in the United States or camps for migrants in Europe, or anti-immigrant sentiment in South Africa), we feel it important that such perspectives of conviviality in local spaces are foregrounded, as a means of resisting the current exclusionary discourses and of presenting a different set of tools with which to think about movement, mobility, and belonging.

The anthropological concept of personhood refers to the ways in which social persons are created in different societal contexts. Conklin and Morgan (1996) argued that "Euro-American" personhood is based on the social construction of individualism, and that

> Western ideologies of personhood prize egocentrism, self-containment, self-reliance, and social autonomy. This individualistic emphasis is evident in key values such as privacy, personal freedom, independence, and economic self-interest. (Conklin and Morgan, 1996: 664)

However, individualism is not only a means by which social groups have made sense of what it means to be a person. Comaroff and Comaroff (2001: 267) argued that "the autonomous person," that familiar trope of European bourgeois modernity, is a Eurocentric idea. In the historical context of the social life of the Southern Tswana in the late colonial period, in which they base their ethnographic analysis,

> Personhood was everywhere seen to be an intrinsically social construction. This in two senses: first, nobody existed or could be known except in relation and with reference to, even as part of, a wide array of significant others; and, second, the identity of each and every one was forged, cumulatively, by an infinite, ongoing series of practical activities. (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2001: 268)

There is no one "natural" way, then, of being a person: we inhabit social worlds and construct ideas of what it means to be a person within the context of those social worlds. All ways of being in the world, that is, lie somewhere along a continuum between the individual and the shared (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2001). Further, it is worth remembering that

> Formalized notions of personhood are not to be construed as descriptive of a static, preordained, social world; they are instrumentalities which people actively use in constructing and reconstructing a world which adjusts values and goals inherited from the past to the problems and exigencies which comprise their social existence in the here and now. (Jackson and Karp, 1990: 28)

The "problems and exigencies" facing Zimbabwean migrants forced them to leave their families and homes in Zimbabwe and make new lives elsewhere. In so doing, they needed to find new ways of making belonging, both for material reasons – to access resources in a context of poverty – and for reasons of identity. Where personhood is made collectively rather than individually, belonging matters greatly. In the context of rural KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, Wickström (2010: 541) wrote that in spaces of what she called a "collectivist orientation," "belonging is of such great importance that it influences how (people) view themselves" (p: 541). Where personhood is social, such forms of belonging are often structured through kinship relations. For migrants, however, existing kinship relations may no longer be useful in one's immediate day-to-day environment, and new forms of belonging have to be made. Diphoorn and van Roekel (2019: 7) wrote that "whereas kinship speaks to formalised and fixed social relations, with clear expectations and duties, friendship embraces doubt and ambiguity as central." Practices of *huShamwari* – of making formal, reciprocal friendship relationships that are a little "like kin" – made it possible to remove some of the ambiguities and doubts that migrants faced. Let us begin by turning to an examination of Shona migrants' practices in Giyani, and the ways in which notions of *hushamwari* and *kuhanyisana* emerged during fieldwork. We start by using some examples from Giyani to work through the differences between how migrants were treated by state representatives and by ordinary

people, and the ways in which *hushamwari* was used to mediate those ordinary relationships away from difference towards mutuality.

Hushamwari as a Structured Force for Conviviality

Madhuve was a Shona woman aged thirty-eight years and a mother of four, who originally came from Chipinge, a town in south-eastern Zimbabwe, close to the border with Mozambique. After finding urban life in Chipinge increasingly untenable, as a result of the livelihood challenges presented by the country's economic decline, Madhuve's husband migrated to Giyani, South Africa, in 2010. From there, he sent back remittances of food parcels and money to his wife in Zimbabwe. After two years, Madhuve followed her husband to South Africa.

Madhuve had come to Giyani for reasons like many other migrants: the economic hardships of daily life in Zimbabwe, with limited opportunities for survival, let alone advancement, had drawn her across the border in search of a better life. At the time of our fieldwork in 2017, Madhuve had been in Giyani for five years. Chekero met Madhuve at a dancing ceremony, where he was intrigued by her because of the symbolic mismatch between her language – chiShona, a Zimbabwean language – and her dress – a *xibelani*, a traditional outfit that is commonly worn by South African Tsonga women during special ceremonies. During an unstructured interview, Madhuve explained that she wore the *xibelani* as it forged a way for her to develop a *hushamwari* with locals in Giyani. Madhuve had been a tenant of one of the organisers of traditional Tsonga ceremonies, a woman who was very well respected in Giyani. Later, Madhuve became her close friend. Some of the ceremonies would be hosted at the residence where Madhuve was living; thus, Madhuve was invited to the ceremonies, and came, over time, to move from spectator to participant. In this way, she met a lot of influential community members with whom she formed social networks . By wearing the *xibelani* and taking part in traditional ceremonies, she opened the door for new relationships that were very deliberately navigated across ostensible cultural differences.

Madhuve was not the only Zimbabwean in Giyani to use dress as a strategy for localising one's presence. Given the prevalence of undocumented migrants in Giyani and the South African policy of arrest and deportation for those who could not prove their belonging, there were frequent police roadblocks, particularly at an intersection called Gaza Beef. Gaza Beef was a key route used by migrants arriving from Zimbabwe. The targets of these roadblocks were primarily migrants without legitimate documentation for their presence in South Africa. A conversation with some migrants one afternoon revealed their understanding of the process. The strategy used by police at the roadblocks began with them stopping all minibus taxis and asking everyone inside for papers that showed whether they were legal and documented. If papers could not be produced, the language was next used as a marker of belonging, with questions asked of the taxi's passengers in Tsonga, Venda, and sePedi. Where passengers could answer in the right tongue but the police remained suspicious about authenticity – languages can be learnt, after all, but this is not the same as a documented right to belong – clothing was used

next as a means of determining legitimacy. The story (as Chekero was repeatedly told by his interlocutors) went that Zimbabweans, particularly new arrivals, were stereotyped by the police as poor and jobless; as such, those riders of minibuses who did not seem quite South African enough were marked out as Zimbabwean by their "cheap" outfits and, on the basis of such flimsy identification, fined or arrested by the police (presumably based on the logic that a badly dressed South African would be able to rectify this error at the police station, whereas a badly dressed Zimbabwean would not). Thus, migrants such as Madhuve dressed in the ways that the police expected locals to dress when travelling around Giyani – in branded clothing or "smart" outfits. Such are some of the ways in which outsiders become insiders or at least try to pass as such.

Madhuve met Tsakani, a Tsonga woman who worked as a nurse, at a traditional ceremony. Tsakani was attracted by the way the *xibelani* fitted Madhuve. This sparked a conversation between the two, from which a carefully maintained connection developed. In attempting to access healthcare, migrants' stories carried echoes of the same bureaucratic xenophobia, with people turned away from clinics because they could not produce the right papers, despite a constitutional provision for undocumented persons to be afforded the same care as citizens. At a state level, due to structural constraints and individual prejudices, such constitutional safeguards tend to fall away (see Chekero and Ross, 2018). In meetings with state representatives, then, whether at a clinic or police roadblock, migrants found it hard to create convivial relationships. However, there were ways around this bureaucratic xenophobia, other ways of making oneself into an insider based on the deliberate creation of shared conviviality rather than on subterfuge. Madhuve's relationship with Tsakani provided one such way. Madhuve explained that she and Tsakani bought each other gifts and attended parties and gatherings together, which opened up new opportunities. Madhuve referred to this relationship as one of *hushamwari* – of careful, cultivated conviviality with an aim to build and nurture new, structured social relationships. The development and maintenance of *hushamwari* with Tsakani, who was a registered nurse, allowed for Madhuve to access medical care. Tsakani recognised the cultural pattern of the relationship between herself and Madhuve because, despite their different national origins, the Tsonga idea of *kuhanyisana* (loosely translated as helping one another to live) fulfilled a similar role. The women became close enough that Tsakani transgressed the rules of the medical institution where she worked to bring medication to Madhuve, as she knew that Madhuve would be turned away if she were to visit the facility. Excluded by (informal) policy at state hospitals, Madhuve used local forms of conviviality to ensure the provision of medical services. She explained that such was the power of *hushamwari,* a semi-formalised variety of friendship that fits with Tsonga conviviality as enacted through *kuhanyisana*.

Such relationships were common in Giyani: for example, on a Sunday afternoon at Dzumeri Four Way, an impromptu discussion on ways of navigating life in Giyani broke out between multiple Shona-speaking Zimbabweans. Dzumeri Four Way was a *shisa nyama* owned by a Zimbabwean named Respect: a place where people came together to buy meat from the Dzumeri Four Way butchery and cook it on the open fires provided. Shisa nyamas are common in South Africa and Zimbabwe as spaces for sociality. In the

case of Dzumeri Four Way, space was mainly, but not entirely, utilised by Shona-speaking Zimbabweans.

During the talk at Dzumeri Four Way, most participants described sociality with locals from Giyani as a crucial tool for navigating daily life. The conversation began with the role of churches in sustaining social and economic relationships between migrants and locals. Churches, especially the Conquerors Ministry in Dzumeri and the Saints Ministry in Section *F*, which were particularly welcoming to migrants, were seen as platforms where migrants could create and sustain the social bonds of *hushamwari* with the locals who attended. For example, one woman explained how she formed a relationship with a pastor which enabled her to then call upon others in the wider community for help when she needed it, which in turn enabled her to develop bonds with them. She went on to explain that "the very same healthcare practitioners who have denied us access to healthcare when we came to the clinics and hospitals will now bring medication to church. They give it because we have built up a *hushamwari* relationship."

This was partly due to the cultivation of *hushamwari* with someone influential: the pastor's position in the community meant that having him as an ally had wide implications with the wider Tsonga community. Thus, *hushamwari* built bridges and linked people, spaces, and places. It inspired imagination and innovative ways of seeking and consolidating the good life for all. Therefore, spaces like churches facilitated associations between South Africans and non-South Africans. Churches in Giyani have become sites of transnational and local networks that migrants draw on for social and spiritual capital, emphasising a shared Christian identity and habitus (Nyamnjoh, 2017) that allowed them to develop formalised *kuhaniyisana*/*hushamwari* friendships that cut across national belonging: in Church, forms of religious belonging mattered more than nationality. Interlocutors in Giyani reported that South African healthcare workers with whom they shared a *hushamwari* relationship would also invite them to receive covert healthcare in their own homes. In such ways, migrants were recognised as part of social institutions, even as the formal medical institutions that were legally obliged to provide services excluded them. Thus, the structure of social network ties between migrants and church opens up a wide range of opportunities for integration and access to healthcare. While medical xenophobia and the denial of healthcare at the state level is real, a different story unfolds in other kinds of relationships.

Hushamwari relations straddled the divide between informal friendship and structured, formal relations and between a gift and a market economy. They were also frequently used to navigate economic difficulty, and to provide social support across gendered lines. For example, again in the suburb of Dzumeri, there was a popular migrant money-rotating club called Fushai (a Shona word that means "preserve for future use"), of which all the members were women. This informal savings group (stokvel, in South African parlance) ensured a level of food and health security and acted as a safety net for women living on the economic margins. Chekero met members of the association, most of whom were Shona migrant women from Zimbabwe. *Hushamwari* between migrants was created and maintained by the stokvel, but bringing in non-locals also allowed

hushamwari and *kuhanyisana* to develop and be nurtured in relationships with Tsonga women as well. Stokvels are invitation-only clubs of twelve or more people serving as rotating credit unions or savings schemes, where members contribute fixed sums to a central fund on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis. Belonging to a stokvel invokes trust: new members are introduced to the group by existing members so that one member vouches for the trustworthiness of the next. As such, they worked to build community amongst migrants who had come to Giyani from many different parts of Zimbabwe, and between migrants and the Tsonga women they met in Giyani.

The "snowball" nature of stokvel membership meant that many of these organisations existed within migrant or local communities rather than across them: nonetheless, they were still able to be mobilised as spaces for developing and maintaining *hushamwari* and *kuhanyisana* between locals and foreigners. Most women in the group said that they used Fushai as a means of saving money; it was also a gendered form of community-making, as putting money into Fushai meant it could not be given to husbands or male partners. Ross's work on rotating credit associations in Cape Town in the 1990s showed a similar phenomenon, such that Ross categorised them as "a womanist economic system" (Ross, 1990: 7). The same gendered economics was seen to play out in Giyani nearly three decades later and, with it, Fushai enabled a space for the creation and maintenance of new relationships. Fushai acted as a means through which money could be classified as different from ordinary household finances. The women said that their male partners usually knew little about the amounts they invested. Members of Fushai would make the arrangements amongst themselves, without their husbands present. The information above shows how women are able to negotiate some sets of relations on their own, as women. Membership in Fushai helped individuals with money when they faced adversity. In such times of crisis, its members extended emotional support towards each other but also gave material goods. Most migrant women confirmed receiving emotional support and comfort from Fushai in the event of sickness or death in their families. One participant said:

> When my husband died, I had no one to turn to except my friends who are members of Fushai. They saw me through the grieving moment of the untimely death of my husband. They helped with household chores such as cleaning the house, cooking and even making sure my children have washed and got food. They were right here with me singing throughout the night. They even accompanied me to Zimbabwe for the burial.

This narration reflects the solidarity between migrant women and locals, created through a stokvel. In addition to receiving financial support, Fushai members reported receiving assistance from other members with practical tasks, such as assistance with cleaning, doing chores, and assisting with childcare. These actions enabled the bereaved to grieve in the community of others. Fushai is thus a dependable form of social capital that allows social networks, which are crucial in times of need. One participant explained the help from Fushai as follows:

> When my son got sick, Fushai helped me to pay the hospital bills at Kremetart Health Centre. I used Fushai money and my husband was very pleased at how I managed to pay bills and buy medication without him paying any money. My husband was broke, and he did not have money. *Zvakange zvakadzvanya* [the situation was tough] and he was not working, but because of Fushai we sailed through.

Again, the above narration shows that the most significant spaces for social support lay in people's everyday associations. It is important to note that relations founded on saving and exchange are a pertinent part of everyday existence between migrants and locals in Giyani. These structures with economic foundations were found to be an important means of creating and maintaining networks and enabling support.

Intimate knowledge of members, seasonal requirements, individual and household capacities to repay, as well as social pressures for both lenders and borrowers to retain their good standing in the community, shaped the availability of funds and support at any given time. These informal savings groups allowed migrants to circumvent the difficulties they faced in establishing formal bank accounts, where they are required to provide official documentation such as work or residence permits and proof of residence in order to open an account. Fushai, which met every two weeks, operated as a collective effort that helped each woman spread the shocks and stresses of life in Giyani. It also provided prospects for participants – both Shona and Tsonga – to network and support each other through conviviality.

Fushai members were able to obtain interest-free loans from the group, removing the transaction costs and risks associated with accounts at formal institutions. The amount of money contributed every month varied according to the amount any one member was able to acquire during that month. One of the women explained Fushai's benefits in the following way:

> Money lending can happen out of our own homes. We can combine finance with other business such as healthcare access. The services provided are outside the review and control of the monetary authorities. Fushai provides a space to network with local people in positions of power.

These sentiments largely represent the opinion held more widely among migrant women. Members were able to transform relationships that originate from Fushai into linking capital that they could use to off set the uncertainties of everyday life and the shocks it contain. Strong traditions of mutual assistance and reciprocity meant that individuals who needed funds could call on other members or the group leader for help. Acceptance of such help obligated the borrower to reciprocate by providing non-financial services or by supplying funds when the lender needed to borrow. The borrowing was also strategic. Members confirmed that lending money to South Africans opens up a semi-formal transactional relationship, which builds *hushwamwari* and social obligations between people. When nurses borrowed money, for example, they then found themselves within an intimate relationship that ensured that they would provide health

care services to Fushai members, even if they did not have documentation. Thus, rotating credit associations allowed for the development of *hushamwari* between migrant members, and between migrants and locals. Over time, trust has developed between locals and migrants who share *hushamwari*, such that migrants come to join the stokvels that locals also frequent – thus creating a new community.

Collective Personhood and Social Bonds

A common feature of the above examples is the disjuncture between Shona migrants, encounters with an unwelcoming state and its attendant bureaucracy – through police roadblocks, an unreceptive healthcare system, and government-mandated bank requirements that ensure the undocumented cannot access formal banking – and the ways in which they were able to use social relationships to navigate those obstacles. Despite both state-based processes of exclusion and the xenophobic actions of individuals, even where the state is supposed to provide services to foreigners (such as where nurses turn away Shona migrants seeking medical help), the broader story to emerge from Giyani is one of the possibilities of using commensurate indigenous concepts and practices to create reciprocal relationships. Of course, the existence of such practices did not mean that other ways of knowing and navigating the world fell away. The above examples also show an entanglement of social forms being called upon as a means of making and maintaining *hushamwari*, as seen through religiosity, for example, or the ways in which *hushamwari*/*kuhanyisana* relations straddled the gift and market economy. Where relations of *hushamwari* and its concomitant Tsonga concept *kuhanyisana* were nurtured and developed in such ways, it was possible for mutuality to take precedence over differences in citizenship or nationality. Where relations were structured in this way, the local community was receptive to Shona ways of making community and validating personhood. A foray into Southern African cosmology and philosophy tells us why this might be.

In Southern Africa, ideas of personhood are closely entwined with the construction of an ethical being (for Zimbabwean literature on this point with an emphasis on Shona ways of being, see Chimuka, 2001; Mawere, 2010; Morreira, 2016). The ethical Shona person is constructed in relation to the social world, which is composed of both living persons and ancestors (as is the case across Southern Africa). Chimuka (2001) argued that an ethical person is one who embodies *hunhu*. Chimuka translated *hunhu* variously as humanity (2001: 27), as a commendable character (p: 26) and, drawing on Ramose (1999), as "the ontological, epistemological and moral fountain of African philosophy" (Chimuka, 2001: 29). Conceptually, *unhu* is very similar to the South African moral concept of *ubuntu*. Indeed, Samkange and Samkange's treatise *Hunhuism or Ubuntuism: A Zimbabwe Indigenous Political Philosophy* (1980) holds the two concepts as identical. Similarly, Chimuka (2001) cited Ramose's (1999)- arguments around *ubuntu* in order to argue that "*Ubuntu (Hunhu*) philosophy (constitutes) the basis of ontology and epistemology for the Bantu-speaking people, of which the Shona is part" (Chimuka, 2001: 29). Some Shona philosophers hold *unhuism* and *ubuntu* as mutually translatable.

The cornerstone of *unhu*/*ubuntu* is that of group solidarity and collective humanity and dignity, in which personhood is seen as collective rather than individual – one's humanity is intimately tied to the humanity of others, whether they are from your immediate community or not. A key point here, which ties into the commensurability of notions of *hushamwari* and notions of *kuhanyisana*, is that despite generations of boundary maintenance across "tribal" and national lines, much of Southern African cosmology shares a similar foundation, across which much common ground can be found. We argue in this article that *hushamwari* and *kuhanyisa* take us beyond broad stroke ideas of *ubuntu*/*unhu*, to give us a pair of operationalisable concepts with which to think differently about how people work to make daily life convivial, centring as they do a set of formalised relationships which focus on producing mutuality rather than difference.

Chimuka has written further about the ways in which intergroup relations were maintained in precolonial Shona society as a means of exploring the possibilities for developing peace-building interventions towards strong inter-group relations in present day Zimbabwe. He wrote that "post-colonial Zimbabwe is riddled with tensions and antagonism where intolerance seems to be rife…Given that, there is a need to work out solutions. One such remedy is to invoke the ideas from our past, which had been very instrumental in the promotion of peace and stability" (Chimuka, 2008: 123). One of the ideas that Chimuka invoked in his "conceptual archaeology" (Chimuka, 2008: 112) of Shona precolonial traditions towards social cohesion is that of *hushamwari*. Fieldwork in Giyani shows that this concept is still alive and strong in the present, although it is no doubt somewhat altered by time and circumstance.

Chimuka noted that *hushamwari*'s peace-building strength emanated from the fact that it provided precolonial society with a place of relationship making outside of kinship networks and provided a kind of relationship building within kinship networks that was something more than kin. It is worth quoting at length:

> In the traditional *nyika* (territory) members knew each other personally on the basis of *hukama* (blood), but more than this, they sought *hushamwari* (civic friendship). This was an important bonding factor, which few writers recognize and highlight. *Hushamwari* found room in Shona civic relations due to the realization that *hukama* had limitations as a moral and political fibre…Friendship was a very effective civic bond, hence the saying *hushamwari hunokunda hukama* (friendship is much stronger than blood ties). It was even encouraged that blood relations be friends because it encouraged mutual respect and understanding. Obviously not any type of friendship would do, but that which was mutual and regarded the other person as an end – an embodiment of *hunhu*. (Chimuka, 2008: 118)

In making *hushamwari* bonds with other migrants, and with local Tsonga people in Giyani, Shona migrants were invoking a form of civic friendship that is deeply rooted in local cosmologies and ways of being in the world. To make *hushamwari* or *kuhanyisana* is to do something more than is translated into the English notion of friendship: as such, the concepts provide tangible ways of creating social cohesion and mutuality across ostensible difference. Chimuka noted that spaces for creating and maintaining

hushamwari occurred where members of social groups who may not have known each other well had fairly structured opportunities to interact – for example, through *nhimbes* (cooperative ventures) or *mukwerere* (rain-making ceremonies) (Chimuka, 2008: 118). We argue that the dancing ceremonies, stokvels, and marriages we have described above provide a similarly structured space for *hushamwari* relationships to emerge in the present, such that a formalised civic bond is established that encourages cohesion and that follows a long-held cultural script about how one makes strangers into a kind of kin.

Conclusion

Nyamnjoh commented that "there is almost total discontinuity between the idea of knowledge in African universities and what constitutes knowledge outside universities" (Nyamnjoh, 2018: 19). With the rise of pressure to decolonise knowledge systems in postcolonial settings, this situation is starting to change. We have argued in this article that to make sense of mobility and forms of belonging in contemporary Africa, Southern ways of knowing need to be taken seriously. Southern African cosmologies and cultures are complex and provide a sound basis of concepts for the theorisation of social worlds. Such concepts and ways of knowing are also not necessarily separate from other ways of knowing. As Nyamnjoh further noted, Africa is a space of "frontier realities," a space in which knowledges have been meeting each other and intertwining since long before colonisation. The ways in which *kuhanyisana* and *hushamwari* have been mobilised in Giyani are entangled with other ways of being in the world. For example, we can see in the ethnographic examples above that Christian religiosity is commensurate with the concepts, as are forms of market and gift accumulation and distribution through savings clubs or bringing medication from the clinic to a "foreign" friend. The point, then, is not that the inhabitants of the semi-rural space of Giyani are somehow more "traditional" than the people present in the urban spaces in which much of the literature on contemporary Zimbabwean migration focuses. Nor is it the point that other ways of knowing and being in the world should be disregarded simply because indigenous knowledges and practices are also present. Rather, we have sought to show that a shift in lens and focus on the part of social scientists as analysts, in which we bring local concepts to the fore, allows for an understanding of ways in which strangers can become like kin that would not have otherwise been possible. Nyamnjoh used the notion of the frontier to discuss how Africans negotiate change and continuity "by reaching out and taking in what they encounter and bringing into conversation various dichotomies and binaries" (Nyamnjoh, 2018). Much of conventional social science has been steeped in dualisms, but beyond the academy, frontier realities seek to find ways to straddle the divide. In this article, we have focused in on some of those entanglements as seen in the commensurate concepts of *hushamwari* and *kuhanyisana*.

In African discourses of *ubuntu* and *unhu*, and frontier Africa more broadly, the collective matters. There are individuals, of course, in the narrative we have presented here, Madhuve is one, Tsakani another, as are the philosophers, the money-merchants, and ourselves as fieldworkers and as authors. Yet, despite what the current neoliberal order

would suggest and despite ongoing practices of difference and diaspora, there are spaces in which conviviality and recognition of the collective are essential. Nyamnjoh argued that within Southern Africa, there is a rejection of the notion that "a unified and singular self is the only unit of analysis for social action. In the absence of permanence, the freedom to pursue individual or group goals exists within a socially predetermined frame that emphasises collective interests at the same time that it allows for individual creativity and self-activation" (Nyamnjoh, 2018: 21). As the examples from Giyani show, collectives do not need to be split into national groupings, but can and do form across such ostensible differences, even in post-apartheid South Africa, even in an ex-Bantustan, even in spaces that were specifically designed as spaces of exclusion, intended only for one "tribal" grouping under the apartheid state. Being social is not limited to only interacting with the people one has always known, or those who are kin; rather, it is expected that even strangers benefit from sociality, such that they eventually become known.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received financial support for the research from the National Research Foundation (Grant Number 98966; PI F. Ross)

Notes

1. Apartheid's formalisation of the policy of "separate development" saw the creation of multiple Bantustans – partially self-governing areas set aside for different black "cultural" groups - within South Africa. Economists such as Wolpe (1972) have understood the Bantustans as labour reserves for the apartheid state, which enabled the underpayment of black labourers as it was assumed their families had access to subsistence livelihoods elsewhere.
2. The sample for this original project was confined to Zimbabwean migrants who identified as Shona. As such, we cannot speak to the experiences of Zimbabwean migrants who identify as Ndebele, or to the experiences of white Zimbabwean migrants. Thus, we prefer not to use the short-hand "Zimbabwean" in this article, but specify Shona throughout. While some of the conclusions we draw about the shared forms of personhood that cut between Shona and Tsonga interlocutors may equally apply to Ndebele migrants (as seems likely, given the ways in which concepts such as ubuntu/unhu, as discussed below, apply across much of Southern Africa), we cannot generalise as such from the empirical work we have done.

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Miteinander trotz offensichtlicher Unterschiede: huShamwari, Kuhanyisana und Geselligkeit zwischen Shona aus Simbabwe und Tsonga aus Südafrika in Giyani, Südafrika

Zusammenfassung

Diese ethnografische Studie untersucht Formen des Miteinanders und der Geselligkeit zwischen Shona-Migranten aus Simbabwe und Tsonga-sprechenden Südafrikanern in Giyani, Südafrika. Um diese Formen des Miteinanders zu analysieren, stützen wir uns auf südafrikanische Konzepte anstatt dieses anhand konventioneller Entwicklungs- oder Migrationstheorien zu erklären. Wir untersuchen, wie das Shona-Konzept des *hushamwari* (übersetzt mit „Freundschaft") und die entsprechende xiTsonga-Kategorie des *kuhanyisana* („einander helfen zu leben") Geselligkeit ermöglichen. Die Anwendung des Konzepts von *hushamwari* ermöglicht es uns, über binäre Konzepte von Verwandtschaft

und Freundschaft hinaus zu untersuchen, wie Menschen wechselseitige Freundschaften schließen, die Verwandtschaftsbeziehungen ähneln. Wir argumentieren, dass die übergreifenden Formen kollektiven Menschseins, die sowohl Shona als auch Tsonga zugrunde liegen, es ihnen ermöglichen, soziale Bindungen über nationale Grenzen hinweg einzugehen. So kann ein Miteinander zwischen Menschen hergestellt werden, selbst wenn der breitere soziale Kontext „Ausländern" feindlich gegenübersteht.

Schlagwörter
Südafrika, huShamwari, kuhanyisana, Simbabwer, Südafrikaner, Geselligkeit, Miteinander

Research Article

GIGA | Africa Spectrum

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 50–72

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720922868
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
SAGE

Peacekeeping Experiences as Triggers of Introspection in the Ghanaian Military Barracks

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Abstract

African political elites have been forthcoming with military support for United Nations peacekeeping missions, contributing substantially to these missions' workforce. Despite their contribution, most studies on peacekeeping omit the African soldier's voice on his experiences of the African war theatre. This article features Ghanaian soldiers' narratives based on their peacekeeping deployments and illuminates how Ghanaian peacekeepers connect their experiences to their home society. In this contribution, I illustrate how Ghanaian soldiers' narratives about peacekeeping experiences are framed as deterring examples for their home society, thus potentially impacting their actions and behaviours. Based on long-term qualitative research embedded with the Ghanaian military, drawing from interviews and informal conversations with peacekeeping veterans and serving military operatives, it is argued that Ghanaian soldiers' narratives of peacekeeping experiences and the collective processes through which these narratives gain currency in the barracks and beyond are informed by introspection in the post-peacekeeping deployment phase.

Keywords

peacekeeping, introspection, narratives, Ghanaian military, Ghanaian peacekeepers

Manuscript received: 04 June 2019; accepted: 08 April 2020

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Introduction

Since its first deployment of troops to the United Nations (UN) operation in Congo (ONUC) in 1960 (Providing for Peacekeeping, 2018), Ghana has been a regular feature in the international peacekeeping arena (Malan, 1999). Peacekeeping is commonly described as a conflict resolution instrument that is mainly deployed by the UN to promote peaceful settlement of armed conflicts (Goulding, 1993; Pouligny, 2006; Rubinstein, 1998). In the past six decades, Ghana has participated in more than thirty of such UN missions (Olonisakin, 1997), contributing more than 83,000 military and police personnel (Providing for Peacekeeping, 2018).[1] As a result of Ghana's extensive involvement in peacekeeping missions, the West African country has evolved into a top ten troop contributor that ships out eleven battalions[2] annually to missions across the globe. Peacekeeping deployments have become an identity marker in the Ghanaian military barracks as Ghanaian soldiers see themselves as "peace soldiers" (Cunliffe, 2013).

While much is known about the institutions and operations in the peacekeeping arenas, the post-deployment aspect of peacekeeping missions remains under-analysed in the literature. The article contributes a post-deployment perspective to the extensive body of literature on peacekeeping by exploring how Ghanaian peacekeepers make sense of their experiences and observations in the conflict zone. The article shows how Ghanaian soldiers upon return to the safety and relative quiet of the barracks introspect on these experiences and observations, and translate these into narratives that are shared with others. I deploy the concept of introspection to explain how Ghanaian soldiers' form narratives that are informed by the observations and perceptions of the peacekeeping experience.

In the extensive and multifaceted body of literature on peacekeeping missions, studies have generated thought-provoking insights on varied interdisciplinary issues. Fortna and Howard (2008: 284) note that the literature on peacekeeping can be divided into three waves. The first wave of scholarship featured deployments during the Cold War era, while the second group of literature focused on newfound interest in peacekeeping in the 1990s, which quickly turned to feature "failure, dysfunction, and unintended consequences" (ibid.). The third wave of scholarship featured systematic qualitative and quantitative studies that empirically scrutinised the impact of peacekeeping, concluding that "despite its limitations, peacekeeping is an extremely effective tool" (ibid.). The article interrogates the idea of unintended consequences of peacekeeping, arguing that Ghanaian soldiers' perceptions, views, and experiences of the peacekeeping arena may have unintended effects on the home society. In line with the third wave of scholarship on peacekeeping, the article then presents a systematic, empirical examination of the impact of peacekeeping on Ghanaian soldiers in the barracks in the post-peacekeeping deployment phase.

The broad literature of peacekeeping has followed the institution's ups and down (Fortna and Howard, 2008: 284). In the period between 1948 and 1978, the UN fielded thirteen missions, while between 1978 and 1987 no new missions were initiated, but from 1988 to 1993 a staggering twenty missions were launched (ibid.).With the boom and bust of UN missions came the wide variety of themes featured in the literature,

ranging from, among others, the evolution of peacekeeping operations (Goulding, 1993), the crisis of UN peacekeeping (Roberts, 1994), the peacekeeping space (Higate and Henry, 2010), or the peacekeeping economy (Henry, 2015), in which peacekeepers engaged in sexual exploitation of girls and women (Jennings, 2010), but also initiated economic activities making them interested in the prolongation of the conflict (Aning and Edu-Afful, 2013). Finally, in view of the changing nature of peacekeeping, there have also been numerous studies on the effects of peacekeeping on soldiers' medical and psychological well-being (Bartone et al., 1998; Shigemura and Nomura, 2002).

Recently, the changing nature of conflict and its implications for peacekeeping mandates have gained traction in the scholarship. In the past, most peacekeeping operations had a so-called chapter VI mandate, which entails settling disputes via peaceful means, such as diplomacy, negotiation, and mediation. However, Karlsrud, among others, notes that due to the asymmetric nature of modern conflicts, there is increasingly a demand for missions with chapter VII mandates (Karlsrud, 2015: 42; Williams, 2013), that is, for peace enforcement which permits the use of lethal force to enforce peace.

Apart from demands for more proactive UN mandates, another prominent feature in the recent literature is peacekeeping's unintended consequences. Scholars such as Dwyer (2015), Wilén (2012), Aning et al. (2013), and Jennings (2010) have highlighted the unforeseen consequences and outcomes of peacekeeping mandates not only on troop-contributing militaries and nations but also on the receiving country. Wilén, citing Burundi as an example, notes that overlooking soldiers for selection for lucrative peacekeeping operations and highly valued international training opportunities could not only create tensions within the barracks of the troop-contributing nation but also dissatisfied soldiers could become spoilers in the peace processes (Wilén, 2016).

Dwyer (2015) has convincingly argued against the instrumental use of African troops – that is, peacekeeping postings as means of eliminating troublesome units and officers. Deploying such officers and units on peacekeeping missions could trigger mutinies and coups, because soldiers "who are already weary of the government or military hierarchy may become further discontent by unfulfilled expectations from the mission," (Dwyer, 2015: 222) prompting returning peacekeepers to rebel against their home government or military hierarchy (Dwyer, 2015; Wilén, 2012).

Furthermore, African troops are involved in some of the most volatile and dangerous missions in the world (Dwyer, 2015: 224). These dangerous conditions may aggravate existing tensions in their own barracks (ibid.). For instance, the risk of deployment may intensify grievances over equipment, training, and leadership, while the hardships and physical danger associated with peacekeeping postings may provoke an extra sense of entitlement by soldiers and generate a sense of injustice among peacekeepers, or amplify problems in the home country (ibid.). In short, peacekeeping deployments and harsh working conditions could exacerbate dissatisfaction between military operatives and political elites (ibid.). Although the notion of unintended consequences is not the main feature of this article, it serves as the basis to embed Ghanaian soldiers' perceptions, views, and experiences, but also as the background against which some of my interlocutors engage in retrospective introspection or judge events.

The literature on the unintended consequences of peacekeeping missions exposes a tendency to highlight the dire consequences of these operations. In line with Aning, who argues that peacekeeping empowers Ghanaian soldiers by outlining the material benefits of peacekeeping deployments (Aning, 2007: 138), I add that peacekeeping could also be beneficial in other ways. For instance, peacekeeping offers African militaries, such as the Ghana Armed Forces, "free training" (Interview with Gr. Capt. D., Air Force Base, Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana [24 July 2014]) through internationalised advanced pre-deployment training and modern military equipment (Wilén, 2012). The pre-deployment training is provided by the international community, that is, the UN, European Union, but also the United States African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA) programme, which has already provided millions of dollars' worth of training equipment (Aning, 2007).[3] Moreover, peacekeeping exposes Ghanaian peacekeepers not only to new ideas about soldiering, such as fighting counter-insurgents (Interview with Lt. A., Accra, Ghana [4 April 2014]), but also to international norms of human rights (Interview with Lt. Col. Y-M., Accra, Ghana [8 September 2014]) and civilian control over the armed forces (Interview with Lt. Col. D., Accra, Ghana [11 September 2014]; see also Finer, 1962; Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1960; Abrahamsson, 1971). Peacekeeping, hence, is a forum where ideas are generated and transferred to peacekeepers (Cunliffe, 2013; Paris, 2010). Adding to Ruffa, who notes how perceptions of missions are informed by existing military cultures, soldiers' experiences in the peacekeeping arena in turn contribute to informing their perceptions of peace and stability at home (Ruffa, 2017).

Adding to this, the article departs from a fundamentally interpretative vantage point. Although there are qualitative contributions to the peacekeeping literature (see for example Aning, 2007; Dwyer, 2015), very few studies feature the soldiers' perceptive, while none examine soldiers' thought processes, their introspective processes, or narratives. Only by engaging with soldiers' introspection in the post-deployment context is it possible to understand how peacekeeping veterans interpret their complex peacekeeping experience and make sense of it in light of their home society.

The article's scope is necessarily limited as interviews could only be conducted after the peacekeepers' deployment. In addition, the interviews were conducted outside the peacekeeping arena at various locations in the home country of the soldiers. Focusing on returning peacekeepers nonetheless reveals how they deal with their experiences in-between deployments and incorporate their experiences in sensemaking processes upon returning to their home society. The article examines how peacekeeping impacts Ghanaian soldiers' ideas through exposure to the horrors of war. It does so through an exploration of the processes of retrospective introspection and interactive reflection, but also the socio-political conditions for the elaboration of these ideas in the soldiers' collective consciousness. It will be argued that these processes eventually allow translating negative peacekeeping experiences into soldiers' positive aspirations for their home society.

Firstly, the concept of introspection, an approach common to psychological studies, will be deployed to illustrate how Ghanaian peacekeeping veterans reflect upon their peacekeeping experiences in the post-deployment phase. Introspection is "an exercise of

perceptual memory or imagination which takes the form of edited, interpreted or imaginatively reconstructed 'replays' of one's experience" (Rankin, 1991: 568). Rankin notes that it is through the re-runs or replays of events that humans deepen their understanding of what really happened, what they believe, intend, and feel (ibid.).

Ghanaian soldiers in the post-peacekeeping phase replay their experiences from the peacekeeping arena to themselves, but also share and exchange their ideas, beliefs, and intentions that result from their retrospective introspection with their environment, that is, friends, family members, colleagues, subordinates, and peers. Through this simultaneously introspective, but also interactive engagement, ideas transferred in the peacekeeping environment are interrogated in their new context, that is, the Ghanaian barracks. Particularly in the process of sharing ideas, the latter gain currency in the Ghanaian barracks when they emerge from the realm of personal experience and enter the collective consciousness.

Secondly, it is argued that retrospective introspection of Ghanaian peacekeepers informs their narratives of peacekeeping experiences. Narratives, here, entail "a *mode of communication* in which people tell stories to entertain, to teach and to learn, but also to interpret events and give meaning to experiences" (Czarniawska, 2004: 10). Baker considers narratives as stories people tell each other about themselves and others about the world in which we live (Baker, 2010: 350). Narratives further constitute a fundamental form of "sense-making" (Barthes, 1977; Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1987). Sense-making, entails here not only the processes of constructing and reconstructing meaning, but also efforts geared towards making sense of actions, events, and objects (Søderberg, 2003). Experience is constituted through narratives which enable people to make sense of what happened and is happening to them by attempting to assemble or integrate these events into one or more narratives (Riedke and Rottenburg, 2016: 7). In other words, Ghanaian soldiers make observations and gather experiences in the peacekeeping arena which they try to make sense of in the post-deployment phase through extensive retrospective deliberations. After processing these observations and experiences, the ideational and thought processes are transformed into narratives that are broadcasted into the barracks and the outside world.

To present Ghanaian peacekeepers' narratives, which are informed by the retrospective introspection of their experiences in war theatres across the globe, my approach is ethnographic and based on empirical data gained through in-depth individual interviews and participant observation in the Ghanaian military barracks. The ethnographic approach enables not only detailed descriptions of Ghanaian soldiers' experiences and observations, but also offers insights into their thought processes and their circulation through narratives in the Ghanaian military barracks. The empirical data for this study was obtained through long-term field investigation of the Ghana Armed Forces between December 2013 and January 2015.

Concretely, I interacted with serving and retired officers and soldiers of all ranks, ranging from privates to generals. Women make up about 9 per cent of the personnel and to ensure gender balance, I proactively included female personnel in my sample. During the fieldwork, I interacted with over a hundred informants (of which about a fifth were

women) in countless informal conversations, and recruited forty interview partners for in-depth engagement. The structured and semi-structured interviews, lasting between thirty minutes to an hour and half, were conducted with soldiers on duty in the barracks in their offices, under trees and sheds or in their living quarters. The retired officers and ex non-commissioned officers (NCOs) were interviewed in their homes or at their new work places outside the barracks. The age of the respondents ranged from twenty-three to over seventy years (for the ex-service men and women). All respondents gave their consent orally, and were selected through theoretically guided snowball-sampling (Atkinson and Flint, 2001), which allowed me to establish trusted relationships with my informants in the "closed world" (Wulff, 2000) of the Ghana Armed Forces and observe that the process of introspection does not happen in isolation, but rather through interpersonal exchanges and interactions, such as meetings, lunches, and coffee breaks, where soldiers gather.

During the fourteen month field study, most of the soldiers I met had toured at least one peacekeeping mission, with the exception of military operatives who had just graduated from the Recruit Training Centre or the Ghana Military Academy (where soldiers and officers are trained, respectively) thus were considered too inexperienced to be deployed (Interview with Lt. Col. A., Accra, Ghana [7 July 2014]). On the other end, I encountered military personnel of the Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment who had been on as many as twelve missions, as their services are in high demand due to their specialised task (Interview with Lt. Col. M-Y; Accra, Ghana [11 September 2014]).

The article proceeds in three parts. I start by embedding the data in the discussion surrounding peacekeeping's "unintended consequences" (Aoi et al., 2007: 7) and the Ghana Armed Forces' institutional transformation. In line with scholars like Dwyer, I propose that peacekeeping should not be studied as a phenomenon that impacts only the peacekeeping arena, but also as an endeavour with implications for the peace and stability of the troop-contributing nation (see also Dwyer, 2015). In addition, I show how the institutional transformation of the Ghana Armed Forces has enabled peacekeeping to become a constructive main body of the argument and inform Ghanaian soldiers' narratives resulting from an assessment of their exposure to the peacekeeping arena; experiences and observations which trigger processes of hindsight introspection on their societal role as soldiers, mainly in relation to ideas of (dis)respect for human life, de-masculinisation and de-feminisation, and the value of stability and continuity. The contribution rounds up with an analysis of how these narratives inform Ghanaian soldiers' self-perceptions and their role as soldiers in their home society.

Consequences of Peacekeeping Deployments in the Ghana Armed Forces

The history of peacekeeping deployments of Ghanaian troops illustrates both negative and positive unintended consequences. While during the period of authoritarian rule, the use of the peacekeeping deployment represented a time to plot coups, the defence reform process initiated by ft. lt. Jerry Rawlings, enabled the military to rebrand itself as a

"civilian-friendly peacekeeping army" (Agyekum, 2019: 162). It has changed the peacekeeping context for Ghanaian deployments resulting in positive unintended consequences.

The Ghana Armed Forces are a military with a tainted past (Aboagye, 1999). Like many militaries in post-independence Africa (First, 1970: 18; Nugent, 2004; Williams, 2009), such as the Nigeria Armed Forces,[4] the Ghanaian military forged its complicated relationship with the Ghanaian state through staging multiple coups. The military's deep involvements in politics in the years 1966, 1972, 1978, 1979, and 1981, and the Ghana Armed Forces' backing of the military regimes that emerged thereafter is well-documented (Hutchful, 1997; Oquaye, 2004; Welch, 1967).

Less attention has been paid to the unintended consequence of peacekeeping deployments in the plotting and execution of mutinies in Ghana, particularly the 1966 and 1981 coups (Interviews with ex-W.O. I K., ex-Cpl. A and Sgt. Y, Accra Ghana [11 December 2014]). Ghanaian soldiers were first deployed to Congo in 1960 (Nwaubani, 2001). In 1961, Ghanaian soldiers mutinied while participating in the ONUC mission (Dwyer, 2015: 208) following an attack on a large number of Ghanaian soldiers. During this mission, the idea for Ghana's first coup in 1966 was "brewed" (Interview with a Peacekeeping veteran and coup maker, Accra, Ghana [May 2014]) "not only because of the pan-Africanism agenda and the anti-Western utterances of the [Dr Kwame] Nkrumah government, which we opposed, but also because of the loss of men we suffered" (ibid.).

The last successful coup in Ghana of 31 December 1981, according to a leading figure of that revolt, was planned during the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon. "We planned that coup during a UNIFIL mission in 1980 because we were dissatisfied with the developments in the country since the 1979 coup. We executed the coup a year later when we returned" (Interview with ex-W. O. Class I K., Accra, Ghana [15 December 2014]). My interlocutors note that deployments provide the best conditions for plotting putsches, as coup makers are camped at the same site and live together. This offers coup plotters the possibility of holding secret meetings in their leisure hours without arousing the suspicion of their commanders, military hierarchy, or military intelligence operatives (Interview with ex-W. O. Class I K., Accra, Ghana [15 December 2014]). Again, the peacekeeping deployment provided the perfect conditions for hatching a coup, a negative unintended consequence.

Since the beginning of 1982, through to the establishment of Ghana's fourth republic in 1992, the Ghana Armed Forces have undergone a major transformation, restoring hierarchy and discipline, banning soldiers from operating outside the barracks, withdrawing soldiers from public administration (Ansah-Koi, 2007: 195), professionalising the rank and file (Agyekum, 2019: 7), and bringing the institution under civilian control (Hutchful, 1997; Oquaye, 2004). These measures have deeply shaped the Ghanaian military's self-image and the public's perception of the armed forces, and with it created the grounds for positive domestic effects of peacekeeping (Agyekum, 2019).

Peacekeeping operations on the African continent have since the 1990s increased in number (Cleaver and May, 1995). Parallel to this development, Ghanaian peacekeeping deployments have multiplied, making peacekeeping an identity marker for Ghanaian

military operatives who consider themselves "soldiers for peace" [Interview with W.O. Class I P., Tamale, Ghana (4 August 2014]). The central importance of peacekeeping for the Ghana Armed Forces (the Ghanaian military expects its soldiers to be deployed at least once in their careers) has produced careful institutional orchestration of the deployments. As a matter of policy, a rotational system has been established in which the regiments and battalions take turns in forming the nucleus unit of the Ghanaian deployment.

At the institutional level, the Ghanaian military is convinced that deployments contribute to cohesion within its ranks. My respondents narrate that in mission areas, the military has the possibility to organise events and activities that foster closeness among its operatives. Similarly, soldiers who, due to the geographical location of their barracks, normally will not be able to work together, get to collaborate with and know each other (Interview with W.O. Class I P., Tamale, Ghana [4 August 2014]). My interlocutors stress that the Ghanaian military's deployment policy is aimed at diffusing possible tensions and combat discontent that could arise within the barracks due to jealousy when some soldiers are sent on a mission, while others are never deployed.

Furthermore, peacekeeping missions provide valuable training (Aning, 2007: 138; Wilén, 2016) from international partners, which the Ghanaian military would not have had otherwise due to resource constraints. The peacekeeping arena is thus considered a forum for gaining vital military insights and experience. My interlocutors note that Ghanaian soldiers collaborate intensively with military operatives from other countries, thus exposing them to new weapon systems, but also to new methods of fighting, tactics, and to how other militaries run their operations (Interview with Lt. A., Accra, Ghana [7 April 2014]).

Finally, peacekeeping deployments have concrete material benefits for the Ghanaian military operative. The soldiers' income is supplemented with UN daily allowances (Hutchful, 1997). Post peacekeeping earnings are used by military personnel to "purchase plots of land, household appliances, build houses, send their children to better educational institutions, and improve their general living standard" (Aning, 2007).

Peacekeeping deployment of the Ghanaian military has also over the years been instrumentalised for the benefit of various national political agendas. Olonisakin notes that Rawlings purposefully deployed Ghanaian soldiers on peacekeeping missions in the 1980s and 1990s to divert their focus from domestic politics (Olonisakin, 1997). Despite the dangers involved in instrumentalising peacekeeping, my interlocutors argue that peacekeeping is still a useful tool for distracting the military from political engagement (Interview with Lt. Col. D., Accra, Ghana [8 September 2014]). Moreover, peacekeeping provides the political leadership with arguments to counter questions concerning why Ghana needs a military apparatus in the absence of outspoken enemies. Additionally, the government can replenish military stocks without stirring up too much controversy, as these can be legitimised as expenditure for peacekeeping operations (Aning, 2007), while the financial compensation received for deploying its soldiers is used by the government to supplement military spending in times of budget constraints (ibid: 137). In short, "Ghana has made peacekeeping into a veritable resource generating phenomenon"

(ibid: 135). Peacekeeping is also deployed as a diplomacy tool for "the promotion of international peace and security" (Ghana National Defence Policy, 2009: 10). Ghana also uses the peacekeeping deployment of her soldiers to leverage on the international stage, as this allows the country to project its soft power (Personal communication with Dr Aning, November 2017). Framing peacekeeping operations in this manner generates political currency for the Ghanaian state, both nationally and internationally, but crucially also affects the self-perception of the Ghana Armed Forces in a positive way.

In sum, the Ghanaian military's institutional transformation from a source of societal unrest to an organisation under civilian control has gone hand in hand with the transformation of the peacekeeping deployment from an environment where coups could be plotted to one contributing to and shaping soldiers' views and perceptions and the professionalisation of Ghanaian soldiers. In "Experiences in the Peacekeeping Arena as Triggers of Retrospective Introspection" section, I will show that Ghanaian soldiers' exposure to the negative effects of war trigger their processes of introspection in the post-deployment phase adding further to the potential of peacekeeping to positively impact the home society.

Experiences in the Peacekeeping Arena as Triggers of Retrospective Introspection

In this section, I present empirical accounts of events, observations, and experiences that my informants report to have triggered their introspection in the post-peacekeeping phase and form the basis of their narratives.

Ghanaian peacekeepers have been deployed to warzones across the globe. However, the empirical accounts presented here entail events, experiences, and observations from the African conflict zones of Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Cote d'Ivoire. My interlocutors reiterate that events, observations, and experiences in these specific countries have had the most profound and transformative impact on their views as soldiers and as people and serve as the foundation of their narratives.

In my interactions with Ghanaian soldiers, three themes emerged as issues my interlocutors ponder over for long periods in the post-deployment phase: (dis)respect for human life, de-masculinisation and de-feminisation, and the value of stability and continuity. The regular recurrence of these issues in my informants' statements, among many more individual narratives about the peacekeeping arena, point to the value-laden nature of these observations, and the stark contradiction with social and cultural codes shared by my informants across rank and personal background.

The "(Dis)respect for Human Life" section features the narratives of Ghanaian soldiers who have undergone an intensive process of introspection upon return in the barracks after deployment.

(Dis)respect for Human Life

"Peacekeeping spaces" (Henry, 2015) are carefully planned and vigorously monitored by the UN (ibid), but my interlocutors report that war and conflict are among the most agile and unpredictable of events. Even though academics such as Richards have contested the characterisation of African war theatres as chaotic and the actors as barbaric (Richards, 1996), my interlocutors maintain that what they term the erratic behaviour of warring factions generally results in chaos and the movement of large numbers of people, including refugees, development workers, and peacekeepers, and the use of extreme violence against the civilian population. There are also countless accounts of abuses against locals by peacekeepers, for example sexual exploitation of women and children, and looting (see also Higate and Henry, 2010).

Professional soldiers are assumed to be hardened and immune to acts of violence (Ellis, 1995). However, the violence witnessed by Ghanaian peacekeepers in the well-documented Rwandan genocide (Mamdani, 2001; Uvin, 1997) shocked even the most battle-hardened Ghanaian military operatives dispatched on peacekeeping and UN observer missions. An officer deployed in the immediate aftermath of the genocide, narrates:

When you are in the field and see the piles of countless corpses in churches, under sheds and along the roadside; that is when you really see and feel the unimaginable, intense hate. This experience really affected me psychologically and changed me for good (Interview with Gr. Capt. A-D., Accra, Ghana [7 July 2014]).

The Rwandan genocide, according to my interlocutors, is the worst witnessed by Ghanaian peacekeepers so far. The unprecedented level of violence and hatred in this war, my interlocutors narrate, not only destroys people's lives and demonstrates a complete lack of value for human life, but also cuts deep into the social fibre of society, turning "former neighbours into enemies" (ibid.). The Rwanda experiences still haunt many of my interlocutors.

Similarly, although not on the same scale as the Rwandan genocide, the atrocities witnessed in the Liberian civil war stunned the most experienced professional Ghanaian soldier (ibid.). A Ghanaian peacekeeping veteran, deployed as part of the first ECOMOG (see also Adibe, 1997; Huchtful, 1999) mission narrates his experience: "I remember the smell of death that met us upon arrival in Monrovia. There were a lot of dead bodies of civilians, as far as the eyes could see; lying on the streets rotting in the hot sun with vultures flying above in the sky" (Informal conversation with W.O. Class I V., Tema, Ghana [6 May 2014]). From my interlocutor's point of view, this upon arrival scene depicts a "complete disrespect for human life" (Interview with W.O. Class I A., Tema, Ghana [9 May 2014]). Although the peacekeepers are aware of the circumstances, namely, the families of the deceased had fled to escape the violence, and thus were unavailable to collect the dead for burial (Informal conversation with W.O. Class I V., Tema, Ghana [6 May 2014]), witnessing the decomposing bodies was still an alienating experience for my respondents as Ghanaian cultural codes dictate respectful treatment of the dead and an honourable, befitting burial (Nukunya, 2003: 73). Hence, the idea that vultures have the possibility to feast on the dead is an unbearable thought from the Ghanaian peacekeepers' cultural perspective, and directly expresses grave disrespect for the deceased.

In accordance with Ellis, who notes that the Liberian war was characterised by "a high level of savagery with violence and torture commonplace" (Ellis, 1995), my interlocutors observe that war inspires lawlessness. Conflict invokes a devaluation of human life, a point clearly narrated by a Ghanaian peacekeeper in Liberia:

> We were on duty on the main bridge [Gabriel Tucker Bridge] in Monrovia. A car full of rebels was approaching at top speed. I could also see scuffles in the vehicle. As it approached, a lady, a rebel from the opposing side, who had been captured, got out of the car through the window. The car stopped, the guys run after her and caught her. They tied her feet and elbows tightly behind her back together, then made an insertion in her chest with, I guess, a razorblade. She tore open and bled to death; they call it *tabé*. This behaviour is senseless (Interview with W.O. Class I A., Tamale, Ghana [6 August 2014]).

The description in the vignette is not an isolated incident. There are far more harrowing accounts of violence witnessed by my interlocutors in the Liberian and other peacekeeping arenas that they could interpret as a devaluation of human life. For instance, my respondents who served in the early ECOMOG missions narrate removing corpses of pregnant women, children, and elderly from the streets of Liberia, but also witnessed dead bodies deployed as obstacles and checkpoints by rebels. This objectification of human bodies even beyond death, my informants point out, clashes with Ghanaian peacekeepers' beliefs in the respect for the dead.

Another incident that according to my interlocutors illustrates disrespect for human life, is narrated by a veteran, deployed to Liberia as a young private soldier:

> A beautiful girl just stepped out of her house. Unfortunately for her, a convoy of rebels was driving by. One of the men saw her, got out of a car and put his arms around her. The rebel told his commander that he was staying behind, because he had found his wife. The commander got out of the leading vehicle, took out his pistol and shot her there and then in the head, then the convoy drove off with the rebel (Interview with W.O. Class I A., Tamale, Ghana [6 August 2014]).

The point of the graphic testimonies of my interlocutors is not only to illustrate the horrors of war, but also to illustrate the devaluation of human life, and the senselessness violent conflict inspires. These experiences are brought back to the Ghanaian barracks and in the post-deployment phase replayed and re-digested, that is, introspection. Additionally, Ghanaian peacekeepers' observations and experiences in the African war theatres have brought the effects of violence closer because they are Africans who have seen and interacted with other Africans in distress. These narratives help them not only make sense of these experiences, but also make the consequences of war visible and tangible to them.

De-Masculinisation and De-Feminisation

Masculinity in the African, and certainly in the Ghanaian context, is closely related to a man's ability to generate financial resources that enable him to fulfil his breadwinner's

role in the household (Adjei, 2016). Viewed in this light, the archetypical Ghanaian family is a patriarchal institution (Adinkrah, 2014), adhering to Ghanaian social constructions of masculinity, which generally translates into a married man's ability to cater for his wife and offspring (Adjei, 2016). A man who is unable to provide both economically and materially for his wife and children is considered useless (Adinkrah, 2012). At the same time, the predominantly male perception of Ghanaian peacekeepers, expects women to maintain respect through their role as committed wives and caretakers. Where women take on the role of main breadwinner, they are perceived as de-feminised. In this section, I present empirical narratives of my interlocutors about loss of masculinity and femininity witnessed in warzones, but also the introspection de-masculisation and de-feminisation triggered for Ghanaian peacekeepers resulting in the narratives presented here.

Based on observations in the African peacekeeping arena and encounters with Africans affected by war, my interlocutors conclude that war de-masculinises men. Prior to the Liberian civil war, this country was highly esteemed by Ghanaians, as it is the oldest West African state (Ellis, 1995). Certainly, in the 1980s Liberia was prosperous by African standards due to American protection and the dollar as currency (ibid.). An informant recalls how Liberia attracted Ghanaians seeking greener pastures away from home: "When I was a small boy, my uncles went to hustle there" (Interview with Staff Sgt. A., Accra, Ghana [9 April 2014]). My respondents, however, note that during the war in Liberia, and similarly in Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire, economic activities stalled with most men in these war affected countries losing their sources of income and livelihoods. Abandoned businesses and lost harvests left local men with no possibilities of generating income to provide for their families (Interview with Staff Sgt. S., Accra, Ghana [16 April 2014]).

Ghanaian soldiers embark on peacekeeping missions with their culturally infused notions of masculinity. In this arena, the peacekeepers witness how war affects men in a specific manner: de-masculinisation. An interlocutor narrates interactions with men in Cote d'Ivoire: "Men came to our camp in search of food because they were hungry. Out of desperation, they offered their wives, daughters and other women to other men in exchange for food" (Interview with W. O. Class II A., Tema, Ghana [6 May 2014]). From the Ghanaian peacekeeper's cultural perspective, these men lost their manhood when they ceased to provide for those under their custody and care, especially women and children, while their inability to fulfil the breadwinner's role rendered them useless.

My informants narrate how witnessing the powerlessness of other men in warzones triggered a process of introspection, thus reflecting upon what being in a helpless situation would mean for their masculinity. In the words of an interlocutor: "I'd rather be shot in the face than have to go through what these men had to do to get a bit of food" (Interview with Lt. A., Accra, Ghana [4 April 2014]). Post-peacekeeping introspection reveals to my interlocutors that war in their country could result in the loss of masculinity/manhood. A situation my interlocutors consider absolutely undesirable, a source of disgrace and humiliation.

Similar to men, my respondents narrate that war also de-feminises women, forcing them into undesirable practices. Traditionally, the position of the Ghanaian woman is under the guardianship of a man, thus contributing to his masculinity/manhood (Adjei, 2016). My interlocutors observe that women who lost their husbands and partners during the war were often left with no primary breadwinner (Malton, 2016). The war basically pushed them into the breadwinner's role making them providers for their family members. These women are considered less feminine by my Ghanaian interlocutors.

Ghanaian male peacekeepers link the loss of the breadwinner to the women's precarious position, and argue that the harsh economic circumstances of war force some into prostitution or into offering sexual favours in exchange for food and money. "People lose their self-confidence in war. You see respectable middle-aged women and mothers hanging around with young boys and men. It is war so she has to find a way to get by and others take advantage of her situation" (Interview with Sgt A., Accra, Ghana [14 April 2014]). From the Ghanaian peacekeepers' cultural perspective, a middle-aged woman is expected to respect herself, thus should not be seen engaging with a young man or men who could be considered beneath her stature. "She is no longer a respectable woman. In our culture, a middle-aged woman or a mother has a standing, she is not supposed to be with someone under her status." In other words, the woman is de-feminised when she indulges with someone considered beneath her level or her societal status.

Moreover, from my interlocutors' viewpoint, an African woman who exhibits culturally accepted behaviour, such as respect for and obedience to her husband, is considered feminine (Adjei, 2016). Promiscuous women, on the contrary, are considered to be less feminine, because they act "masculine" (Ratele et al., 2010). Although my interlocutors appreciate and are sympathetic to the fact that war circumstances drove these women into what they consider promiscuous behaviour and prostitution,[5] my interlocutors still judge them to be "less women" (ibid: 565). In other words, although what is considered culturally appropriate behaviour for women becomes blurred in war, women are still judged by the soldiers for indulging with men other than their custodians for money and food. The women's actions, to my respondents, outweigh the circumstances that have driven them into such activities, but also factors that have driven her into taking on the breadwinner's role. To ensure that their women never undergo such tribulation, Ghanaian soldiers argue that they will do whatever it takes to avoid war in their country.

Although Ghanaian peacekeepers frown upon women for their promiscuity and perceive men affected by war as less masculine, and by extension humiliated, my interlocutors assess their home society through the misfortune of others who are labelled as suffering "de-masculinisation" and "de-feminisation" as a result of war. The circumstances of the victims of conflict serve as a strong warning to my interlocutors who note that they do not wish for themselves or the women under their guardianship to ever have to make such choices due to war.

Narratives of Continuity: Appreciation for Peace and the Value of Stability

In this section, I discuss how peacekeeping has contributed to Ghanaian soldiers' appreciation of peace, and the value of stability and continuity in their country. Since the establishment of Ghana's Fourth Republic in 1992, the country has repeatedly been applauded for holding free and fair elections and peaceful transitions of power (Agyeman-Duah, 2008; Gyimah-Boadi, 2001). Since the departure from the coup era, Ghana entered a period marked by peace and stability (ibid.), with the country gaining an international reputation as the "beacon of democracy in West Africa."[6] Due to its status, Ghana can afford to deploy soldiers to peacekeeping missions. An unintended but effective consequence of peacekeeping deployments is the undiluted message these deployments broadcast to Ghanaian soldiers: "When you see the misery elsewhere, you are reminded of the importance of peace. You are glad that you have peace in your country" (Interview with Gr. Capt. A-D., Accra, Ghana [7 July 2014]). In other words, the value of a peaceful environment becomes more apparent to Ghanaian peacekeepers in the peacekeeping arena.

My informants narrate that a peaceful environment results in continuity and predictability, which have specific advantages. These conditions, my respondents contend, guarantee continuity which allow them to make long-term plans and investments. "We are planning good futures for our children and don't want the plans to be disturbed by a coup or war" (Interview with Air Force W.O. Class I O., Accra, Ghana [20 July 2014]). In war situations, my interlocutors have observed during deployments that investments in future generations are almost impossible, because children drop out of school. Similarly, in warzones, Ghanaian soldiers note that it is impossible for them to educate themselves to further their professionalisation and ultimately their careers.

Ghanaian soldiers generally invest – often making use of incomes generated through peacekeeping – in long-term income generating ventures such as "building houses, setting up farms and businesses, to supplement their income upon retirement." These future-oriented endeavours need time to mature, and engaging in war would disrupt the execution of my informants' future planning (ibid.). Through the process of introspection, Ghanaian soldiers assess their personal long-term future planning, aspirations, and investments against the backdrop of volatility and unpredictability witnessed in most African war theatres. Through introspection in the post-peacekeeping phase, but also during the deployment, my interlocutors appreciate the importance of peace, stability, and predictability in their country.

The Effect of Peacekeeping Experiences on Ghanaian Soldiers' Self-Perceptions and Their Societal Role

This section of the article analyses how peacekeeping experiences influence the Ghanaian soldiers' thinking and self-perception in the post-deployment phase through processes of individual as well as collective introspection and narratives of (dis)respect for human

life, de-masculinisation and de-feminisation, and appreciation for peace and the value of stability.

Introspection involves Ghanaian soldiers replaying and re-digesting (Rankin, 1991: 568) their peacekeeping experiences in the post-peacekeeping phase. Experiences, observations, ideas, and knowledge Ghanaian peacekeepers are exposed to during their missions are re-examined in the quiet of the barracks, both individually and collectively. During formal military gatherings, such as durbars, but also informally during breaks soldier discuss with colleagues, peers, friends, and family members, who stayed behind. The conversations I observed centred on a range of peacekeeping experiences, views, and perspectives. In one such incidence, at Kamina Barracks, home of the sixth Infantry Battalion of the Ghanaian military, in Tamale, Northern Ghana, soldiers are slowly gathering for a durbar with their commanding officer (CO) under the shed next to the regimental square. While waiting for the arrival of the CO, a group of six senior non-commissioned officers engage each other about their upcoming deployments and their expectations, but at the same time, reflect on past experiences elsewhere. These exchanges usually begin with "Do you remember when we were on patrol to…. on the way we saw …. do you remember?"; "Do you remember when were on guard duties at… that was tough?"; "Do you remember when the women and children came to the camp in … it was heart-breaking?"; Or "Do you remember when the men came to us for water and food in … unbelievable?" In the incidence quoted above soldiers revisited events from their past deployments, meandered through their memories, jostled back and forth, while assessing and shaping their deployment experiences with each other; deeply personal views, perceptions, and experiences were shared and individual experiences were catapulted into a collective process of retrospective introspection in the Ghanaian barracks.

Concretely, in such formal and informal gatherings that Ghanaian peacekeepers' stories about piles of countless bodies in churches, under sheds, and along the roadside come to the fore. It is in these types of settings that Ghanaian soldiers exchange and recall with each other seeing decomposing bodies and about the smell of death meeting them upon arrival in Monrovia or witnessing the senseless killing of a young woman by rebels for being at the wrong place at the wrong time. In this environment, soldiers exchange stories of seeing men and women in war-torn countries suffering de-masculinisation and de-feminisation as a result of the conflict in their nation. Stories of men who were unable to fulfil their socially and culturally expected role of the breadwinner and as a result of hunger offered their female family members to other men in exchange for food. Or stories of women taking up the breadwinner's role or war forcing women into promiscuous behaviour. It is in such interactions that Ghanaian peacekeepers exchange and reflect upon the value of peace, stability and continuity in their home society.

Put differently, in these types of interactions soldiers openly discuss with each other about their experiences, views, and perceptions from the peacekeeping arena, and these form the bases for their narratives. It is through this collective retrospective assessments that the Ghanaian peacekeepers' experiences gain meaning in the post-peacekeeping

phase and become attached to specific narratives which carry collectively agreed upon truths; these then result in shared narratives of (dis)respect for human life, de-masculinisation and de-feminisation, appreciation for peace, and the value of stability.

The peacekeeping arena serves as a forum where Ghanaian soldiers are exposed to experiences which in turn are used to interpret domestic politics. Despite Ghana's international reputation as a peaceful and stable country, the harsh tone of public political debates in the various national media outlets indicates fierce competition in the political arena. Occasionally, Ghanaian politicians seem to insinuate a willingness to use violence to gain or retain power (Justice Ghana, 2017). These insinuations are much to the chagrin of Ghanaian peacekeeping veterans leading to the common response: "They [politicians] don't know what they are talking about. War is very hard and ugly!" (Interview with W. O. Class I TN., Accra, Ghana [9 April 2014]).

Peacekeeping has exposed Ghanaian soldiers to the effects of war and conflict first-hand. Ghanaian soldiers assess the insinuations of using violence by the political class and their possible repercussions on society based on their peacekeeping experiences and their introspection. These dictate to my interlocutors that war should not be taken lightly, as its outcome would most likely be to rebuild even the most basic infrastructure, while its traumatised citizens would have to be nursed to overcome their experiences of violence. The general consensus under my interlocutors is that war is undesirable in their country. This unanimous conclusion, my interlocutors narrate, shapes their views of the importance of preserving peace and stability in their home society, but also their resentment towards politicians who insinuate violence.

Peacekeeping makes Ghanaian soldiers reflect on their sense of duty and service. "We have taken an oath to defend our nation, by land, air, and sea. That is our task; after what we have seen elsewhere, we take this very seriously" (Interview with Maj. Gen. A., Accra, Ghana (1 May 2014); see Constitution of Ghana, 1992). My interlocutors reiterate the view that a military's purpose is to serve and defend its host society from external enemies of that state, but also to provide security to state institutions and preserve peace. However, my informants narrate witnessing in various African war theatres, for instance in Liberia, that the military was not used for state protection, but rather for the defence of a regime (Interview with W.O. Class II H., Accra, Ghana [9 April 2014]). My respondents narrate that when regime survival is the military's goal when other actors challenge the government's legitimacy, these armed forces tend to crumble under duress, leading to (civil) war. According to my respondents, this painful realisation has strengthened their sense of duty to serve and defend their country, rather than serve the narrow interests of politicians. Peacekeeping in this manner amplifies Ghanaian soldiers' sense of duty and service to their nation. Through intensive personal and collective processes of reflection, peacekeeping shapes them as soldiers, and informs their reflections about their role in society.

Conclusion

This article set out to examine how Ghanaian soldiers make sense of their peacekeeping experiences; the thought processes peacekeeping veterans undergo in the post-peacekeeping deployment phase and how they arrive at the narratives they form based on their experiences.

As argued throughout this piece, most studies on peacekeeping omit the voice of the soldier. However, the deployment of qualitative methods makes it possible not only to prominently feature Ghanaian peacekeepers' voices, but also through personal interactions and interviews we gain insights into their thought processes, while digging deeper into their construction and re-construction of their various narratives. Additionally, qualitative methods make it possible for us to understand how Ghanaian peacekeeping veterans, in the post-deployment phase bring their experiences, observations, and views together. Qualitative methods also allow us a preview into how Ghanaian soldiers in the post-deployment phase connect their experiences from the conflict zones to developments in their home society.

Further, recent literature on "unintended consequences" of peacekeeping operations focus mostly on their negative implications, on both the deployed military and the troop-contributing nation. Considering the Ghanaian military's tainted past, and the fact that Ghanaian soldiers have used their peacekeeping deployments as an opportunity to either mutiny or plot coups, it is tempting to follow this line of reasoning. However, my study has shown that unintended consequences are more ambiguous and complex. Although in some cases, the unintended consequences have been negative, at the institutional level, the military has benefitted from international knowledge transfer, while at the person level, soldiers have been able to improve their living standard as a result of peacekeeping deployments. In short, unintended consequences are not only negative or positive, but could also be used as the background against which Ghanaian soldiers assess their peacekeeping experiences or the trigger of their retrospective introspection.

Retrospective introspection is another avenue through which Ghanaian soldiers make sense of their peacekeeping experiences. Through replaying and a reassessment of experiences, Ghanaian soldiers introspect and interpret their complex peacekeeping experiences and make sense of them in light of their environment. This deep process of assessment ultimately informs Ghanaian peacekeepers' narratives about war and its devastating effects on society, while co-constructing in the end the way they perceive (political) order in their home society. In other words, Ghanaian soldiers' process of introspection in the post-deployment phase results in sense making of their experiences through the construction and reconstruction of narratives about (dis)respect for human life, de-masculinisation and de-feminisation, and the value of stability and continuity, which are broadcasted to their environment, thus not only bringing the peacekeeping experience home and making it tangible for those who stayed behind, but also giving credence to the soldiers' voice.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. Since their first deployment, Ghanaian soldiers have been sent to Lebanon, Cambodia, Liberia, Croatia, Rwanda, Chad, Niger, Sierra Leone, Iraq/Kuwait, Somalia, and Western Sahara. Ghanaians are involved in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and United Nations operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI). In recent decades, the UN has collaborated with regional bodies, for example in the AU-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) equally including Ghanaian soldiers (cf. Firsing, 2014; Murithi, 2008; Williams, 2009).
2. Interview with Lt. Col. D., Accra, Ghana (8 September 2014).
3. Check ACOTA website for goals of the programme: http://www.africom.mil/what-we-do/security-cooperation/acota-africa-contingency-operations-training-and-assistance (accessed 29 December 2017).
4. For elaborate reflections on similarities between West African militaries, see Luckham, 1994.
5. Although none of my male informants spoke about engaging the services of prostitutes, it is known in the barracks that Ghanaian soldiers on peacekeeping missions regularly visit prostitutes.
6. British Minister for Africa hails Ghana statement, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/minister-for-africa-hails-ghana-as-a-beacon-ofdemocracy-following-successful-elections (accessed 2 December 2016).

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Erfahrungen von Blauhelmsoldaten als Auslöser von Selbstreflektion in Ghanas Militärkasernen

Zusammenfassung
Politische Eliten in Afrika waren bei der militärischen Unterstützung für Friedensmissionen der Vereinten Nationen entgegenkommend und haben einen substanziellen Teil des Personals gestellt. Trotz dieses Beitrags lassen die meisten Studien zu *Peacekeeping* die afrikanischen Soldaten mit ihren Erfahrungen auf den afrikanischen Kriegsschauplätzen nicht zu Wort kommen. Dieser Artikel skizziert Narrative ghanaischer Soldaten über ihre *Peacekeeping*-Einsätze und zeigt, wie ihre Erfahrungen auf ihre Heimatgesellschaft übertragen werden. Ghanaische Soldaten stellen ihre Erfahrungen als abschreckende Beispiele für ihre Heimatgesellschaft dar, was ihre Handlungen und Verhaltensweisen beeinflussen kann. Die Studie stützt sich auf Interviews sowie informelle Gespräche mit Blauhelm-Veteranen und diensthabenden Militärs. Es wird deutlich, dass die Narrative ghanaischer Soldaten über friedenssichernde Erfahrungen und die kollektiven Prozesse, durch die diese Erzählungen in der Kaserne und darüber hinaus an Bedeutung gewinnen, durch Selbstreflektion in der Phase nach dem Einsatz beeinflusst werden.

Schlagwörter
Peacekeeping, Selbstreflektion, Narrative, ghanaisches Militär, ghanische Blauhelmsoldaten

Analysis and Report

GIGA | Africa Spectrum

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 73–85

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720914630
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
SAGE

Dynamics of Everyday Life within Municipal Administrations in Francophone and Anglophone Africa

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Abstract

Decentralisation in sub-Saharan Africa promises to build responsive institutions, hold officials to account and promote popular participation. Still, existent studies ignore the everyday interface between decentralised structures and citizens, as well as how decentralised institutions function in relation to their local contexts and other "authorities" on the margins. These contexts shape service provision and the impact of local power structures on local communities. Against this backdrop, our conference in Dakar, Senegal, on "Dynamics of Everyday Life within Municipal Administrations in Francophone and Anglophone Africa," which took place in May 2019, demonstrated three key points of interest: namely, how actors within local bureaucracies interface with those who are outside; how ordinary citizens appropriate the bureaucratic techniques of the state and how these actors negotiate and adapt to the daily practices of municipal administrations. In general, decentralisation is not simply implemented, rather, it creates new frameworks and spaces for both formal and informal public action.

Keywords

Francophone and Anglophone Africa, decentralisation, everyday life, local politics, Municipalities

Manuscript received: 13 September 2019; accepted: 03 March 2020

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Introduction

Decentralisation is a long-standing topic in development policy and research. At least since the 1980s, numerous attempts have been launched in Africa – with the official aim of making local administrations more effective and bringing them closer to the people (Cheema and Rondinelli, 1983; Rondinelli et al., 1989; Leonard and Marshall, 1982). With emerging debates on democratisation in the 1990s, decentralisation was expected to facilitate local political participation and local accountability (Rothchild, 1996; Wunsch and Olowu, 1992). Additionally, decentralisation has been presented as the panacea for local development (Bierschenk et al., 2003; Crawford, 2009; Hagberg, 2010).

However, there are now doubts about the development impact of decentralisation and indeed regarding willingness to cede authority to local actors (Asiimwe and Musisi, 2007; Crawford and Hartmann, 2008; Macamo and Neubert, 2004). Despite the policy studies accompanying the different decentralisation programmes, we still as of now scarcely understand the apparent mixed results of such reforms. Already, there are critical studies on bureaucratic practices in Africa (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 2014; Blundo, 2006). These works present different ethnographies of how bureaucrats behave in public service. This partly coincides with Bayart's (2013) notion of "everyday bureaucratisation" in urban settings. The research shows how a range of informal practices and normative expectations affect African bureaucracies. However, their object of analysis is professionals working in public services and state bureaucracies, but not African municipalities per se.

Again, most of the research on decentralisation focuses on the local administration itself, on legal regulations and on their implementation. However, we learn mostly from ethnographic studies that neo-traditional leaders play a crucial role in local politics and interact with the local administration (Bellagamba and Klute, 2008; Lund, 2006; Van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal and van Dijk, 1999). In this regard, we need to consider a point often missed in the debate. From the outset, decentralisation was inherently conceived by central government officials and by policymakers as an instrument of state control in remote rural areas. Populist development rhetoric was deployed to stem rural opposition (Barkan and Chege, 1989; Crook, 1999; Vengroff and Johnston, 1987). However, the legitimacy of this outside interference, seen from a local perspective, is challenged by competing claims from neo-traditional leaders, religious actors, local associations and local "big men." They all make claims to represent or complement state authority. This implies that current debates on decentralisation need to go one step further. Analyses thereof should reach beyond the administration and include the wider local context within which projects are undertaken in the name of decentralisation (Hagberg, 2010) , as well as consider the actors who contribute to local authority on a daily basis (Englebert, 2002; Ray, 2003). We need detailed analyses highlighting the interfaces between and bureaucratic practices across local administrations, elected officials, non-state associations, local entrepreneurs and ordinary citizens.

Rationale for the Conference

Our conference on "Dynamics of Everyday Life within Municipal Administrations in Francophone and Anglophone Africa" followed an interdisciplinary approach and sought to overcome the identified shortcomings in the decentralisation debate – with its focus on the administration itself and on its development impact alone. It was also inspired by recent studies of decentralised bureaucracies (Ayeko-Kümmeth, 2015; Doumbia, 2018; Sabbi, 2017) that present particular points of interest regarding the practices of municipal administrations. First, there are tensions between municipal officials and elected representatives with regard to who has control over local political resources. Second, there is unease between municipal officials, local political actors and residents regarding urban renewal projects and land tenure – particularly relating to concerns over the tenure security of local land owners. Third, expectations regarding the concept of decentralisation differ fairly widely: seen as either local decision outlets or job opportunities for municipal officials.

Strikingly, these everyday misunderstandings and contestations have not been adequately addressed in the literature. Against this backdrop, key questions addressed during the conference focused on local meanings of politics, interactions between municipal officials and residents, councillors' emolument and on demands for accountability. Thus the conference aimed to shed light on the daily practices of municipal administrations, and how they are, in turn, influenced by their constituencies. This allowed us to widen our perspective so as to include the view from outside local bureaucracies and to foreground the interface (Long, 1989) between state and local actors.

The conference took place from 16 to 19 May 2019 in Dakar, Senegal, at the Faculté des Sciences et Technologies de l'Education et de la Formation (FASTEF). It was organised under the auspices of the 2019 Programme Point Sud (funded by the German Research Foundation, DFG), in co-operation with the Deutsches Historisches Institute Paris (DHIP) and Centre de Recherches sur les Politiques sociales (CREPOS) based in Dakar – and convened by the authors of this article. Our approach builds on socio-anthropological research offering new insights into local administrations, either with a focus on the everyday life processes inside local administrations (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 2014) or on local power structures (Bellagamba and Klute, 2008) – including municipal councils. The aim was to understand the everyday dynamics inside and outside of municipal councils, and between their respective actors.

The participants were representatives for very different approaches, positions and topics with regard to their respective disciplines, such as Political Science, Social Anthropology, Sociology and History. Their experiences emanated from francophone and anglophone countries with different historical and colonial legacies. Additionally, practitioners from local administrations and civil society activists contributed papers and held discussions within the interdisciplinary setting present. A special praxis forum facilitated extremely fruitful dialogue between practitioners and scholars. Not only did practitioners learn from the approaches and analyses of scholars, they also challenged the perspectives of the latter – especially on questions of social justice in municipal administration programmes. Moreover, our excursion to the municipal government of Gorée

Island, Dakar – facilitated by the deputy mayor, Annie Jouga – shed light on the daily routines of the administration, and on their interactions with both the public and the central state. Conference participants gained rare insights into what practitioners go through in order to deliver local services.

Decentralisation as a Negotiation and Contestation Endeavour

A number of contributions centred around the varying meanings, interferences, tacit contestations and instances of cooperation vis-à-vis the actions of municipalities, as well as the local political arena more generally. One key interference in the work of municipalities comes from the state and national politicians seeking their own political gains. This interference affects the daily functioning of the bureaucracy. Elieth Eyebiyi's paper on corruption and accountability at the municipal level showed, through daily land transactions, how bureaucratic corruption is part of everyday manoeuvres imported from the central state to the municipal bureaucracy via decentralisation. This interference also affects the daily functioning of local political authority. George Bob-Milliar aptly pointed out partisan interference in Ghanaian municipalities in his paper on the political party capture of municipal councils there. Though municipal elections legislation prohibits the involvement of political parties, the dominant parties still clandestinely manoeuvre in favour of and sponsor particular candidates who run for local office. This party-tainted interference shapes how elected representatives subsequently serve the local population.

Another issue is the tussle between municipal officials and residents over land access and tenure security. Sometimes these tensions emanate from the fragmented and conflicting roles of municipal institutions. Collins Adjei Mensah's paper on institutions that manage urban green spaces in Ghana showed how complex power configurations and the fragmented roles of municipal departments regarding green spaces create confusion not only over tenure security but also engender non-compliance and trespassing onto such designated spaces. Drissa Tangara's paper on land management in peri-urban Bamako, Mali, shed even greater light on everyday strategies of circumvention and non-compliance. While the multiple actors involved in land administration inhibit efficiency of governance, ordinary citizens use different legal and customary narratives to defend their access thereto and their tenure security. Yet these decentralised municipal institutions offer a social space for dialogue between the different institutions interfacing with the local state. Aïdas Sanogo's paper articulated the social role played by the Town Hall of Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire, mostly as a public domain for resolving land and social conflicts between different traders' associations.

Unsurprisingly the interference of the local administration in local matters generates stand-offs, particularly when it attempts to regulate local and private businesses. Oscarine Mela's contribution analysed the difficult interactions between municipal security agents and privately owned motorcycle-taxis in urban Cameroon. The municipal council's agents, commonly known in the daily parlance of Yaoundé as *Awara*, are part of a specific security service that aims to ensure the maintenance of order in urban areas with

unregulated spaces and parking slots for traders and motorcycle-taxis. Despite heavy-handed policing by *Awara* agents, motorcycle-taxi drivers craftily evade traffic regulations to deliver timely services to their clients – often despite tussling with the agents on duty. Adama Cissé's paper traced the origins of the brute force used by municipal agents to erstwhile colonial administrative structures. Brutality was central to the colonial government's apparatus of control, and was subsequently passed onto postcolonial ones as the means of keeping urban residents in check. Despite the threat of force, decentralised structures create democratic possibilities for organised local actors to resist specific programmes of municipal governments. Local movements that pursue social justice projects are one example hereof. This was captured in Antje Daniel's paper on the varying modes of cooperation and contestation between the local activist group Reclaim the City and the municipality of Cape Town, South Africa. While demanding affordable housing through the "illegal" occupation of municipal buildings, the group still compels municipal officials to protect them on the grounds of social justice.

Decentralisation as the Dual Legitimation of the State and the Margins

An important point raised in the respective contributions was the legitimation of local authority specifically by referencing or even reinventing precolonial concepts and practices. Some of these reference points were directly called upon to induce responsive services. Others are mimetic replications of the state's bureaucratic practices, deployed in order to gain greater credibility. Kamina Diallo's paper showed how *Dozo* traditional hunters' associations have managed to reconfigure power relations at the local level in Côte d'Ivoire. In the municipality of Korhogo, communal associations providing local security in the post-conflict reconstruction process have craftily taken on the label of "*Dozo* traditional hunters." *Dozo* members not only conform to the state's security apparatus, but also present themselves as a bureaucratic organisation in possession of its own offices and with an official register for identifying their legitimate members. Their organisational structure has earned them recognition from state and municipal officials alike. In the same vein, John-Baptist Ndikubwimana's paper drew attention to the legitimation of new institutions of decentralisation in Rwanda by linking them to certain precolonial concepts. The paper pointed out how gains from Rwanda's decentralisation have been craftily linked to precolonial practices. In particular, the cultural term *Imihigo*, translating roughly as "performance contract," induces municipal officials to deliver responsive local services. Similarly, Jane Ayeko-Kümmeth's paper highlighted the references made by state and municipal authorities to precolonial concepts in order to whip up credibility regarding accountability programmes in Uganda. Municipal authorities there have compensated for weak accountability by referring to the cultural term *Baraza*, roughly "communal fora," so as to enhance the enthusiasm for their related programmes.

That notwithstanding, citizens' rights and obligations may also be strengthened by newly invented semi-formal local institutions, as described in Anthony Agyei's paper on public budget hearings and decentralised decision-making in Ghana. Despite the

challenges that inhibit greater public participation in these fora, the embedded guidelines on municipal budgets engender quality control and social inclusion through the Town Hall meetings that ensure societal control and appease demands for accountability. Modou Ndiaye's contribution was a clarion call for local residents in Senegal to actively exercise their rights vis-à-vis control over local policies and to demand responsive local services.

Attempts to ensure citizens' rights and concerns inform the content of municipal projects connect directly with the ongoing struggles over public authority occurring between local administrations and local political actors. This view was analysed in the keynote speech delivered by Katja Werthmann, which focused on decentralisation in Cameroon and Burkina Faso, respectively. Typical actors herein include chieftains and related institutions, which command enormous local influence. Koly Fall's paper on southern Senegal identified the practical dialogue between chieftains, municipal figures and community organisations in the promotion of local socio-economic development. Farima Samaké's paper described further how members of the rural municipality of Sanakoroba, Mali, reconcile daily practices with current legislation. Despite the strong emphasis on formal functions, successful development actions have been those jointly undertaken by customary authorities and the municipal council of Sanakoroba. Relatedly, Jimam Lar's paper on communal security provision in central Nigeria revealed the, at first, inherent tensions between the state police and communal agents. Still, communal security agents have invoked state authority to justify their actions while simultaneously filling the void left by its absence. Hence, their actions have gained them recognition while concomitantly legitimising the state as security provider.

Cross-Cutting Debates: Linking Conceptual Arguments with Case Studies

Generally, the respective contributions identified the opposing logics of actors outside and those inside municipal administrations. However, the papers were skewed in favour of perspectives from non-state, local political actors and from among the local population. It was clear that despite expectations of improved services, quite often the intensified presence of the administration at the local level is experienced more or less as a brute force that restricts both individual and collective liberties. This point was underlined during the discussion of the papers by Susann Baller and Ndiouga Benga from a historical perspective. They held that this perception obviously contradicts the political aim of decentralisation being a means to improve democracy and local participation. In that regard, the discussions accompanying the contributions generated more fundamental and cross-cutting analytical insights. While some of the latter followed the arguments of earlier publications, others opened up new perspectives entirely (as described in more detail below). In part at least, these new topics and perspectives were introduced by the discussants.

The concept of "travelling models" (Behrends et al., 2014; Olivier de Sardan et al., 2017) played an important role in the discussions. When we think of decentralisation as

a travelling model developed in the Global North and transferred to the Global South, we can better appreciate the contradictions that accompany the policy's related processes. The stated aims of decentralisation – such as improved service delivery, local participation, democracy, accountability, as well as the fight against corruption – correspond to the global notion of "good governance." Decentralisation programmes follow the assumption that new legal rules and formal structures need to be established in order to guarantee the accomplishment of set aims.

In hindsight, the numerous attempts at decentralisation in Africa show that the typical answers to problems and failures are new, (supposedly) improved rules and increased efforts to implement the latest system. However, that assumption often gives rise to new failures and generates fresh amendments to existing rules (more below). If we follow the concept of travelling models, we need to consider how translation and adaptation to the new local context works exactly. Everyday life shapes the actions of both municipal institutions and external actors. The simple but crucial conclusion here is: context matters.

As Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan pointed out in the open discussion session, parts of the Political Science and Development Studies literature often disregard contextual issues, which leads to a description of African political institutions as weak. However, this ignores how the continent's political systems operate on a daily basis. In reality, local political institutions blend with neo-traditional practices and formal rules. This interplay between formal institutions and local counterparts depends on the dynamics existing within particular local contexts. While local actors – and especially neo-traditional ones – are still "twilight institutions" (Lund, 2006), their roles and strength vis-à-vis state institutions vary, and cannot be reliably generalised. Local contexts differ greatly, even between neighbouring municipalities according to the disparate persons involved.

At the same time, the conference discussants – particularly Alexander Stroh and Anja Osei – underlined the fact that in processes of decentralisation we cannot ignore the wider context of state strength. Indeed, the papers and discussions revealed that the state and the political system set the political and institutional frameworks for public action. While they might be challenged or criticised, these frameworks cannot simply be ignored. This process of blending state power with local political action is highly personalised; it is marked by close personal relations in the local setting and between local and national actors. Formal regulations crucially establish the framework within which personal ambitions and obligations can be negotiated. How these personalised relations play out does not follow systematic and standardised procedures. Obviously, decentralisation cannot be implemented as a set programme anchored merely on technical expertise.

To legitimise new administrative rules, the state sometimes refers to precolonial "tradition." This happened during the colonial era too, when the concept of the "chieftain" was included in systems of local administration. However, even in strong chieftaincy systems, this inclusion changed these individuals' roles. Thus, we refer to them as neo-traditional institutions. This tendency to refer to precolonial systems can still be found

today, for example with the cases of the *Baraza* in Uganda and *Imihigo* in Rwanda. The concept of "performance contract," per the Kinyarwanda term *Imihigo*, claims to refer to the precolonial one concluded between warriors and the king. Interestingly, neither classical ethnographic studies (see Vansina, 1962 or Maquet, 1954) nor the older Kinyarwanda dictionaries mention this concept at all. A reference to "tradition" may also be made by local authorities, as in the case of Côte d'Ivoire regarding precolonial hunter societies, *Dozos*, as a system of communal security provision. These cases underline how precolonial concepts and new institutions may complement each other in the delivery of public authority. Additionally, references made to "tradition" may work even when the concept is re-interpreted or re-invented, because the idea can enhance positive attitudes towards institutions.

Another overarching topic was accountability. Several contributions analysed efforts to improve the public perception of accountable municipal institutions. But as the papers hinted, there remain several "grey zones" through which residents and clients access and circumvent municipal services. These spaces, according to Förster and Ammann, take on shape and meaning through their actors' "agency and practice" (2018: 3). This underlines the fact that in the general debate, accountability relies solely on official norms vis-à-vis the multiple forms thereof that we observe in everyday life. In his comments as discussant, Olivier de Sardan referred to the multiple demands for accountability faced by tax collectors in Niger based on the different modes of governance there. A tax collector is supposed to strictly enforce related regulations. However, their affected relatives expect to be exempted therefrom. They are not only accountable to the municipal tax office, but also to the chief,to their family, and to other relations too. From a strict legal perspective, this daily practice, simply put, is corruption. Practically, however, that obscures the multiple forms of accountability. Indeed, this normative analysis of clientelism only reinforces the official version of corruption. Yet the above-mentioned actions are embedded in everyday life practices in local arenas, and follow the frameworks of the different modes of governance (see Olivier de Sardan, 2011).

Conclusion: Decentralisation as a Framework for Controlling and Orchestrating Public Action

The foregoing has revealed that processes of decentralisation and changes in administrative rules might not lead to the intended outcomes, but they certainly do have consequences. We need to understand processes of decentralisation also as ones of changing or introducing new rules. The latter provides space for local public action, especially within relations between municipal administrations and their citizens.

More generally, changes in rules often revitalise local political processes. They may reorganise power relations between strong actors, and open up spaces that offer new formal frameworks (and sometimes even successfully support bureaucratic modes of governance). This action occurs in the local arena, coming with state and other outside interference. It also opens up options for local associations, and opportunities for spontaneous protests and claims too. Sometimes, the triggered processes may lead to greater

democracy; in other cases, however, local power-holders may take advantage of the newly opened political space. The type of actors that capitalise on this opportunity depends on (1) the distribution of power, and its recognition by ordinary people; (2) the degree of trust in established local leaders; (3) the perceived freedom of action, existing grievances and on expectations with regards to possible changes and (4) the degree to which leaders channel such claims into public action.

This does not mean that the community takes control – as often implied by promotors of local participation. The newly opened space for political action also gives way to particularism and local conflicts inside the so-called community, and between neighbouring communities harbouring notions of micro-nationalism too. There is still the chance that, in the long run, these frameworks may open up spaces for greater democratic participation and people's control of power. However, these are just two possible developments; a contrasting scenario is the consolidation of stronger local-power-holder bases.

Throughout the discussions, it became clear that municipal accountability mechanisms and general public participation represent "a bureaucratic paradox"; more and conflicting rules allow public action outside of official channels. In his remarks, Georg Klute mentioned the importance of these open moments or windows of opportunities via reference to Graeber's (2015) work on "the utopia of rules." Indeed, the different papers highlighted the never-ending introduction of new rules that, in reality, hardly ever change existing practices. Klute urged us to analyse the state as a massive organisation, and thus the citizen as one part of it. Emphasising this point further, Alfred Ndiaye held that local administrations act as the intermediaries between the local and the metropole – as seen per the notion of the "command state" (Elwert, 2001).

This also shows the ambiguity of the administration; the many rules from the state and its red tape create confusion for bureaucrats and their clients alike. The administration believes its problems can be solved merely by introducing more and new rules. Essentially, fresh and ambiguous rules offer space for political action both inside and outside the administration. From the neo-institutional sociology perspective, this is another striking example of "decoupling" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). Even if new rules are formally adopted, they are often ignored in daily organisational routines. Thus, we need to understand decentralisation as a process in which specifically a certain concept thereof is implemented. The decisive elements herein are hardly the concept or programmes of decentralisation. Rather, they are the wider setting established within the national political frame as well as the local context, its actors and the dynamic interpretation and use of this new political space.

The various insights that have been briefly presented in this article were only possible to acquire through the consequent interdisciplinary approach adopted. Mainly ethnographic-style research unravelled how local political processes are articulated through interfaces between local bureaucrats, citizens and other local authorities existing on the margins of the state. The presence of local activists and practitioners underlines the importance of local self-organisation, constraints and pressures in everyday life as well as of pragmatic solutions – even when experiences with them revealed both the

limits of self-organisation and the resistance generated from local power-holders or state representatives. At the same time, it is obvious that the bigger picture regarding state structures, policies and legal frameworks – and, of course, the historical background and related processes – cannot be ignored either. What we learnt from the conference – and now intend to explore further – is how decentralisation processes open up and strengthen the local political arena to a number of actors, such as the bureaucracy, local councillors, neo-traditional authorities, as well as local "big men" and movements. This also implies that research in this field will benefit tremendously from the taking of an interdisciplinary approach going forward.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Dynamiken des Alltagslebens in Gemeindeverwaltungen im frankophonen und anglophonen Afrika

Zusammenfassung
Eine Dezentralisierung in Subsahara-Afrika stellt den Aufbau handlungsfähiger Institutionen in Aussicht. Zu den damit verbundenen Versprechen gehören außerdem, Beamte zur Verantwortung ziehen zu können sowie die verstärkte Partizipation der Bevölkerung. Bestehende Studien zu Dezentralisierungsprozessen ignorieren jedoch den Alltag in den Verwaltungen und deren Verhältnis zur Bevölkerung. Ebenso fehlt das Wissen, wie dezentrale Institutionen in Bezug auf ihre lokalen Kontexte und andere „Autoritäten" außerhalb der Verwaltung agieren. Diese lokalen Kontexte beeinflussen die Dienstleistungen und die Auswirkungen der lokalen Machtstrukturen auf lokale Gemeinschaften. Vor diesem Hintergrund hat unsere Konferenz im Mai 2019 in Dakar, Senegal, zum Thema „Alltägliche Dynamik in den kommunalen Verwaltungen im frankophonen und anglophonen Afrika" drei zentrale Themenfelder behandelt: wie interagieren die Akteure in der Lokalverwaltung mit ihrem Umfeld; wie eignen sich „normale" Bürger bürokratische Verfahren des Staates an; und wie fordern sie diese heraus bzw. passen sie sich den Alltagspraktiken der Kommunalverwaltungen an. Ein durchgängiger Befund war, dass Dezentralisierung nicht einfach umgesetzt wird, sondern einen veränderten Rahmen und neue Räume für formales und informelles öffentliches und politisches Handeln bietet.

Schlagwörter
Gemeindeverwaltungen, Dezentralisierung, Alltagspraktiken, Lokalpolitik, frankophones und anglophones Afrika

Analysis and Report

GIGA | Africa Spectrum

The Ghetto President and Presidential Challenger in Uganda

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 86–99

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720916085
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
SAGE

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Abstract

The political history of post-colonial Uganda is about as fascinating as that of any post-colonial state. The styles of key political figures, including Milton Obote and Idi Amin Dada, who have had the privilege of leading the country, are central to this fascination. Yet, since becoming Uganda's leader in 1986, President Yoweri Museveni appears to have outdone his predecessors so much so that an entire generation cares little of the country's history before Museveni. In 2021, the Ugandan people are scheduled to go to the polls in a presidential election. Following the success of a bill in parliament to expunge an upper age limit to contest for the office of president, the seventy-five -year-old Museveni is set to seek an additional mandate. Unlike in his previous electoral contests, however, Museveni faces the challenge of a man less than half his age. Thirty-seven year-old Robert Kyagulanyi is among the most successful popular musicians in East Africa. Kyagulanyi has since exploited his success and fame to become an elected Member of Uganda's Parliament. Barely two years after the artist materialised as a politician, the Ghetto President, as he is popularly known, has declared his intention to run for the office Museveni occupies, against Museveni. Since Museveni permitted electoral contests for the presidency of Uganda, he has remained defiantly invincible. How does Kyagulanyi propose to undo this, and why does he think he can, to the extent of daring? Drawing on a socio-biographical analysis of the celebrity MP, some strategic interviewing and student-participant observation, the article engages the dynamics inherent with some of these issues.

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Keywords
Uganda, politics, elections, activism, popular music, Bobi Wine, Yoweri Museveni

Manuscript received: 05 December 2019; accepted: 10 February 2020

Introduction

In 2021, the people of Uganda will go to the polls in a presidential election. The incumbent president, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, is certain to run after the country's parliament passed a bill expunging an upper age limit to contest for the office of president. Several scholars have drawn attention to how the previously perceived "to be" reforming and promising country has retrogressed in recent years. Moses Khisa juxtaposes this retrogression, among other factors, with Museveni's insistence on ruling for life, and claims that this ambition has in turn led to the erosion of basic democratic institutions, the securitisation of politics, the criminalisation of political competition and an upsurge in contentious politics across the East African country (Khisa, 2019). Presently, Museveni's "strategic choices" (Swinkels, 2019) to remain in power are at odds with Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, better known as Bobi Wine, a popular musician and MP representing the Kyadondo East Constituency of Wakiso District in Uganda's Central Region. Bobi Wine's mantra has been one of simplicity: grateful for Museveni's glories of the bush wars and insistent that absolute power corrupts absolutely irrespective of the individual, and as such Uganda must eschew strong men and instead build strong institutions, once and for all. The circumstances surrounding Wine's emergence as an independent candidate and victorious MP have been documented elsewhere (e.g. Mutyaba, 2017). Yet Wine claims he had no choice but to participate in the forthcoming presidential election as an independent opposition candidate against the perennially victorious electoral fortune of Museveni (Aljazeera, 2019). Considering the unravelling bulge of the youth demographic in Uganda, wherein "there is…huge...following for… leaders [like Bobi Wine since] 78% of Uganda's population is under age 30" (Ford, 2019), the 2021 presidential election holds the prospect of some novelty. Wine's deployment of his music, the Internet/social media for activism causes and now for a presidential cause, is to be understood as a positioning of the MP to navigate a treacherous terrain in a strongly regulated and visibly oppressive country (Ashaba and Taodzera, 2019). It has been severally argued that there is a preponderance of "legitimate" weapons at the disposal of the state as enshrined in the Constitution and across the country's existing laws. The Computer Use Act and the Regulation of Interception of Communications Act, for example, are still very much constitutive of "humane" options for the state's self-preservation against online freedom in Uganda (Kakungulu-Mayambaya and Rukondo, 2019; Rukundo, 2018). Two years after his election as MP, much of which was constituted by speculation of a potential presidential bid, Wine recently cleared the air and announced that he would be running for the much coveted and historically engaging office of president of Uganda, against Museveni. In a country with the world's second youngest population where the median age of sixteen is three years under the median age

in Africa (Ford, 2019), Bobi Wine's pitch for running for the office of president is neither unexpected nor farfetched: "We came to the conclusion that we should challenge this regime as a generation," he stated while declaring his presidential intention (Pilling, 2019; Titeca, 2019). Beyond the generational base and ethos of his bid/campaign, there is a sense in which Mr. Wine stands out even among the young generation: A twenty-six year-old middle school history and religion teacher, Timothy Ssimbwa, describes Wine as "ordinary; he grew up in the ghetto…Since he's ordinary, he'd be a good leader" (Ford, 2019). This piece proposes to engage with the dynamics of Bobi Wine's rise, apparent exceptionality resulting from the "ordinariness" of one in his circumstance and realistic chances of ousting President Museveni through the ballot in 2021. The analysis is etched on primary empirical material including strategic interviews and participant observation in the city of Kampala, Uganda. It draws from relevant theoretical tracts in conceiving a framework themed on the relation between Bobi Wine's background, music, activism and philanthropy – each bringing a fragment into constituting the overall appeal of the popular musician cum politician. The article explores Wine's standing in Uganda and adopts a critical socio-biographical analysis, which examines selected figures' socio-cultural relationships with their communities/environments, as its conceptual framework. The article conveys excerpts from interviews, findings from participant observation and the discourse analysis of a song of Wine's: "Freedom" (2017a). The considerable opposition from within Uganda's popular music scene to Bobi Wine's politics is also assessed. The section "Activism in Uganda" offers a summary of activism in Uganda and seeks to delineate the distinctness of Bobi Wine's in the country.

Activism in Uganda

Protest is a form of activism. A popular musician with one protest song in the body of work, who lays claim to activism, is not unusual. Yet activism, as understood in popular parlance across Africa, is more. Activism is the practice of deploying direct vigorous action/campaigns in order to bring about change in a given socio-political space. Activism is one of those categories that constitutes a perennial challenge to the academe; for it is not uncommon to find academics who insist on a disciplinary definition and identification for any treatise on activism. Much like with music or fashion, the academe appears to have been unprepared, thus, overwhelmed by the spate of activism, particularly in recent times. This suggests that there ought to be an interrogation at the heart of each activism and activist's sincerity. If the academe is intended to interrogate society, it behoves asking why the academe appears to be failing in defining a fragment for "activism" within any of media and communication studies, political science, celebrity studies or cultural studies. At status quo, proffering a definition for the term "activism" results in one that floats across disciplines. Identifying this snag that exists at the core of the comprehension of activism is necessary in order to proceed with the objective here, which is to locate Bobi Wine's music, philanthropy and perceived lifestyle as an amalgamation in executing activism and running for the office of president in Uganda. The article suggests that the collection of the many fragments of Mr. Wine have the potential to equate

to what ought to be known as activism in the strict sense, that is of actual activism being of an ongoing characteristic as against opportunistic activism being adopted and deployed in staccato. After all, activism ought to interest the sociologist, the journalist, the media critic, the political scientist and even the anthropologist. Activism ought to be a way of life such that an activist is perpetually living activism until the sought is gotten, particularly since there is little value in being an activist on several fronts, as compared to living an activism on all of one's fronts. It is noteworthy that Mr Wine's socio-political activism began with his music. Paraphrasing the inventor of afrobeat, Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, whose activist ethos tended to a way of life before his passing in 1997, Wine has criticised his early days as a popular musician wherein he used the tool to teach "non-sense" to his listeners. Following his awakening, however, he insists that his music must be deployed only for the purposes of teaching some sense, particularly in respect of socio-political justice for Ugandans and for other Africans governed by dictatorships. Having had a difficult upbringing, Wine's metamorphosis appears seamless. He has taken well to the appellation of "The Ghetto President" becoming an advocate, in a perpetual activist's sense, for the rights and better living conditions for the millions across Uganda's slums- slums in which Wine was himself raised and for which he is sufficiently versed to speak.

The history of activism in Uganda presents an interesting subject matter. An influential volume reflecting on the emerging trends of digital activism through social media in Africa included a chapter on the dwindling popularity of the leadership in Uganda, along with such countries as Ethiopia and Zimbabwe where the personnel of leadership has changed since the volume's publication in 2016 (Chibita, 2016; Mutsvairo, 2016). The literature on activism in Uganda has included subjects such as the perennially contentious issues on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) relations and challenges; Land Rights (Schefer, 2019); HIV/AIDS; theatre for drawing attention to generate awareness; agri-food research, among others (e.g. Das, 2007; Edmondson, 2011; Farley, 2014; Lyons, 2012). On the issue of LGBT in a country with an Anti-Homosexuality Law, it is noteworthy that Mr. Brian Wasswa, an activist for the rights of LGBT people was attacked and killed on October 4, 2019 (Human Rights Watch, 2019). In 2017, the Jobless Brotherhood broke new ground in civic activism by smuggling two live pigs into the Ugandan Parliament as symbols of the greed of the ruling class who had remained unmoved in spite of a 61 per cent demographic in unemployment (Larok, 2017). Uganda's young climate activists were in the news recently making a case for the need for the continent to take a collective stand against pro-global warming practices of which Africa contributes the least but is nonetheless the most vulnerable (Mercado, 2019). Student movements, which dominated through the twentieth century, also gained renewed momentum recently with Bobi Wine's "People Power" movement. "People Power is not a political party, but a movement driven by young people. Its only ideology is embodied in the name itself" (Ford, 2019). Strikingly reminiscent of the Pan-African wave of the 1960's and of the student activist groups that served as key opposition against Milton Obote's and Idi Amin's regimes, Julius Kateregga, is the current president of the Makerere University Students Guild. Kateregga ran for election as a People Power

candidate (Ford, 2019). Yet, in spite of the rich terrain of activism practices in Uganda, the literature has yet to include material covering the deployment of activism as a rallying centre and eventual launching pad for a presidential run. The seamless transition, in Bobi Wine's metamorphosis, from musician to activist/conscious musician to politician, makes for the overarching contribution of this article. Indeed, the amalgam of Bobi Wine, his music (as would be seen), his protégés (as the make-up of the participant observation and an interviewee exemplify) and the transnationalism of his cause show the extent to which people are using new media to speak into each other's political realities. Across different African countries, citizens are engaging in shows of solidarity reminiscent of the independence and anti-apartheid struggles of previous generations. Together with literature sceptical of the mobilising potential of new media, the emergence of young rallying characters under 40, such as Bobi Wine, in several African countries has been tentatively conceived as Pan-Africanism for the digital age (Nyabola, 2018).

Uganda gained independence from Britain in the early sixties and the East African nation of a little over 40 million inhabitants has had a chequered history of political leadership in fifty-seven years of self-governance. Although there has been a mix of coups d'état and electoral ascensions of power (in the case of Milton Obote), the current president Yoweri Museveni is only the ninth individual to be Uganda's head of state. Contrast this with say his Nigerian counterpart at the present time, Muhammadu Buhari, who is the 15th President of Nigeria, and the differences in the mode of governance since "re-democratisation" in both countries assume improved comprehension. Indeed, while re-democratisation in Nigeria after 1999 meant that a single leader had a maximum of two terms of four years each; Uganda's authoritarianism has perpetuated Museveni in office since he assumed the reins in 1986 with correspondingly necessary constitutional alterations. Despite the presence of institutions such as parliament, the judiciary and an electoral system, at least in form if not content, Uganda is effectively a hybrid state slanted towards presidentialism (Ssentongo, 2018; Tripp, 2010). To place the Ugandan story in a more vivid perspective, it is plausible that President Museveni is the materialisation of what might have been in Nigeria had any and or all of the self-succession bids of Generals Ibrahim Babangida, Sani Abacha and Olusegun Obasanjo been successful. That Museveni has been in office longer than the combined period all three aforementioned leaders were in office, is suggestive of the calibre of opposition suppression Museveni presides over. Activism against Museveni's rule and policies must therefore be viewed critically and respectfully. As has been the norm in Paul Biya's Cameroon, for example, the Ugandan government shut down the Internet during the last elections in 2016 amid allegations of vote rigging. In order to further illustrate what leadership under Museveni has entailed, in July 2018, the government introduced a social media tax in a move seen by many as a gimmick to discourage online dissent. Leading the protest march against the tax through #ThisTaxMustGo whilst also illustrating a new wave of dissent against Museveni's penchant for maximum rule was MP Bobi Wine (Ashaba and Taodzera, 2019; Mutyaba, 2018). It is also significant that whereas there have been several dissenting popular musicians through Museveni's reign in Uganda, none has yet

sought to challenge for the office Museveni occupies until Bobi Wine. The subsequent analysis centres on Bobi Wine's political philosophy/activism, philanthropy, music and rhetoric while offering a window into his chances at the presidential election in 2021 vis-a-vis the implications of the election for the East African sub-region and for the larger African continent.

The Activism, Philanthropy and Music of Bobi Wine Among Ugandans

This section seeks to comprehend the appeal of Bobi Wine as accruing from his activism, music and politics. The section relies on excerpts from interviewees resident in Kampala, Uganda and on participant observation among a demographic of young students in Kampala's largest private university. It is essential to establish the nature of the terrain within which Bobi Wine has resolved to continue to operate. Beyond the well-known "People Power" hymn behind his movement, Wine's unspoken alternate mantra is without doubt to "live and die in/for Uganda" (Titeca, 2019):

> More than 120 of [Wine's] concerts in 2017 were cancelled by security forces, who use tear-gas and water cannons to break up his rallies. A draft censorship law, often referred to as the "anti-Bobi Wine law", demonstrates the threat the authorities consider him to be. The law places various restrictions on artists and filmmakers, including making them seek government approval for song lyrics and for when they want to perform abroad. (Jennings, 2019)

Considering that Uganda has become a space where an artist may be granted permission by the state to offer his/her art to his/her audiences, or to be prevented from offering some of his/her artistic components to his/her audiences abroad, Wine's resolve to shun the lure of asylum and several other means to relocate to a western capital ought to be properly unpacked. Indeed, this resolve is to be understood within the backdrop of the average African's proclivity for the un-African and of Wine's conviction to live in Uganda not minding the economic challenge this poses to growing his craft. Wine's resolve conveys a charter to continually sensitise Ugandans – particularly young Ugandans – through several means including music. In order to gauge the impact/effects of Wine's work, it was necessary to interrogate a section of his audiences, specifically a section of young Ugandan students. Thus, between January and February 2017, I was required to teach a Journalism and Media Studies freshman class on the module "Introduction to Online Journalism" at a large private university in Kampala, Uganda through a much accelerated format. In order to animate conversations and to highlight the reality of popular music as journalism in Africa, I tasked the students to engage with mini projects of Ugandan popular musicians of their choice who had demonstrated some form of online journalism. The outcome was instructive as it showed the depth of the vast popular music terrain in Uganda. But more than that, Bobi Wine was the popular musician who emerged with the most frequency among the project's choices of popular musicians by the students. It was overwhelming to the extent that I had to alter the rules

of the project, after making them, by insisting that not more than two students may focus on one popular musician. Since this episode, and since Wine's election in July 2017, the activist's approaches to the common man's cause have revealed just why he is a favourite – including experientially with freshmen students of an "Introduction to Online Journalism" course – among the youth in Uganda. Unsurprisingly, as Bobi Wine resonates with the Ugandan commoner, so he does in the academic literature of studies on Ugandan and East African popular music. Indeed, scholarship referencing Bobi Wine's works is wide and varied. For example, Sanga (2010) highlights the activism of Wine's hip hop in terms of youth empowerment with respect to globalisation; Mbabazi (2012) examines digitisation in Wine's music; Magishagwe (2014) focuses on Wine's humanitarian work; while Malande and Masiolo (2013) are concerned with Wine's juggling of idioms in his music to advance political agenda. The emphasis here is on the seamless transition between Bobi Wine as activist musician and Bobi Wine as activist politician. MP Bobi Wine has spoken of his encouragement/motivation thus:

> [Museveni] wields a lot of weapons and a huge budget. However, I'm always encouraged by the fact that more ferocious, intimidating and authoritarian leaders have led Uganda. But the way they were overpowered was even laughable. So that should encourage this generation – Bobi Wine. (Angopa, 2018)

At the risk of rehashing public knowledge, it is worth stating that Wine ran for parliament as an independent candidate, defeating a number of candidates including the candidate of the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM). It is instructive that Wine holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music, Dance and Drama from the prestigious Makerere University, Kampala. Since he began his music career in 2000, he has made several politically conscious songs that speak to power and poor conditions in the country. As a piece of informative digression, it was earlier noted that another African musician with an activist ethos was Fela Anikulapo-Kuti who studied music at Trinity College. Of Fela, I have argued elsewhere that when compared to those that came after him, he is celebrity activism personified (Osiebe, n.d.). The extents to which Bobi Wine is able to measure up to Fela's feats remain to be seen. Winning a presidential election would undoubtedly make for a weighty advance considering that Fela ran unsuccessfully for Nigeria's presidency. Perhaps the biggest challenge, yet, faced by Wine since becoming an MP was the alleged attempt on his life which resulted in the death of his driver during bye-elections in the city of Arua (Ford, 2019). Before the tragic episode, the constitutional amendment bill sponsored by Museveni's NRM on age limit to run for the office of president spurred the activism in Bobi Wine through his speeches, his social media posts and his music. Hitherto, the constitution stipulated a cap age of seventy-five, although this had been so amended to expedite Museveni's previous election bids as it helped to exclude rival politicians who nursed ambitions to challenge him. Wine was easily the most vocal MP against the bill intended to facilitate Museveni's election in 2021. Considering the majority NRM in parliament, Wine offered opposing viewpoints that may resonate for long in Uganda and among Ugandans. At some stage, Wine went

as far as refuting and publicising an alleged $8,000 bribe paid to each MP to support the bill towards Museveni's life presidency (Dahir, 2017).

There is, it would appear, a synergy between Wine's rhetoric and his collective charter as demonstrated by certain charity causes of his. Wine's connectivity is such that he maintains a website at <http://bobiwine.ug/> which is strikingly not a vehicle for music promotion and events' booking as is the artistic/entrepreneurial wont. Instead, the website bears the caption '*Standing Up Against Corruption and Bad Governance*', and seems dedicated to doing that. The site also serves the Bobi Wine Foundation focused on "discussing, and finding solutions to social, political and economic issues in [Uganda] especially such challenges that hinder the youth from attaining their welfare goals" (Wine, 2017b). The challenge of accessing public figures remains a bane in much of Africa. Wine's social media contacts as advertised on his website are at best inactive. Yet, the streets of Kampala seem charitable to him. A preliminary interview was conducted with an opinionated resident of Kampala who is active on social media and a customer service manager with one of the Internet service providers in Kampala. In the course of our exchange, my interviewee responded that: "Bobi Wine gives homes to thousands of Ugandans, he pays school fees, makes them record music…and he calls himself "Ghetto President," so he speaks for all from the ghetto. But Museveni is still in power till death does us part. But I like Museveni, he is peaceful and wise."[1] The foregoing is an excerpt from a conversation with a frank twenty-eight year-old Ugandan woman. Although only one of "Museveni's babies" – born after Museveni assumed power in 1986 – the highlight is of importance as it represents a common theme on the subject matter (Titeca, 2019). The expiration of Museveni's stranglehold on power in Uganda is unknown. The recent constitutional amendment to expunge age limits suggests that he may continue to vie for the office electorally in a somewhat Mugabe fashion, or that, indeed, further amendments could transpire. The excerpt therefore speaks to Bobi Wine's role as an activist for the just in spite of Museveni's seeming perpetuity. It further speaks to a practical side of his works in peace-building and conflict management in a country where a dictator is apparently well-liked and enjoys an arguably balanced love–hate relationship with the largely youthful population. An associate professor of communication and media studies at Makerere University is of the view that while Bobi Wine represents a breath of fresh air, "his leadership qualities and presidential credentials are of no consequence to the status quo and only mark him out as an endangered species."[2] This is a pointer to the inherent challenges of meaningful activism in much of Africa. The numbers of well-documented cases of intolerance to dissent by various governments across Africa are testament to this.

In closing the discussion, it would constitute inaccuracy to ignore the substantial opposition and antagonism that MP Bobi Wine faces in Uganda. For example, his fellow musician, Bebe Cool, although widely perceived as a Museveni mole, has been consistent in his emphasis that Bobi Wine is but a making of the media and of no actual substance. Bebe Cool has assured his audience that MP Bobi Wine is only an empty barrel who can never be president of Uganda. It is apparent that there is no love lost between the two, and Bebe Cool has clearly made it his charter to establish himself as a voice

against Bobi Wine's continual rise in political capital. Meanwhile, in October 2019, President Museveni made a direct and unequivocal move to counter Bobi Wine's momentum by appointing musician Mark Bugembe, also known as Buchaman, as presidential adviser on ghetto affairs (Athumani, 2019). Athumani reports of how "[Buchaman], who took over the unofficial title of ghetto president when Wine became a lawmaker, rejects the criticism that Museveni is using him" (Athumani, 2019). But beyond Bebe Cool and Buchaman, the bulk of the (musical) celebrities in Uganda seem to be in solidarity with one of their own – MP Bobi Wine – to the extent that Jose Chameleon has vowed publicly that Bobi Wine must be president of Uganda. Perhaps more significantly, Kizza Besigye, President Museveni's perpetual electoral opponent, has presented Bobi Wine as a presidential candidate towards the 2021 election. This contrasts with the view of Odonga Otto, the veteran opposition MP for Aruu County Constituency in Pader District who belongs to Besigye's Forum for Democratic Change. Otto offered that Wine is not conversant with national issues, is unconvincing in his plans for fiscal policy, and yet to learn from previous opponents of Museveni such as Besigye. While Otto concedes that Wine could put up a contest, he believes Museveni is vastly too meticulous and ruthless to permit any slip ups to an "amateur" in Bobi Wine (Matavu, 2020). It is unclear if Otto has motives beyond the surface of his comments, but his observation on the incoherence of Wine's policy plans aren't farfetched to keen listeners of Mr. Wine. Yet, Wine has been described as presidential by the famed Ugandan journalist Shaka Ssali (Ssali, 2018). What these developments suggest is that there is likely to be a coalition of Museveni's constant opposition with a youth demographic driven by Bobi Wine's audacity and resonant music. Invariably, time would tell what direction Uganda and Ugandans elect to go as the twenty-first century seizes to relent in hitting the ground running. "We must say what we mean and mean what we say. Let me say that again. We must say what we mean and mean what we say. We must learn to put country first" were the closing words by MP Bobi Wine while addressing a gathering of the Democratic Party in Makerere, Uganda. To put Wine's message differently, citizens and politicians who are prone to social media posturing must be made to understand that such posturing necessarily have to be met by a manifestation of real life values and stellar practices. As is his preoccupation most times, Wine's singles "Dembe" (2016) and "Freedom" (2017) speak directly to the issues he applies his office as an MP debating. While "Dembe" was an initiative for peaceful elections, the highly censored "Freedom" is a moving call to Uganda's youth population that defined the charter of the cause to be free of President Museveni's stranglehold of the nation (Mutyaba, 2018; Titeca et al., 2018). Indeed, "Freedom" is a direct address at President Museveni wherein Wine minces no words in pleading with Museveni's elderly lieutenants to talk to their principal. Wine expresses knowledge and appreciation for Museveni's efforts in fighting a bush war while pointing out that the purpose of the war has since been abandoned in preference for the practice of what the fight was against. Wine advocates the leader's consideration over the fact that babies who were unborn when he rose to Uganda's number one seat have themselves since become parents under his hypocritical and now redundant leadership. The musician-MP insists, in "Freedom," that the people are

unambiguous and unanimous on the non-alteration of the Constitution which he describes as the people's sole remaining hope. In the singer's estimation, the oppression accruing from a Museveni presidency has grown worse than what accrued from apartheid. As a consequence, he asks: "what was the purpose of the liberation when we can't have a peaceful transition? What is the purpose of the Constitution when the government disrespects the Constitution? What is my freedom of expression when you judge me because of my expression?" (Wine, 2017a). For additional reach and effect, Wine shouts out cities and provinces across the country urging the people across these locations from Kampala to Jinja, from Kabale to Kaseese and from Karamoja to Kyandodo, to each and all play their part in the movement to reclaim freedom.

Concluding Remarks

It is a pointer to the fact that activism could/should co-exist side-by-side with civility that Wine has stated that he would be honoured by an invitation from the presidency (Aljazeera, 2019). Wine has also spoken highly of President Museveni's intelligence and repeatedly said that the erstwhile guerrilla represented a mentor at the time the latter emerged as a rebel leader while he was in the age group the former presently occupies. Indeed, Wine has said severally that Museveni's methods towards his materialisation as Uganda's leader in 1986 make very much for the sort of activism which he, Wine, champions presently. Yet, Wine has insisted that the president has fallen prey to the absolute corruption which absolute power conveys, and that the only guaranteed means to check this, even if he, Bobi Wine, were to emerge in a position of power, was term limits. Media/political heavyweights in Uganda such as Kizza Besigye and Shaka Ssali have come out to state their support for Bobi Wine at the country's next presidential election. Bobi Wine's metamorphosis from a self- and materially- obsessed rasta man, into a cleaner shaven and consistently conscious reggae/dance hall star, and into a Member of Parliament as an independent, is remarkable. A conservative principle of activism is the wont to have actual activists in activism non-seasonally, while political leadership is left, preferably, to non-activists equipped in statecraft. Yet, the peculiarity of the Ugandan scenario has thrown up elements of celebrity, garnished with the ethos of activism, and the clout of an MP, as Bobi Wine exemplifies. For any opposition to muster a sustainable tempo so as to begin to resemble a force capable of challenging Museveni's socio-psychological grip, such opposition is expected to be characterised by an amalgam of qualities hitherto unknown in the country's electoral space. As it unravels, it is hoped that Wine's candidacy would eventually be guided by the proper valences of electoral consciousness (Osiebe, 2019). His music, as in "Freedom" for example, appears to have set the agenda fundamentally for any incoming leader of Uganda. An incoming leader who's written several manifestoes of governance and of nationhood should have no qualms adopting workable models towards the rapid development direly needed by Ugandans and in Uganda. The celebrity footballer, George Opong Weah, may have been elected President in Liberia; however, it is barely parallels with what is happening in Uganda where a dictator has someone standing up to him with the clout of music and

self-expression. Wine would be well advised to explore proper electoral/governance valences and extend a soft-landing cum olive branch to President Museveni. Recent examples such as transpired in The Gambia and in Zimbabwe where the outgoing despots were offered deals with certain dignities and privileges, may be pointers to the way to go in Africa where sit-tight leaders have proliferated to scourge degrees, with Uganda and Museveni being particular. In the event of victory at the election, therefore, Wine could deploy populist gestures for his predecessor such that life after office isn't marketed as a frightening one considering it's been over three decades in power. Extending some courtesy to Museveni, who is getting desperately nostalgic as the six day jungle march stunt revealed (BBC News, 2020), could resolve impending conflict and keep the peace. It remains to be seen if indeed the Ghetto President can substitute the "Ghetto" in his appellation for "Uganda" through the keenly anticipated presidential poll next year.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks the editorial team of *Africa Spectrum*.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This project is funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, Germany Research Foundation) under Germany's Excellency Strategy - UBT, Africa Multiple.

Notes

1. Personal Interview with a resident of Kampala 2018.
2. Personal Interview with media studies professor, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda 2018.

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Ein "Ghetto-Präsident" als Herausforderer bei Ugandas Präsidentschaftswahlen

Zusammenfassung
Im Jahr 2021 wird in Uganda ein neuer Präsident gewählt. Nach der erfolgreichen Gesetzesänderung im Parlament zur Aufhebung der Altersbeschränkung für Präsidenten bewirbt sich der 75-jährige Yoweri Museveni um eine weitere Amtszeit. Anders als bei seinen früheren Wahlkämpfen steht er einem halb so alten Herausforderer gegenüber. Der 37-jährige Robert Kyagulanyi gehört zu den erfolgreichsten Musikern Ostafrikas. Kyagulanyi hat seitdem seinen Erfolg und seine Bekanntheit genutzt und wurde als Abgeordneter des ugandischen Parlaments gewählt. Kaum zwei Jahre nach der Etablierung des Künstlers als Politiker, der im Volksmund „Ghetto-Präsident" genannt wird, erklärt er, für das Präsidentenamt zu kandidieren. Der Artikel stützt sich auf eine sozio-biografische Analyse des prominenten Abgeordneten sowie Interviews und teilnehmende Beobachtungen bei Studierenden um die Dynamiken der Kandidatur zu erkunden.

Schlagwörter
Uganda, Politik, Wahlen, Aktivismus, Unterhaltungsmusik, Bobi Wine, Yoweri Museveni

Analysis and Report

GIGA | Africa Spectrum

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 100–112

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720925826
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
SAGE

The Corona Virus and Migration Governance in South Africa: Business As Usual?

Franzisca Luise Zanker[1] and Khangelani Moyo[2]

Abstract

The South African response in dealing with the Corona pandemic needs to speak to the realities of *all* people living in the country, including migrant and refugee communities. Reflecting on this in light of ongoing research on the political stakes of migration governance, we find that the virus response shows little change in the government agenda when it comes to dealing with refugees and other migrants. Veritably, we see that the pandemic may even be an excuse for pushing through already-aspired to policies. This includes the securitised agenda behind the sudden building of a border fence to close off Zimbabwe and the xenophobic-rhetorical clout behind the lockdown rules about which shops are allowed to remain open. The temporary stay on renewing asylum seekers permits counts as a perfunctory exception. We show that each of these developments very much play into politics as usual.

Keywords

South Africa, refugee and migration governance, Corona pandemic, xenophobia, securitisation

Manuscript received: 21 April 2020; accepted: 21 April 2020

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Introduction

As the global Corona pandemic continues to spread around the world, it is anything but business as usual.[1] Over four million people have now tested positive for the virus, and countries all over the world are taking measures from border closures to lockdowns to try to stem the increase in infections. South Africa was the first country on the African continent to impose a lockdown from midnight on 26 March of this year. The quick response has been applauded internationally (Harding, 2020). Implications of such a lockdown in a country already in a period of economic downturn are worrying however, with access to food threatened, social distance and quarantining in the many townships a feat of impossibility and the violent clampdown of the South African Police Service (SAPS) to enforce the lockdown only likely to make matters worse (e.g. Kiewit, 2020; PLAAS, 2020). Like elsewhere in the world , if South Africa wants to flatten the curve of infections and save lives, it needs to speak to the realities and people *living* in the country, including migrant and refugee communities. For the Corona virus does not distinguish according to passport or citizenship. Hence, for matters of public health, countries must also consider those usually pushed to the margins of society.

Some countries have taken this seriously, with Portugal leading the way by temporarily granting all migrants and asylum seekers full citizenship rights to enable unhindered access to healthcare services. Many countries have, however, persisted with policies that lock out refugees and migrants from critical services while also continuing with costly deportations in the midst of worldwide travel bans (Reidy, 2020). What has become abundantly clear is that our very perceptions and practices of addressing issues of migration, mobility and refuge are intractably tied up in the evolving pandemic (e.g. Landau, 2020; Shiferaw and Mucchi, 2020).

States are fundamental to protecting refugees and implementing migration governance, yet especially in the African setting we still know too little about how choices are made at the state level and what stakes play a role (Bakewell and Jónsson, 2013; Milner, 2009). Previous research has highlighted, that, like elsewhere, African states instrumentalise migrants and refugees as security threats or scapegoats for economic woes and increasingly restrictive policies are applied to both immigration (e.g. Adepoju, 2011; Whitaker and Clark, 2018) and refugees (e.g. Rwamatwara, 2005). However, research about how migration and refugee policies are made, unfold and are contested remains limited. The reflections in this article are part of an ongoing research project which seeks to close this gap by considering the political stakes and societal discourse related to migration governance in (and across) four cases in Sub-Saharan Africa, namely South Sudan, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.[2] We draw on empirical material from thirty interviews with civil society activists, academics, politicians and government officials, and four focus groups with refugees and South African youth, which were conducted between February and March 2020 in Johannesburg, Musina and over the telephone. Given the extremely fast-paced evolution into a global pandemic, we did not discuss the Corona implications during our interviews, despite the fact that a week or two later everything had changed. Though at the time of writing our data have not yet

been fully analysed, as the lockdown was announced in South Africa it led us to rethink our initial findings in light of the ongoing pandemic.

In the following, we briefly introduce refugee and migration governance in South Africa, before highlighting three migration-related policy developments as the Corona pandemic evolved: the closure of refugee reception centres, a new border fence between South Africa and Zimbabwe, and confusing messages about which businesses, including food shops, may stay open according to citizenship rather than services they provide. We show that each of these developments has at best little to do with dealing with the Corona epidemic, and at worst, very much plays into politics as usual. We see the pandemic being used as a way to implement other objectives – primarily of securitisation, but also the instrumentalisation of xenophobia for exclusion and scapegoating.

Migration Governance in South Africa

As existing laws, practices, and narratives on migration form the backdrop against which the current government has addressed these issues during the ongoing pandemic, we start by revisiting the status quo ante before discussing current developments. There is a long tradition of cross-border labour migration in the entire Southern African region, and South Africa is a popular destination because of its stable political environment and better developed economy.

Often praised for its progressive asylum laws, with the Refugee Act from 1998 allowing asylum seekers to move freely, work, and study in the country, South African politicians have repeatedly generated political capital from restricting these rights in the two decades since the implementation of the Act. Today, the asylum process can be long and arduous (see below), and many migrants and asylum seekers face considerable risks in South Africa, including crime, harassment, and xenophobic attacks (e.g. Amnesty International, 2019; Estifanos et al., 2019; see also Camminga, 2018).

With few possibilities for anyone but highly qualified migrants entering South Africa, the political and administrative response and societal understanding have long merged refugees and migrants in the system: many migrants who enter the country see no choice but to enter the asylum system, in order to legalise their stay. As such, the asylum system has become a surrogate immigration channel which further obfuscates the distinction between economic immigrants and asylum seekers (Moyo, 2017). This has resulted in the development of a dysfunctional asylum system that is beset by an insurmountable backlog that could take decades to clear. The net effect of a restrictive immigration system and a dysfunctional asylum system is that it fails in its duty to protect refugees and asylum seekers who require urgent assistance and protection.

The only exception to the restrictive immigration regime has been the Documentation of Zimbabweans Project (DZP), which was introduced in 2010 to ease pressure on the asylum system by dealing with the large numbers of undocumented Zimbabwean immigrants. The idea was to regularise the status of Zimbabweans living in the country, giving them the right to work, study, and run businesses, albeit temporarily (Thebe, 2017). The programme was extended in 2014 and 2017, but there is no certainty as to whether

it will be extended again in 2021 when the 2017 permits expire. The ad hoc nature of the DZP is not new, as South Africa has implemented similar programmes in the past, namely the amnesty for former mine workers (1996), Mozambican refugees (1996–1999) and for undocumented Southern African Development Community (SADC) citizens (1996) (e.g. Crush, 1999; Peberdy, 2001). The difference is that these newer amnesties only give recipients temporary residence with no option of permanent residence regardless of length of stay in South Africa. The DZP effectively keeps recipients in a state of permanent temporariness.

The new measures introduced as part of dealing with the Corona pandemic reflect key characteristics of South Africa's refugee and migration governance, namely only a temporary stay of the bureaucratic wall for asylum seekers, securitisation, as well as the instrumentalisation of xenophobia, as we show in the following.

Waiting in Suspension: A Stay on Jumping Bureaucratic Loops

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) announced on the day the lockdown started that because Refugee Reception Offices (RRO) are also affected by the lockdown, anyone whose permit will become invalid will have an additional thirty days after the lockdown is lifted to renew their permit. Some banks followed, allowing asylum seekers to keep their accounts open, even if their permits expire in the meantime (Vearey, 2020). A temporary stay on having to renew permits during the pandemic is, however, at best merely perfunctory.

The DHA is barely able to keep up with the backlog and administering permits even at the best of times. A bureaucratic wall has successively been built up, making life for asylum seekers much harder. Refugees have five days to make a claim once they enter the country. Most asylum seekers are then given a limited Section 22 permit, which they have to renew every one to six months, whilst awaiting the adjudication process. One asylum seeker describes his ordeal:

> … when we come by crossing [the] borders due to political issues … they welcome [d] us but according to my understanding that welcome is a forced welcome because they don't assign us a proper place to go for work … in order to exist … From my experience, I stayed more than 12 years here … since 2008 but I am an asylum seeker, … every month [I had to go] to Durban from here [in Johannesburg] …I was working in a spaza shop and I was shot and since 2016 I could not get any help for that destruction and loss. (Focus groups with refugees and asylum seekers, Johannesburg, 14 February 2020)

Yet RROs lack the capacity to process asylum claims. Out of six offices, only three continue to fully function (Durban, Musina, and Pretoria), with others closed fully or to new claims since 2011. Court orders to reopen the closed offices have been ignored by the DHA to date. Whilst some of the interviewees we talked to noted that it takes time to implement a court order, especially given capacity and financial constraints of the DHA, others argued that this indicated a "*crisis of the rule of law*" (interview, refugee rights'

activist, telephone, 4 March 2020). To date, the DHA has long ignored court orders and largely ignored the critique from activists (see also Carciotto and Mavura, 2016).

The burden of constantly renewing the permits, often having to travel far distances, and waiting in long queues is unsustainable, and often takes years. In the meantime, the Refugee Appeals Board is already processing a backlog, which by December 2017 included 147,794 claims and would take sixty-eight years to work through, as a 2019 audit of the immigration process at the DHA concluded (Auditor General of South Africa, 2019; interview with Lawyers for Human Rights, Johannesburg, 13 February 2020). Recent changes to the refugee law – facing criticism on a number of points, including the fact that refugees or asylum seekers are forbidden from partaking in undefined "political activities," do change the rules for the appeals board, which will hopefully speed up procedures. Nonetheless, though the stay of having to renew permits is for once a decidedly un-bureaucratic solution, it does not indicate a more general shift. For one, no rules indicate how to deal with new asylum claims that arise during the lockdown period, and how this could affect the future of their asylum claim. Moreover, all other Corona-related policy developments paint a picture of business as usual at best, if not using the pandemic to advance policies unrelated to public health.

Border Walls to Stop a Virus: A Securitised Agenda

One of the other very first measures announced to deal with the Corona epidemic was to build a 40 km fence on the border between South Africa and Zimbabwe (Al Jazeera, 2020).[3] For a start, this takes away critical resources at a time when infections in South Africa are higher than all the neighbouring countries combined. This means that closing this particular border point holds limited value for public health. At the time of writing, there were 3,300 recorded cases in South Africa and only twenty-five in Zimbabwe.[4] Border walls, including fences, are also known to be costly and with questionable effects at best, and this is an area that is already known for the porous nature of its borders (Dodson, 2000; Jones, 2016). If anything, hopes for dealing with the virus cannot be pinned on building walls with neighbouring countries, but rather on concerted efforts at regional coordination and galvanising responses that will ensure that the entire SADC region can flatten the curve together. It also belies the reality, where infections have mostly come from people arriving and returning or coming from much further afield, especially Europe.

Patricia de Lille, the Public orks minister, explained the fence would "ensure that *no undocumented* or infected persons cross into the country" (emphasis added, Al Jazeera, 2020). This statement highlights that infectious-diseases prevention is likely only an afterthought. Despite the immediate crisis, priority is given to stopping undocumented migrants, a reflection of an increasingly securitised approach to migration and refugee governance in South Africa. Securitised approaches in migration governance aspire to a restrictive migration policy through the social construction of migration as a security question, whereby migration has supposed negative effects on the domestic environment and portrays a danger for public order (e.g. Huysmans, 2000).

One academic we talked to noted in the following:

> borders are becoming increasingly securitised so in other words problems of managing borders and managing immigration more generally can be seen increasingly as security issues and more specifically national security issues *rather than just social problems*. (Emphasis added, interview, Johannesburg, 17 February 2020)

To update this according to the pandemic and its reaction, which has come to light in the few weeks since the interview took place, responses speak to more than just a social or public health agenda but to a place where "South Africa has become more hostile towards immigrants including refugees and asylum seekers" (ibid).

South Africa is not alone in pursuing a securitisation agenda, but joins a growing list of countries that have put their faith in walls and fences as well as externalisation processes in order to keep away irregular immigrants, even when this contradicts the very foundation of free movement they otherwise aspire to (Bourbeau, 2011; Huysmans, 2000). The securing of borders agenda and building of fences is not new in South Africa, however, and not only in line with a more universal trend. It has antecedents in the apartheid era period where the state built electric fences on the Mozambican and Zimbabwean borders to stem the flow of irregular migrants (Crush, 1999), but in the post-apartheid times there has been a strong focus on deportation and securing the border (e.g. Amit, 2013; Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014). The most recent White Paper on International Migration from 2017 reflects this securitised focus by, for example, including the idea of processing centres at the borders, which dismantle most of the rights that asylum seekers currently hold.

The processing centres idea has received a lot of critique from civil society actors and is yet to materialise. In February, however, a new Border Management Authority Bill was passed by the National Assembly, which aims to coordinate border security under a single authority composed of DHA, SAPS, the South African Defence Force, and other state agencies. The Act has been long in the making but also faces criticism for potentially abusing basic principles of refugee protection and painting a militarised picture of "migrant invasion," which is at odds with Pan-African free movement ideals (Bornman, 2020).

Back to the ongoing pandemic, the building of the fence certainly gives the Border Management Authority Bill another push. Taking the securitisation over public health agenda to its maxim, soldiers and other security personnel have now been deployed to the new fence to protect it, after acts of vandalism even prior to completion. With emergency powers open to abuse all over the world, a COVID-justified fence with military protection certainly plays into the hands of the increasingly securitised approach to migration and refugee governance in South Africa.

No Exception: Xenophobic Discourse in Times of Rising Inequalities

Beyond the issue of securitisation and a temporary stay on the bureaucratic hurdles, the pandemic response has additionally highlighted the frequent xenophobic rhetoric politicians use in order to gain populist points, especially amongst the many poor South Africans.

The country has faced several waves of xenophobic violence against refugees and other migrants, notably in 2008, but also in 2019 (Mosselson, 2010; Nyamnjoh, 2010). Often such acts of violence have taken place against foreign-owned small shops, known as *spaza* shops, which are widespread in the townships. The number of *spaza* shopsis estimated to be in the region of 100,000 across South Africa's townships, with unconfirmed estimates of approximately 70–85 per cent of these owned by foreign nationals (du Toit, 2020). Many of the foreign nationals are refugees, particularly from Ethiopia, Somalia, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. These businesses make significant contributions to the local economies where they operate , by creating employment for both foreign migrants and South African citizens (Hovhannisyan et al., 2018).

The outbreaks in xenophobic violence are periodically linked to politicians' pronouncements, which directly or indirectly invoke such clashes (World Politics Review, 2019). At best, they ignore the existence of a problem. A prominent ANC politician told us in an interview, "It's not xenophobia – just be documented and don't be a criminal" (interview, Johannesburg, 11 February), effectively putting all blame of violence on refugees and migrants themselves.

Now, in the midst of announcing the rules pertaining to the shutdown, the Minister of Small Business Development, Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, noted in a briefing that whilst *spaza* shops may operate, only South African owned and operated ones may do, claiming; "We want to make sure that the quality of food and surety of the quality of products is there."[5] On the first day of the lockdown, immigrant-owned *spaza* shops were already being shut down by police (Sizani, 2020). Ironically, such shutdowns will actually force many residents of townships to increase their movements in order to buy food and other necessities, increasing the health risks of the Corona virus spread. Such communication mishaps at a time where national unity is so sorely needed, speaks volumes to the business as usual approach. On 6 April, a new directive permitted all *spaza* shops to remain open, but by then the damage may have already been done.[6]

There is no easy explanation for xenophobia. Misago (2019), for example, identifies political mobilisation in local communities as the trigger of xenophobic violence, arguing that general discontent and other macro and micro issues do not solely explain the outbreaks of violence in specific communities. Fertile grounds for xenophobia are, however nurtured by the abject poverty and lack of employment opportunities many people face. As one participant in a focus group with young South Africans in a township on the outskirts of Johannesburg put it: "Xenophobic attacks are an opportunity to loot, because we are unemployed, we get bored, we are hungry" (Focus Group Discussion Orange Farm, 14 February 2020).

The scapegoating of an "other," especially migrants, in order to gain or retain votes in light of inequalities competition over very limited resources is by no means new to the country (e.g. Dube, 2019; Whitaker and Clark, 2018). At a time when an economic downturn is expected in the aftermath of the pandemic, such political posturing can, however, act like a fire accelerator. In a different focus group, an asylum seeker noted, "How would the country be able to manage migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, if 'the government in South Africa is failing to manage its own people?'?" (Focus groups with refugees and asylum seekers, Johannesburg, 14 February 2020.)

The xenophobic tendencies are heightened by social inequalities, which are only likely to rise as the pandemic further escalates. To sum up, the initial lockdown rules were used as a political opportunity to rhetorically exclude refugee and other-migrant shop owners, despite the public health costs and potential violent conflict repercussions this holds.

Conclusion

We write this from our respective homes in Johannesburg and Freiburg, experiencing the diverse challenges of lockdowns: from small children who are suddenly in our twenty-four hour care, greatly restricting our working hours, to tense outings to our closest supermarkets, our lives are anything but usual. At the same time, we can count on many privileges in these unusual times. Reflecting on our ongoing research in light of the government response to the global pandemic, we found that there seems to be little change in the government agenda when it comes to dealing with refugees and other migrants. Veritably, we saw that the pandemic may even be an excuse for pushing through already-aspired to policies – primarily of securitisation but also the instrumentalisation of xenophobia for exclusion and scapegoating. This is in line with what policy experts see as "some governments, that are taking advantage of the crisis to push through legally dubious, hard-line migration policies that can't be justified by public health concern" (Reidy, 2020).

The South African migration and refugee governance regime is characterised by a deeply overburdened asylum system that has become a surrogate immigration channel. In the midst of what already was an economic downturn, the governmental tools of dealing with this have always been making the asylum process as burdensome as can be, securitising through borders and deportations and blaming foreigners in the country for economic woes through constant xenophobic exclusion and scapegoating. Despite a temporary stay on having to renew asylum permits due to the closure of reception centres, the migrant-related responses to the pandemic show that infectious-diseases prevention is merely an afterthought to ongoing agendas.

The construction of a border fence was one of the first responses to the pandemic, hugely disproportionate to the actual health risk from Zimbabwean neighbours. The initial lockdown rules were used as a political opportunity for once again rhetorically excluding refugee and other migrant shop owners. Beyond the securitised agenda of the

border fence and the xenophobic-rhetorical clout behind the lockdown rules, the global pandemic has only allowed a temporary stay on the bureaucratic loops asylum seekers are usually expected to jump in the system, a move which, however, feels perfunctory. This paints a picture of business as usual at best – if not using the pandemic to advance policies unrelated to public health. With the infections rising, the restrictive agenda is nonetheless especially damaging during this time.

The global health crisis, however, also shows that forcing people into years of uncertainty and "permanent temporality" will not pay off (Landau, 2006). In the long-run only a more inclusive agenda, which includes listening to those stakeholders who have been advising on these issues, would allow South Africa to return to the progressive asylum laws it has received so much praise for.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: The research in this piece is part of a research project "Displacement in Africa - The Politics and Stakeholders of Migration Governance" funded by the German Foundation for Peace Research 2019-2021.

Notes

1. A shorter version of this was published as a blog piece in *African Arguments*, see Moyo and Zanker (2020). Given the fast-paced environment of governmental dealings in light of the global pandemic, the analysis in this piece is limited to the time period of writing, up to the 21 April 2020.
2. The research involves a mixture of both desk research (South Sudan, Zimbabwe) and fieldwork (Uganda, South Africa), including interviews and focus groups. It is funded by the German Foundation for Peace Research. For more information and updates, see: https://www.arnold-bergstraesser.de/en/projects/research-project-on-displacement-in-africa
3. Though a statement from the Minister of Public Works on her Twitter feeds indicates that, this was actually not building a new fence but merely repairing and replacing an existing fence – see https://twitter.com/PatriciaDeLille/status/1251180195953901570/photo/1
4. See: https://africanarguments.org/2020/04/14/coronavirus-in-africa-tracker-how-many-cases-and-where-latest/ (accessed 21 April 2020).
5. See https://ewn.co.za/2020/03/26/sa-lockdown-govt-working-on-relief-package-for-informal-sector (accessed 10 April 2020).
6. See https://scalabrini.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Directions_lockdown_covid_Department_Small_Business_Development.pdf (accessed 10 April 2020).

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Der Corona-Virus und Migrationspolitik in Südafrika: Weiter wie bisher?

Zusammenfassung

Die südafrikanische Reaktion im Umgang mit der Corona-Pandemie muss den Lebenswirklichkeiten *aller* im Land lebenden Menschen, einschließlich Migranten und Geflüchteten, entsprechen. Basierend auf einem laufenden Forschungsprojekt zu der politischen Bedeutung von Migrationspolitik zeigen wir, dass die Reaktion auf den Virus kaum Veränderungen der Regierungsagenda im Umgang mit Flüchtlingen und anderen Migranten erkennen lässt. Stattdessen sehen wir, dass die Pandemie sogar als Vorwand dient, um bereits eingeleitete politische Maßnahmen durchzusetzen. Dazu gehören die Versicherheitlichung der Migration im Kontext des plötzlichen Baus eines Zaunes an der Grenze zu Simbabwe und die fremdenfeindliche Rhetorik im Hinblick darauf, welche Geschäfte während des *Lockdowns* geöffnet bleiben dürfen. Befristete Sonderregelungen

in Bezug auf die Verlängerung von Asylbewerbergenehmigungen stellen lediglich eine oberflächliche Ausnahme dar. Wir zeigen, dass jede dieser Entwicklungen einem "weiter wie bisher" in der Migrationspolitik in die Hände spielt.

Schlagwörter
Südafrika, Migrationspolitiken, Corona-Pandemie, Xenophobie, Versicherheitlichung

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Book Review

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 113–115

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720915924
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
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Pauli, Julia (2019), *The Decline of Marriage in Namibia: Kinship and Social Class in a Rural Community,* Bielefeld, Transcript, ISBN 978-3-8376-4303-9 (paperback), 96 pages

Julia Pauli's book merges two current debates, namely the debate on the emerging, African middle class and the debate on the global decline of marriage. Julia Pauli studies the downward statistical trend of marriages through the lens of social differentiation and the *New Kinship* debate, arguing that the *Decline of Marriage* manifests itself differently within the various, clearly defined social strata of Namibia. The argument is laid out on about 250 pages and the book is organised in three parts: The first part reflects on the fieldwork conducted in Fransfontein, a small settlement in the northwest of Namibia, and on the settlement's post-apartheid livelihood. The second, and slightly shorter part, discusses the value of marriages in the past and today, while the third part describes the situation of those who form families outside marriage. A compendious conclusion follows.

The theoretical underpinnings of the work are already presented in the introduction. They lie in the scholarship of Pierre Bourdieu, whose theories Pauli also problematises. Her Bourdieuian examination of class distinction forms the backdrop upon which her book is painted (pp. 18–21). She critically engages with the economic history of Namibia and its long colonial occupation and Apartheid. During these periods, a black elite emerged, but the formation of a black middle class is a more recent development, as Pauli shows (pp. 22–24; 111–118). The author has legitimate objections to Bourdieu's all too static theories, which do not do justice to the economic, political and social upheavals that have taken place in Namibia over the last fifty years. Bourdieu's theories do not account for the context of genesis under which social classes originally formed in Namibia and the immense possibility for people to experience both social rise and fall. Pauli vigorously argues that Namibian social structure is much more heterogeneous and fluid than the social structure of mid-twentieth century France Bourdieu described.

The first part of the book also includes an in-depth discussion of its expanded triangulation of research methods. The thoroughly assembled group of interviewees of various age ranges prove that a differentiated, long-term perspective on age is worth exploring. Most of the interviewees born between 1915 and 1944 were married, while only a third of interviewees born between 1945 and 1964 were married. For those born in 1965 and later years, only 11 per cent were married, however, some may eventually marry (p. 70ff). In addition to the detailed ethnographies of women from all three age

groups, Pauli's geographical survey of the town of Fransfontein is quite impressive. For example, the homes of unmarried women are usually on smaller plots of land to the southeast of the town than of married women. For married couples, the husband is typically the head of the household, though the cartography shows numerous femilocal households (p. 116).

In the empirical parts two and three, various aspects of marriage are examined: stability, break, change, plurality, and exclusiveness. In opposition to classic kinship theories, Pauli argues in the second part of the book that marriage in Namibia is not generally regarded as important or necessary for older and younger generations alike, though marriage manifests itself differently with respect to social class. For the elder generation, the wedding celebration was modest, while today a lavish wedding ceremony is a public display of status and wealth few can afford (pp. 189ff, 252). The marriage between two members of the elite is still a very important life event not least for establishing the line inheritance. Additionally, the middle class has developed a new festivity, which honours a kind of accomplishment; women who have not had children by their twenty-first birthday receive *the key. The key* is a rite of passage into the age in which motherhood is desired, which correlates motherhood with the biological age, rather than marriage. This disentanglement of reproduction and marriage is not exclusive to the middle class, as the third part shows. The bond between mother and child, for instance, is much stronger than the alliance of marriage. For older generations, mothers had multiple children with the same partner. Conversely, younger women are more likely to engage in "polyandric motherhood" (Guyer 1994 inPauli 2019: 209) by having children from different fathers, which creates a larger lateral support network. Therefore, marriage declines partly out of choice (p. 242ff), partly due to economic changes commenced in the late 1970s (pp. 189, 260).

Overall, I enjoyed reading this detailed and well-arranged ethnography. My critique concerns Pauli's theoretical approach. The author asks how Bourdieu's thinking can be fruitfully applied to the Namibian lifeworlds (p. 20). That being asked, anthropological research projects conducted in the past twenty years that have not cited and referenced Bourdieuian sociology are a rarity; yet at the same time, projects that have critiqued the limited applicability of his work are equally uncommon. Even though Bourdieu's work is essentially required reading for anthropologists, he is not a canonised theorist on middle classes in the Global South.

Addressing an interdisciplinary readership, Pauli's discussion on the middle class is somewhat mercurial. Pauli's research, which took place between 2003 and 2006, was not originally focussed on social stratification and classes as the methods section suggests. Yet, it should be stated that the anthropological involvement in the interdisciplinary debate on African middle classes first arose after Pauli's study was concluded. When reading the book, one has the sneaking suspicion that the middle class debate was added retroactively to the manuscript. Therefore, some chapters focus more on class than others. Nevertheless, the book has the potential to be well received by a diverse range of interdisciplinary readers, though at the same time foreknowledge of kinship terminology is recommended.

I enjoyed reading the chapter on methods in particular. The connection that Pauli draws between ethnography, geography, and demographic data is a both pleasant and informative read. Moreover, the chapter encapsulated very practical questions asked by Pauli. For example, she discusses how fieldwork with a family opens doors for research and she acknowledges her data collection in a team including family members and research assistants (p. 57ff). In the era of Data Property Rights, every anthropologist should take to heart how jointly collected data should be handled (see also Curtis 2019). The way local research partners, family members, and colleagues who assist in data generation and analysis are included in the publication and presentation of the research is an important part of any anthropological undertaking.

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GIGA | Africa Spectrum

Book Review

Africa Spectrum
2020, Vol. 55(1) 116–117

DOI: 10.1177/0002039720917680
journals.sagepub.com/home/afr
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Blessing-Miles, Tendi (2020), *The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe: Mujuru, the Liberation Fighter and Kingmaker,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ISBN 978-1-108-47289-0 (paperback), 348 pages

Solomon Mujuru – or Rex Nhongo to use his *nom-de-guerre* – has been a key figure in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle and in politics after independence. Given his importance and prominence, one wonders that the first biography comes out only now. Blessing-Miles Tendi deserves appreciation for offering us an account of Mujuru's life that is well-researched, very detailed and even exciting to read. It skillfully uses a biography to shed light on crucial sequences in Zimbabwean history.

Tendi portrays Mujuru as liberation fighter and kingmaker – as well as a betrayed national hero. The book moves chronologically in ten thematic chapters that link important moments in Mujuru's life with key moments in Zimbabwe's history. Chapter 2 starts with Mujuru's early years being marked by poverty, limited education, the early death of his mother and regular moves, which are "pointers to the future" in which we see Mujuru as an "action-oriented person", concerned with "unremitting acquisitive pursuit of wealth" and striving for personal independency (pp. 23–24). The book elaborates how Mujuru joined the liberation movement, namely the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), and later on defected to the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), where he was promoted and brought into central commanding positions in the liberation fight (chapter 3). He devoted his life to the struggle: "He led from the front and was at his most comfortable in the operational field. He lived for the warfront" (p. 9). Informing us about the secret that Robert Mugabe was Mujuru's nephew – or rather "a distant relative" (p. 84) – Tendi explains the key role Mujuru had played in elevating Mugabe into the leadership position of ZANU during the liberation struggle and how they and their comrades then brought independence and dealt with the transition period (chapters 4–6). Mujuru was appointed as chief of the army after independence and in this position oversaw the integration of the liberation fighters into the army (chapter 7). The book then delves into post-independence politics and inter alia provides details on the operation in Matabeleland, which some call ethnic genocide or ethnic cleansing (chapter 8). We learn that "in terms of chain command, Nhongo bears ultimate responsibility," but was in effect not in control of the north-Korean trained "Fifth Brigade," which was running the operation. Rather, that infamous Brigade reported directly to Mugabe and Emmerson Mnangagwa. While Tendi uses several pages to present the details related to this, we at

least learn from one paragraph that the other military "operations against dissidents, which Nhongo controlled directly, were exceptionally ruthless" (p. 204). Chapter 9 then turns to the issues of "love" and "fortune" and depicts Mujuru as an alcoholic, who loved "doing masculinity" (p. 232), and as a rather unsuccessful businessperson who was notwithstanding able to amass larger sums of money given his position in the state. We also learn that Mujuru continued pulling the strings in Zimbabwean politics, effectively working against Mugabe and Mnangagwa.

Finally chapter 10 provides the details of Mujuru's death in 2011 and elucidates the mysterious circumstances, giving rise to the assumption that he was murdered for the benefit of President Mugabe.

Tendi's book is a good read that provides another, more inside perspective on the liberation struggle and post-independence politics. It brushes away the assumption that nationalist movements were united and also shows that the power struggles in these movements continued after independence. In Zimbabwe, these struggles were fought particularly brutally. However, one cannot escape the feeling that the book could provide a more balanced assessment. It pictures Mujuru as a liberation hero and a serviceperson, who helped Mugabe come to power, who left his position as chief of the army to make space for others, and who was not involved in the many wrongdoings of the post-independence government but was genuinely interested in a transfer of power and stood against an extended rule of Mugabe. Tendi implies that Muruju paid with his life for these positions. In fact, many in Zimbabwe and beyond question(ed) the circumstances of his death and challenged the official report on it. However, many in Zimbabwe and abroad also share the perspective – bluntly spelled out on Wikipedia – that Mujuru "was generally regarded as one of the most feared men in Zimbabwe." That said, the biography is largely silent on that, rather seeing Mujuru as a victim of a power struggle in Zimbabwe. One could have also asked why Muruju stayed in the Politburo and the Joint Operational Command – two key decision-making bodies in Zimbabwe – after his resignation as army chief. Why did he promote his wife into the vice-presidency? Why could he amass wealth? And why had he remained part of the power struggle within ZANU if he genuinely believed in change and could have stepped aside himself? A discussion of these questions would have led to a different, certainly more nuanced biography.

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