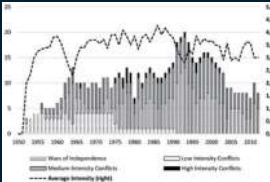Andreas Exenberger, Ulrich Pallua (Eds.)

Africa Research in Austria
Approaches and Perspectives

EDITED VOLUME SERIES

Andreas Exenberger, Ulrich Pallua (Eds.)

Africa Research in Austria
Approaches and Perspectives

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Preface: African Studies at Austrian Universities

Ulrich Pallua & Andreas Exenberger

The first workshop of the group of researchers called *African Studies at Austrian Universities* was organised by the African Studies Department in Vienna in 2014. It brought together most of the researchers in Austria working on African issues including linguistic, historical, literary, sociological, economic and political approaches. After this particularly successful workshop the follow-up *"Afrikaforschung in Österreich: Zugänge und Einordnungen"* was held at the University of Innsbruck in March 2015. The overall aim was to invite not only the participants from the first workshop to present their projects and papers, but at the same time to expand the existing network by also reaching out to young post-doctoral students in Austria to contribute to this Austrian network of scholars whose main research field is African Studies, the study of African societies, their history, economy, language, and literature. It featured topics as diverse as "The African Diaspora", "Barbary Coast Captivity Narratives", "The Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie", "The History of Political Ideas in Africa", "The Tension between Developmentalism and Democracy in Ethiopia", "Climate Change, Conflicts, and Development: Problems for Africa's 'Limited Access Orders'", "Science Under Nazism: Recent Biographical Research On Wilhelm Czermak", "The UN: Under the Guise of colonial-political Interests During the Cold War", "Manpower Development: CVs and Interactions in the German-Tanzanian Triangular Relationship, 1970-1990", and "Higher Education in Eastern Africa: A Comparison of Public and Private Universities in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda". The workshop was rounded off by an exhibition entitled "Bitter Oranges: African Migrant workers in Calabria" showcasing the inhumane conditions African workers suffer from on the orange plantations in in southern Italy, a cooperation between the University of

Innsbruck (namely the research area "Cultural Encounters – Cultural Conflicts") and the Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen.[1]

These workshops of different scholars working in African studies on a yearly basis are unique because they provide a forum for an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and perspectives and a fruitful dialogue with possible collaborations between the different universities in Austria. The challenge of bringing together so many disciplines dealing with heterogeneous approaches consists in identifying what Stuart Hall calls the

> "recovery of lost histories. The histories that have never been told about ourselves that we could not learn in schools, that were not in any books, and that we had to recover […]. That is how and where the margins begin to speak. The margins begin to contest, the locals begin to come to representation."[2]

The term representation is thus an integral part of the various approaches the different scholars adopt in this volume including issues such as identity, self- and other-representation, collective memory, the past and its effect on the present. Representation as such is inextricably linked with telling stories, stories about Africa. According to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a third-generation Nigerian writer, we have to be aware of the danger of the "single story" as a single story changes the way we see history: that is why we have to be aware of the responsibility we have as tellers of "stories". Adichie claims that the single story her roommate in America had about her was

> "a single story of catastrophe. In this single story, there was no possibility of Africans being similar to her in any way, no possibility of feelings more complex than pity, no possibility of a connection as human equals."[3]

Telling stories about Africa is thus of particular relevance because we have to be aware of who tells these "stories", how, when, and why, and of the fact that the perspectives we adopt to a great extent also pertain to power relations:

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1   In the context of this research area (respectively one of its predecessors), already in 2012 the collective volume *Afrika: Kontinent der Extreme* (with contributions in German and English) was published with innsbruck university press. It is interdisciplinary in nature and assembling several contributions from different methodological and theoretical perspectives and aimed at questioning the usual narrative of African societies. See Exenberger (2012).

2   Hall (1997), 48.

3   Adichie (2009).

> "Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person. The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti writes that if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story and to start with, 'secondly'. Start the story with the arrows of the Native Americans, and not with the arrival of the British, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you have an entirely different story."[4]

What Adichie means here is that in order to tell a "different" story about Africa, many stories have to be told and taken into account as only then will we be able to gauge how the single story has been misinterpreted and misused by power-related discourses and to start talking about how "stories can also be used to empower and to humanise. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity."[5] The articles in this volume all tell different "stories" from literary, historical, sociological, and socio-political perspectives and focus on various aspects of African identity in order to counteract prejudices and refute stereotypical and biased representations – that is, a "single story" of Africa.

This collection of essays starts with Arno Sonderegger's article *The Modernity of Pan-Africanism: From History and Politics to Popular Culture*. It deals with the history of modernity in Africa, how the concept of modern Africa is inextricably bound up with the colonial past, and how nineteenth-century colonial domination impacted on the development of the "new states" in Africa. After drawing a phenomenological sketch of Pan-Africanism including aspects of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and anti-racism in the development of a "modern" Africa he introduces the different approaches to Pan-Africanism of Youssou N'Dour, Kwame Nkrumah, Cheikh Anta Diop, and Bantu Stephen Biko.

A similar approach in even closer connection to the arts is also adopted by Birgit Englert. Her article *Reflections on the Role and Production of Research Films in African Studies* analyzes the role and production of research films in African Studies, including not only the relevance of audio-visual work in general but also reflections on how to work with film in research processes. Moreover, she draws on concrete

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4 Adichie (2009).
5 Adichie (2009).

examples of audio-visual work projects carried out within the framework of the De-partment of African Studies in recent years about African diasporas in Europe where she played different roles, ranging from facilitator and producer to that of director.

We then turn from representations in music and film to those in literature. Maximilian Feldner in his article *"Teach Them Our History": Nigerian Identity For-mation in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Half of a Yellow Sun"* is concerned with the Biafran War, a war that threatened to tear Nigeria apart, and the effect it had on the population. The article explores the idea of the novel constituting a literary work of symbolic national identity formation: Adichie uses the Biafran War to show readers how the construction of identity in the process of nation building has symbolically contributed to a collective Nigerian identity, that is the literary techniques and narra-tive strategies employed to tell a story of the nation.

Silvia Lercher in *Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: Storyteller and Activist* rounds off the discussion by focussing on the dramatic events of the Biafran War in *Half of a Yellow Sun* and how she draws on the collective memory of her family and people to create the story. Using trauma theory as a theoretical framework the article discusses how a third-generation writer from Nigeria raises awareness about the traumatic past of Nigeria and how identity and collective memory are inextricably intertwined in the process of a collective consciousness of a nation.

Eric Burton's contribution focusses on African-European contact from a more specific historical perspective. His article *African Manpower Development during the Cold War: The Case of Tanzanian Students in the Two German States* traces and re-constructs biographies of different Tanzanian actors in the context of the develop-ment cooperation or "solidarity" of the two German states. The article thus fathoms the room for manoeuvre in career choices and in everyday life in the context of a continuous lack of skilled workers in the Tanzanian developmental state and the two ideologically different approaches of their European counterparts.

Thomas Lechner continues this discussion with a case study roughly from the same time of the formation of the Tanzanian state. In his article *The Role of the United Nations in the Congo-Crisis: An Instrument to Enforce National Interests?*, he investigates the Soviet interest in postcolonial Africa with a special focus on the role of the United Nations in the Congo disaster. With the end of the Belgian mandate in the Congo in 1960, Patrice Lumumba's party "Mouvement National Congolais" won the elections. At the ceremony of independence in June 1960 Lumumba described Belgium's relationship to the Congo as one of slavery. The author outlines Lumumba's

strategy of seeking help by approaching the United States and the Soviet Union, and the role the United Nations played in fuelling the conflict in the Congo.

In the last contribution, Andreas Exenberger takes a broader look at these kinds of conflicts in his article on *African "Limited Access Orders" and Post-colonial Conflicts*. Departing from the recently developed institutional framework of limited and open access orders, he engages in its application on African states and their various internal and external conflicts by putting particular emphasis on the international order. An outlook by Thomas Spielbüchler concludes the collection.

Finally, we would like to take the opportunity to thank all the scholars for their contributions to this volume, also those who presented their papers as part of the workshop in Innsbruck, thus contributing to bringing African Studies at Austrian universities to a wider public, and – last but not least – those who supported the workshop and made this publication possible.

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Innsbruck, June 2016

The Modernity of Pan-Africanism: From History and Politics to Popular Culture

Arno Sonderegger

Africa in the Modern World

It should be a truism that Africa is an important part of modern history or, the history of modernity. Certainly, Africa has made particular experiences and produced her own views on the historical developments of the last 500 years. Yet to say that Africa is an integral and relevant part of the modern world – and that it has participated crucially in the process of its making – sounds strange to Western ears. We have been used to consider Africa a very remote place: the other side of humanity. We often assume Africans living on the fringes of human development. Such consideration is false: Africa was and has been very much interconnected and entangled with the rest of the world. Africans are very much part of the modern world, shaped by it and shaping it.

A word or two seem appropriate to make clear what I mean by "modernity" and the "modern world". I consider these terms useful in order to discuss "their" history and "ours" in one common frame of reference. This is not meant to be understood in any Eurocentric sense, but – to the contrary – to help bypass the delusive "us-them-divide". The famous American anthropologist Clifford Geertz tackled the categorical difficulty at issue here when writing in 1995 that

> "[m]odern is what some of us think we are, others of us wish desperately to be, yet others despair of being, or regret, or oppose, or fear, or, now, desire somehow to transcend. It is our universal adjective. [...] Modernity, or its absence, sets economies, regimes, peoples, and moralities off from one another; fixes them generally in the calendar of our time.

But though it is, originally, a Western word and a Western notion ([…] meaning […] 'now existing', 'of this time'), the idea of modernity has become the common property of all the world, even more prized and puzzled over in Asia, Africa, and Latin America […] than in Europe and North America […]. Whatever it is, it is pervasive, as either a presence or a lack, an achievement or a failure, a liberation or a burden. Whatever it is."[1]

Modernity, then, is something that sets apart, that divides. The notion is repeatedly used by various human actors to claim not only difference but superiority. Such abusive use must be rejected – not so much on moral grounds, but due to the fact that "the idea of modernity has become the common property of all the world", i.e. that we all are living in one world. Accepting modernity's pluralised, complicated and "uneasy" character, the notion offers ample opportunities to look at global realities in one common frame of reference, neglecting neither differences nor sameness.

Seen from both an African perspective and a historical angle, the modern world and the African variants of "modernities" were brought into being by interaction with Europeans with basically commercial interests, but sometimes missionary and political interests as well. For almost 400 years (1450-1850) the Atlantic slave trade was the dominant and ugly side of more general trade relations connecting Africa with the Americas and the Caribbean, Europe and Asia. The experience of slavery in the mines and on the plantations of the so-called "New World" led to the ideology of White racism – proclaiming both the existence of a single Black race and its inborn inferiority – and, along the coastlines of Africa involved in the trade, to increasingly unequal relationships among local populations. There emerged exploitative economies, and new and grossly hierarchical societal and political structures.[2]

The 19th century witnessed a certain transformation with important long-time effects on Africa. At its root lies a reinvigorated imperialist drive on behalf of Northwest European powers and public activists who strove for anti-slavery and missionary aims. The civilizing mission became an effective ideology shared by many Europeans (and Americans) who took an interest in African affairs, and in the 1880s and 1890s the "civilization speak" lent itself to the justification of the military conquest and partition of Africa by European Great Powers. Imperial domination and foreign rule were then implemented in the whole of Africa – with the sole exceptions of Liberia

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1 Geertz (1995), 136-137.
2 Cf. Eckert et al. (2010).

(a former colony founded by African American repatriates and nominally independent since 1847) and the Ethiopian Empire that successfully repulsed the Italian advances in 1889 and 1896. European colonial rule of Africa came under attack on international levels with the end of the Second World War, and African anti-colonial movements in the colonial territories slowly gained momentum. The British and French had to give up their African empires in the 1950s and 1960s, Belgium in 1960, the Portuguese in the 1970s. The independence of Zimbabwe, Namibia and Eritrea came even later, in 1980, 1990 and 1993.[3]

The independence of the "new states" of Africa – framed by, as they were, the boundaries arbitrarily set up by the European colonisers, and inheriting colonial institutions (militaries, bureaucracies, legislatures) – was precarious at best. The limitations to acting potently and self-determined proved to be very severe. As American historian Frederick Cooper put it,

> "African states, like their predecessors [i.e., the colonial territories], had great difficulty getting beyond the limitations of a gatekeeper state. Their survival depended precisely on the fact that formal sovereignty was recognized *from outside*, and that resources, such as foreign aid and military assistance, came to governments for that reason. Like colonial regimes, they had trouble extending their power and their command of people's respect, if not support, inward. They had trouble collecting taxes, except on imports and exports; they had trouble setting economic priorities and policies, except for the distribution of resources like oil revenues and customs receipts; they had trouble making the nation-state into a symbol that inspired loyalty. What they could do was to sit astride the interface between a territory and the rest of the world, collecting and distributing resources that derived from the gate itself: custom revenue and foreign aid; permits to do business in the territory; entry and exit visas; and permission to move currency in and out. [… S]truggles for the gate – and efforts of some groups to get around it – bedeviled African states from the start. What independence added was the possibility of weaving patron-client relationships within the state […]."[4]

This, in a nutshell, specifies many of the most disturbing factors present in Africa today linked to a particular ongoing past of colonial domination. "The Past of the Present"[5] is crucial to any understanding of contemporary Africa, i.e. that

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3 Cf. Sonderegger et al. (2011).
4 Cooper (2002), 156-157.
5 Cooper (2002).

"Modern Africa"[6] that is intrinsically interwoven with the roles of "Africa in the World"[7]. At the root of these difficulties in post-colonial "gate-keeping" Africa, is the unequal integration of Africa into global capitalism and international politics. This long term historical process started with the slave trade in the early modern period, underwent several transformations, but has not yet come to an end. In a famous book of the early 1970s the Guyana born African historian Walter Rodney described "how Europe underdeveloped Africa". He argued that underdevelopment is the product of "[…] a particular relationship of exploitation […] a product of capitalist, imperialist and colonialist exploitation." Rodney observed the simple truth that

> "African and Asian countries were developing independently [that is, along their own terms] until they were taken over directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers. When that happened, exploitation increased and the export of surplus ensued, depriving the societies of the benefit of their natural resources and labour."[8]

Seen from a somewhat less deterministic and accusatory viewpoint, it was a new kind of interdependence that, back then, had begun in the wake of commercial-capitalist interests and imperialist zeal: a history of "modernity" and its "alternative modernities". With regard to Africa's development, the occurring asymmetrical (and violent) integration into world markets and world politics took deep roots:

> "African economies […] are [globally] integrated in a manner that is unfavourable to Africa and ensures that Africa is dependent on the big capitalist countries. Indeed, structural dependence is one of the characteristics of underdevelopment."[9]

Characterizing the importance of the colonial heritage for contemporary Africa, British historian Basil Davidson (1992) spoke of "the Black Man's Burden", in particular the disastrous effects that the Western nation-state model had on Africa's post-independence development. Davidson, however, reminds us that nationalism is always – and has been everywhere – a double-edged sword, capable of both progressive and regressive effects:

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6 Davidson (1984).
7 Ellis (2011).
8 Rodney (2009), 15-16.
9 Rodney (2009), 30.

"We have to be concerned here with the nationalism which produced the nation-states of newly independent Africa after the colonial period: with the nationalism that became nation-statism. This nation-statism looked like a liberation, and really began as one. But it did not continue as a liberation. In practice, it was not a restoration of Africa to Africa's own history, but the onset of a new period of indirect subjection to the history of Europe. The fifty or so states of the political partition […] became fifty or so nation-states formed and governed on European models, chiefly the models of Britain and France. Liberation thus produced its own denial. Liberation led to alienation."[10]

In the main and despite of some honest efforts to the contrary, the "new" postcolonial states in Africa displayed the more regressive, negative tendencies of nationalism. In fact it is hard to see how they could have done otherwise. But for the moment it is enough to remember that the African anti-colonial movements that have emerged in the colonial territories since the 1930s and 1940s, contributed significantly to the process of political decolonisation. By claiming rights to self-determination and independence, those anti-colonial movements have made good use of universalistic, nationalist rhetoric in challenging the colonial masters. Remember that formal independence was not given voluntarily, but came only in reaction to struggling Africans, and at a heavy price.[11]

Though not a Marxist historian like Rodney, and surely a much less engaged left wing writer than Davidson, Frederick Cooper is equally convinced of the importance to "[…] explore ways to think about Africa's place in a world once dominated by European colonial empires and still shaped by capitalist economic relations."[12] One very important point in this effort of understanding Africa's role in the modern world is trying to overcome the habit of clear-cut attributions and oppositions. Accepting the historical complexity and entanglement of all parts of the globe is a necessary prerequisite for any such understanding. Accepting, for example, that "Gatekeeper states are thus not 'African' institutions, nor are they 'European' impositions; they emerged out of a peculiar Euro-African history."[13] This is part of the history of modernity.

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10 Davidson (1992), 10.
11 Cf. Cooper (2013); Cooper (2014).
12 Cooper (2014), 2.
13 Cooper (2002), 161.

A Phenomenological Sketch of Pan-Africanism

An intriguing part of that "peculiar Euro-African history", and intricately responding to its transformations and changes, is the history of Pan-Africanism. In the early 1960s when the idea of a Pan-African political union was part of a heated debate, Colin Legum defined Pan-Africanism as "essentially a *movement of ideas and emotions*", not "a declaration of [specific political] principles."[14] His definition turns our attention to a very basic fact of Pan-Africanism: its extreme variety and diverseness. Perhaps the least common denominator shared by all Pan-Africanists is a more or less diffuse belief in African unity. But there are some more notions and values that can be used to delimit the Pan-Africanist sphere, all of them explicitly referring to "modern" ideas and echoing the catchwords of the French revolution: *egalité, liberté, solidarité* – equality, freedom and liberty, and solidarity.[15]

Colin Legum pinned the early beginnings of this ideology down to the late 18th-century Americas – to the hot spots of plantation slavery and the heyday of the transatlantic slave trade: "Pan-Africanism began not in the 'homeland' but in the diaspora. [...] Pan-Africanism had its [origins] in the New World. It developed through [...] 'a complicated Atlantic triangle of influences' between the New World, Europe and Africa."[16] In that sense, Pan-Africanism grew from the history which has been roughly outlined before.

In strictly political terms – referring to the arena of political decision making and execution – Pan-Africanism's effectiveness was limited to a quite short period of time after 1945 when African nationalist leaders shared Pan-African sentiments and used Pan-Africanist networks in their struggles against colonial rule. It was at that time that one of the most important Pan-Africanist strategists of the 20th century, Trinidadian George Padmore, could be convinced that the time was ripe for a strong unified Africa:

> "In our struggle for national freedom, human dignity and social redemption, Pan-Africanism offers an ideological alternative to Communism on the one side and Tribalism on the other. It rejects both white racialism and black chauvinism.

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14   Legum (1965), 14, original emphasis.
15   Cf. Sonderegger (2010), 188-189.
16   Legum (1965), 14.

It stands for racial co-existence on the basis of absolute equality and respect for human personality."[17]

Note that Padmore did not even for a moment consider Western capitalism a viable option for Africa's advancement; his book was amply called *Pan-Africanism or Communism? The Coming Struggle for Africa* – with a title that mentions the only two alternatives that seemed theoretically viable for an improved African situation. In fact, Padmore argued convincingly that communism, though superficially it might seem reasonable in theory due to its proclaimed anti-imperialism, was not a viable option for Africa at all in practical terms.[18] There remained, therefore, only one way to take – Pan-Africanism – because

"Pan-Africanism looks above the narrow confines of class, race, tribe and religion. In other words, it wants equal opportunity for all. Talent to be rewarded on the basis of merit. Its vision stretches beyond the limited frontiers of the nation-state. Its perspective embraces the federation of regional self-governing countries and their ultimate amalgamation into a *United States of Africa*.[19]

When Padmore wrote this credo in 1956, hopes for the realisation of a unified African state on a continental basis were still high. A few years later, with the compromise institution OAU (Organisation of African Unity) founded in 1963, such high hopes faded quite rapidly. However, Pan-Africanism cannot be reduced to its visible role in that short era of political decolonisation. As Colin Legum put it 50 years ago, it is a "movement of ideas and emotions". And I would like to add, it is a movement of practices and engagements not restricted – and not restrictable – to the level of state politics.

To call Pan-Africanism an ideology extremely varied, diverse and diffuse does not mean that it is a useless notion. However, to make it useful and sharp we must distinguish between different Pan-African variations. Figure 1, "Pan-Africanism in a nutshell", shows a way of conceptualizing them in one single frame of reference. It provides several clues to crucial aspects of the Pan-African phenomenon, some of which will be discussed in some detail in the following pages.

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17 Padmore (1972), 355.
18 Cf. Sonderegger (2015), 195-201.
19 Padmore (1972), 355-356, original emphasis.

Figure 1: Pan-Africanism in a Nutshell
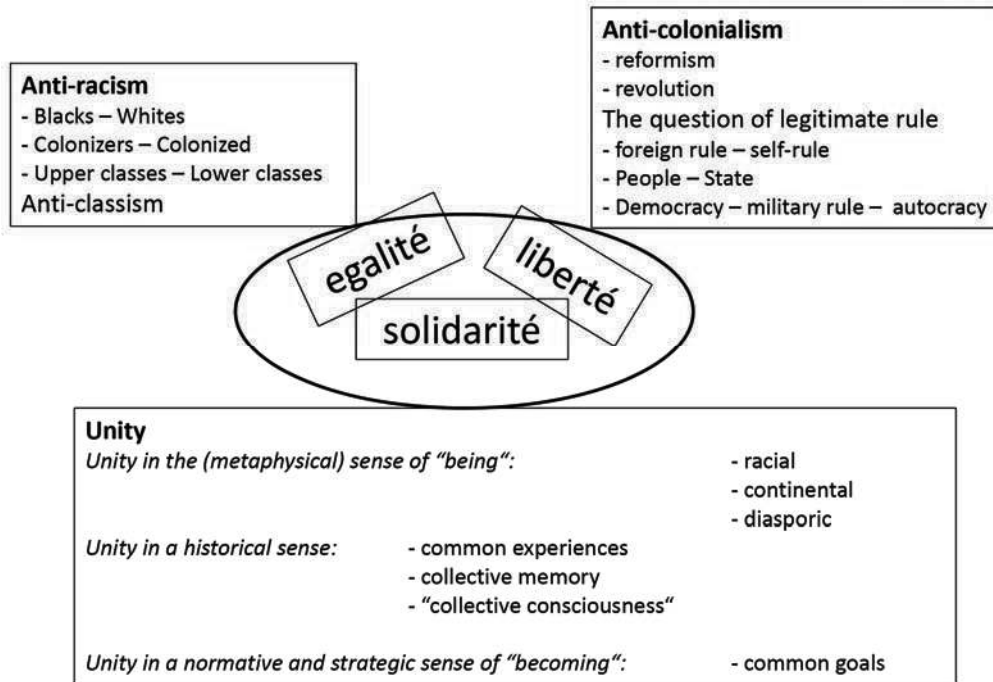
1. Searching for Equality: Aspects of Anti-Racism in Pan-Africanism

Some varieties put a strong emphasis on matters of race, racial discrimination, and the anti-racist struggle. These are intrinsically tied to particular socially established hierarchies and class differences, both (if in varying forms) in African colonial circumstances and in American Black diasporic settings. The Pan-African fight against racism goes right back to the 19th century. One citizen of Liberia, Edward Wilmot Blyden was, in 1865, the first West African to proclaim not only a racially distinct African type, but to develop elaborate ideas about what he called "the African personality": a "race" in unselfish service to humankind:

> "Thus Ethiopia and Ethiopians [i.e. Africa and Africans], having always served, will continue to serve the world. […]

> And in the light of the ultimate good of the universe, I do not see why the calling of the one should be considered the result of a curse, and the calling of the other the result of special favour. The one fulfills its mission by domination, the other, by submission. The one serves mankind by ruling; the other serves mankind by serving. The one wears the crown, wields the sceptre; the other bears the stripes and carries the cross. […]

> And if the principle laid down by Christ […] that he who would be chief must become the servant of all, then we see the position which Africa and the Africans must ultimately occupy."[20]

Obviously, Blyden's racial notion of the "African Personality" was deeply stuck in the racist discourse of his time.[21] The same is true with regard to the Jamaican Marcus Garvey who, in the years from 1914 to the mid-20s, founded and led the first mass protest movement with a Pan-African outlook in Harlem, New York City: the *Universal Negro Improvement Association* (UNIA). Garvey, who was most successful in infecting poor urban Blacks in the African diaspora with self-esteem and "racial pride", thought of Africa primarily in terms of the "lost home" that must be colonised and civilised by folks of his sort. Consequently, his relationship to the continent was one of imagined imperialism: no wonder, Garvey declared himself President of Africa (evidently, he did so without any immediate effect on either continental Africans or on the European colonial powers there in charge). Garvey's racism as well as his capitalist zeal and his plans for a Black imperialism, were in fact so profound that George Padmore, Pan-Africanism's first historian, refused to include Garvey in the realm of Pan-Africanism proper, calling it "Black Zionism or Garveyism" instead.[22]

Racial attitudes did not vanish among Pan-Africanists in the 20th century. In particular among African artists and literary scholars from the Black diaspora, such attitudes are still manifest today. This is in part due to the ongoing influence and attraction of ideas that first gained momentum in France in the 1930s and 1940s: a group of young students and poets, Léopold Sédar Senghor from Senegal, Aimé Césaire from Martinique and Léon Damas from French-Guiana, founded an influential cultural movement – *négritude*.[23] Its basic idea resembles Blyden's "African personality", Africans being defined as Black, emotional and sensitive, distinctively set apart

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20 Blyden (1976), 112-114.
21 Cf. Sonderegger (2009), 72-77.
22 Padmore (1972), 65-82.
23 Cf. Decraene (1964), 35-38; Hymans (1971).

from European Whiteness, rationality and callousness. Senghor's understanding of the relationship between Europe and Africa was, however (in sharp contrast to Garvey's views), not one of aggressive opposition but of complimentary values.[24] As long-standing head of government in independent Senegal, Senghor consequently went for a close alliance between Senegal and France.

The perpetuation of racial attitudes – and sometimes outspoken racism – amongst "the wretched of the earth"[25] struggling against racist discrimination by White Western people, comes as no surprise. And it was no surprise to the leading man of the Pan-African Congress Movement, W.E.B. DuBois, who addressing an African American readership declared in 1903: "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line."[26] The Harvard educated historian DuBois who attended the first (and only) Pan-African Conference in London in 1900 and organised a series of four Pan-African Congresses from 1919 to 1927, believed "[…] that the Negro people, as a race, have a contribution to make to civilization and humanity, which no other race can make",[27] but he believed too that "their 'race identity'" could and would "disappear without harm" in course of time.[28] DuBois, in other words, was not a racist. He did not believe in everlasting fixed racial traits. Although he used "race" as a means to forge alliances in his efforts to overcome White and colonial racism, he was not a racist at all.

2. Claiming Freedom and Liberty: Aspects of Anti-Colonialism and Anti-Imperialism in Pan-Africanism

What prevails in other cases of Pan-Africanism is the struggle against foreign rule, against colonial and imperial domination. This has been the dominant issue in Pan-African struggles from the mid-1930s onwards, lasting as long as independence from the colonial yoke was finally achieved. As this goal was achieved in various colonial territories at different times, there is no single African date of independence, and no general sudden end of anti-colonial activity, but various waves of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist activities flowing through different African countries at different

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24 Senghor (1970), 179-192.
25 Fanon (2004).
26 DuBois (1903), forethought.
27 DuBois, quoted in Appiah (2014), 92.
28 Appiah (2014), 93.

times.[29] DuBois's congress movement had its share in the early history of Pan-African anti-colonialism. In the 1920s, this elitist circle of Western educated Africans of mostly diasporic origin carried many petitions before the newly found international institutions – such as the League of Nations and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) – as well as imperial governments, attacking both the general injustice and concrete malpractices in colonial territories. They did so but unfortunately, to no immediate effect.

The much more radical approach of the Third Communist International, the Comintern founded in 1919, was more successful in establishing connections to the broader population in the African colonies. Among African workers at the docks in the port cities, and along the railway lines, the socialist spirit of solidarity fell on fertile ground.[30] This was especially the case in already industrialised South Africa where a Communist party had been founded as early as 1921, but left-wing thought had profound influence in other parts of Africa as well, in particular among the younger generation.[31] George Padmore who was a leading figure in the Comintern in the late 1920s and early 1930s, focused on his Pan-Africanist practice of extending and deepening those connections.[32] After his break with the Soviet-led Comintern in 1933/34 and his permanent settlement in London in 1935, Padmore was paramount in assembling a great number of future African leaders and organising their joint efforts to get rid of colonial domination. With the end of the Second World War in sight, Padmore began to revive the old Pan-African Congress movement – prompting the 77-year-old DuBois to cross the Atlantic and host the Fifth Pan-African Congress at Manchester in October 1945.

That event expressed a self-conscious and radical "challenge to the colonial powers". Utilizing the outcome of the Second World War, the new alliance of old and young Pan-Africanists wanted to seize the opportunities that emerged from the ruins of the old world order:

> "We are determined to be free. We want education. We want the right to earn a decent living; the right to express our thoughts and emotions, to adopt and create forms of beauty. We demand for Black Africa autonomy and independence […].

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29 Cf. Sonderegger (2013), 65-68.
30 Cf. Derrick (2008).
31 Cf. Wa Thiongo (2010).
32 Cf. James (2012, 2015); Sonderegger (2016).

> […W]e are unwilling to starve any longer while doing the world's drudgery, in order to support by our poverty and ignorance a false aristocracy and a discredited Imperialism.
>
> We condemn the monopoly of capital and the rule of private wealth and industry for private profit alone. We welcome economic democracy as the only real democracy. Therefore, we shall complain, appeal and arraign. We will make the world listen to the facts of our condition. We will fight in every way we can for freedom, democracy and social betterment."[33]

At least formal political independence became real within the next few decades and a so-called "post-colonial era" began. This had, of course, profound effects on how international dependences and anti-colonialism were henceforth conceived. In "post-colonial" times, anti-colonialism translates either into a global critique of the international world order (similar to the critique with which I introduced my paper) or into efforts of strengthening the African Union idea in political spheres of influence. The latter strategy played a certain vital role in the transition times from late colonial rule to early independence, but came to a halt sometimes in the mid-1960s. However, following the euphoria after the termination of South Africa's Apartheid regime, the second option was pursued by South African president Thabo Mbeki and Libya's Muammar al-Gaddafi in the second half of the 1990s. They called for an "African Renaissance" and pressed (and paid) for the reorganisation of the defunct Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into a politically more integrated African Union (AU). In 2002 the AU replaced the older institution, but so far it was hardly more successful in unifying the African state governments than its predecessor.

3. Being or Becoming? Unity as a Matter of Fact and a Matter of Debate

The Pan-African varieties differ in another important respect as well. Especially among African and African American writers, questions of identity, of being or becoming unified, are part of an ongoing and unresolved debate. Ngugi wa Thiongo's reflections on "An African Renaissance" give good evidence of both the nature and the limits of those debates that are, to a certain degree, preoccupied with memory and remembering, trying to restore self-esteem and urging for a collective consciousness.[34]

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33 Padmore (1963), 5.
34 Wa Thiongo (2009).

In fact, the ways in which African unity can be understood are very diverse. Some like to see unity as something already existent, but they disagree among themselves whether such "given unity" is due to racial (including the diaspora) or continental "singularity". Others reflect much more deeply on historical grounds, referring to "formative" common experiences of Africans in the past, such as the slave trade, slavery, and colonialism. Often this leads them to stress negative impacts on Africans and emphasise victimhood, sometimes to the degree of paralyzing their own efforts of facilitating African empowerment. But to a certain degree the active memorisation of certain aspects of the past – leading to a collective memory of some shared views – might lead to a forceful collective consciousness informing activist political struggles. In the end, all depends on the goals and visions of the future. In this respect, again, Pan-Africanists differ enormously as soon as it gets concrete.

The Diversity of Pan-Africanism and Its Popular Appeal: Some Points and Persons

Establishing when – and under what circumstances – particular varieties of Pan-Africanism had an effect on the thoughts and practices of wider communities (and when and where not) is crucial for any historical understanding of the Pan-African phenomenon. As may be guessed by looking at figure 1 above, this is no task that can be done all at once. It would take up much time and space to discuss all the elements mentioned in the figure in detail. Therefore I am not going to try to give a summary account, but rather concentrate instead on a few points and persons with a high reputation in Pan-African circles.

In selecting whom and what, I let myself be guided by one African artist who has rightly been called "Le griot planétaire" by his biographer.[35] A gifted musician from Senegal, the internationally acclaimed singer Youssou N'Dour, released several versions of a song called "*New Africa*" in the course of the past quarter century[36] and performed it live on numerous occasions all over the world. Mixing Wolof and English, this song is a hymn of rare elegance and, in some circles, considered the African anthem of Pan-Africanism. Calling for a "new Africa" – a Africa that is proud

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35 Arnaud (2008).
36 Youssou N'Dour (1992); Youssou N'Dour (2000); Youssou N'Dour (2008).

of its past, strong and determined to overcome all obstacles, present and future, hard and honestly working for its development and a better life – Youssou N'Dour expresses basic Pan-African sentiments and ideas. Playing artfully with words, emphasizing slightly different aspects and issues from performance to performance (see appendix for the varied song lyrics of 1992, 2000 and 2008), he ceaselessly asks for unity among Africans and unification of their efforts:

- Let's get together (1992), Let's […] work as a group (2000), Let's come together (2008);
- develop a consensus (1992), develop the same views and wishes (2000), a meeting of minds (2008);
- let nothing come between us (1992), let nothing pull us apart (2008), Together, no one can come between us (2000);
- Three people can't wrestle / And two are stronger than one (1992), United we are stronger (2008).

Youssou N'Dour hints at the colonial past as well, when singing "When I think of what our grandfathers went through, it's sad" (1992) or "When one thinks of what our ancestors went through / We are heartbroken and revenge is all we can think of" (2000). But he is quick to argue for an optimistic turn. This is most clearly visible in the lyrical variation of 2008. At that time, Youssou N'Dour does not stop with his regretful look at the colonial past, nor does he express feelings of depressing grief or helpless wishes for revenge, but continues his grief with an uplifting verse leading, almost immediately, to the Pan-African vision:

"When I think about how our grandparents suffered, I cry / But our past must not stop us from moving forward / I dream to see Africa unified by a common vision" (2008)

In order to get there, Youssou N'Dour claims for leadership and responsibility, as well as for cooperation and diligent activity on behalf of everyone. He calls for democracy and development. He criticises exploitive or self-righteous African leaders, but people's laziness and passivity as well: "A long road lies ahead / We have much to do / So let's get ready" (2008).

To put that vision of African unity into practice it requires, first and foremost, a change of consciousness and awareness – not only on behalf of Africans but of the whole world. Therefore, it makes perfectly sense that this musician from francophone Senegal phrases that paramount requirement in English, which effectively works as

a "world language" that is almost universally understood. Accordingly, Youssou N'Dour ends all performances of this song, with only minor variations of words, in what he and most of us conceive of as a universal tongue: "Change your thinking / Come together / Work together / Keep on working / […] All you people / Africa / Africa united."

In short, Youssou N'Dour is calling for a united Africa that is proud of its past, strong and determined, working for its development and a better life. Towards the end of the song, in the English/universal section, he mentions three famous Pan-Africanists by name: Ghanaian Kwame Nkrumah who died in exile in 1972; Senegalese Cheikh Anta Diop who died in Dakar in 1986; and Stephen Bantu Biko who was tortured and murdered by South African policemen in 1977. By passionately singing their names, Youssou N'Dour is calling his listeners to actively remember those (and other) Africans of the recent (and not so recent) past who fought, in their very own and special ways, for African liberation, equal rights and solidarity. It is a contemporary and popular Pan-Africanist statement. Invoking Nkrumah, Diop and Biko builds a vocal link between the present efforts for Africa's progressive development and the Pan-African tradition.

Though all of them are definitely important protagonists of Pan-Africanism, the three men represent quite different strands and shades of this ideology. Kwame Nkrumah, the "Black Star of Africa" as he was called in the 1950s and 1960s,[37] has been – without a doubt – the most proficient politician trying to set up a politically united Africa on the continental base so far. On the other hand, Youssou N'Dour's fellow-countryman Cheikh Anta Diop had a Pan-Africanist agenda that did not deal with current realities so much (or, at least, did not look at them in realistic terms), but claimed a pre-historical and genetic Pan-African unity binding together all Blacks that must only be recovered and awakened. Publishing his ideas since the late 1950s,[38] Diop perpetuated the racist tradition of Pan-Africanist thought and *négritude* at a time when many others had already overcome the racist bias. Wole Soyinka's quip of "tigritude" – published with a profound impact in *Time Magazine* on 17 November 1967: "A tiger does not proclaim his tigritude – he pounces." – is perhaps

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37 Cf. Davidson (2007).
38 Cf. Diop (1987); Diop (1990).

the most famous early critique of *négritude* by an African intellectual, but by no means the only one.[39]

The English translations of Diop's work that appeared in the U.S. since circa 1970 – at the heyday of Black radicalism – and never went out-of-print since, ensured its enduring international impact. According to Chinua Achebe,

> "[i]t is important not to view Négritude in isolation but in the full context of the black consciousness movement of the first half of the twentieth century […]. […W]hat these intellectuals were trying to achieve – the reclamation of the power of self-definition to recast Africa's, and therefore their own, image through the written word – [was] incredibly attractive and influential. Here were highly sophisticated individuals who believed in the need for blacks who had been victims of historical dispossession to appreciate and elevate their culture – literature, art, music, dance, etc. They encouraged Africans […] to celebrate and espouse their culture as not only not inferior to European culture and civilization but equally acceptable even if fundamentally different."[40]

Even though Achebe's balanced view on *négritude* has some merit, especially with regard to his hints at the necessity of historicizing the phenomenon, it avoids to confront the basically racist premises on which Cheikh Anta Diop built his claims. He overlooked too that Diop's attractiveness to an international audience rests, to a great extent, on his simplifications and straightforward pairs of opposition. In Senegal itself, that kind of racism and racist heritage does not play a dominant role. Here Diop is positively remembered for his stubborn opposition to Senegal's postcolonial political elites.

Still another Pan-African approach was developed in the early 1970s by South African student representative Stephen Biko. His agitation for "Black Consciousness" in the Apartheid state resulted in heavy state repression and, ultimately, led to his killing. The single most interesting point about his political work – carried out on a civil society basis – seems to me his profound non-racialist approach. In the following and concluding pages I am going to sketch these three variants of Pan-Africanism along selected lines.

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39 Cf. Mphalele (1961); Soyinka (1999), 95-96, 125-144.
40 Achebe (2012), 163-164.

1. Kwame Nkrumah: The Struggle for Political Power and Erasure of the Ruling World Order

Born in a small fishing village in the south-western Gold Coast, Kwame Nkrumah attended a Catholic school where teachers became aware of his outstanding gift for learning. Nkrumah acquired a solid education, and served as teacher at Achimota College in the late 1920s and early 30s. Inspired by Nigerian journalist and activist Nnamdi Azikiwe who had just returned from studies abroad and now recommended young Africans not to go to the British metropole but to the U.S., Nkrumah decided to set sail in 1935. In the next ten years which he described as hard but worthwhile, he earned academic qualifications in the United States of America. And he became much more politically conscious there as well. According to his autobiography,

> "[a]t this time I devoted much energy to the study of revolutionaries and their methods. Those who interested me most were Hannibal, Cromwell, Napoleon, Lenin, Mazzini, Gandhi, Mussolini and Hitler. I found much of value to be gleaned and many ideas that were useful to me later in my own campaign against imperialism."[41]

In 1945, Nkrumah left the U.S. for London. There he became close friend to George Padmore, and they organised the Fifth Pan-African Congress together. While Padmore brought into their relationship the firm socialist brains, Nkrumah possessed that great charismatic oratory skill and popular appeal that would soon turn him into a successful politician and shining figure.[42] Returning to his native Gold Coast colony in 1947, Nkrumah's political star and influence rose as fast as can be. His supporters successfully agitated among the young urban townspeople as well as among rural people making good use of market networks and the media, both print and radio. Being detained twice by the colonial government, the influence of Nkrumah and his CPP party could not be stopped. The first elections that were held in the Gold Coast in 1951 were won by the CPP, and Nkrumah – still in jail at the time – was inaugurated "Leader of Government Business", soon called "Premier Minister". With Nkrumah in the lead, the Gold Coast was on its way to self-government and independence. In 1957 the Gold Coast colony eventually achieved formal independence. Nkrumah chose the name "Ghana" for the "new" state. He headed Ghana until

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41 Nkrumah (1957), vii-viii.
42 Cf. Sonderegger (2016).

February 1966 when his regime was overthrown by a military (and very pro-Western) coup d'état. Nkrumah had been on a trip to China and Vietnam. He returned immediately to neighboring Guinea but was forced to live in exile for the rest of his life.

After achieving Ghanaian independence, Nkrumah organised a series of conferences to support African nationalist movements in the colonial territories and to coordinate the newly independent states, both in Africa and Asia. He became a prominent proponent of non-alignment. Henceforth Nkrumah acted as the mastermind and the main symbol of the Pan-African efforts of establishing a strong and united African state. Nkrumah considered indispensable "[…] a common political basis for the integration of our [African] policies in economic planning, defence, foreign and diplomatic relations."[43]

> "[… A] united Africa – that is, the political and economic unification of the African continent – should seek three objectives: Firstly, we should have an over-all economic planning on a continental basis. […] Secondly, we should aim at the establishment of a unified military and defence strategy. […] The third objective […] [is] to adopt a unified foreign policy and diplomacy to give political direction to our joint efforts for the protection and economic development of our continent."[44]

As stated earlier, this goal was not to be realised. In course of the early 1960s the chance of creating such a continental macro-state had given way to the tiny "nation-statisms" that Basil Davidson (1992) spoke of. From 1945 onwards, Nkrumah had clearly seen the problem and worked hard to convince other African leaders to make the right choice; but he practically failed. This practical failure of bringing about the United States of Africa does not mean that Nkrumah's analysis of the colonial past and, as he called it, the "neo-colonial" present, is wrong. For example, with regard to European colonial rule, his analysis went like this:

> "The aim of all colonial governments in Africa and elsewhere has been the struggle for raw materials; and not only this, but the colonies have become the dumping ground, and colonial peoples the false recipients, of manufactured goods of the industrialists and capitalists […] of colonial powers who turn to the dependent territories which feed their industrial plants. This is colonialism in a nutshell."[45]

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43   Nkrumah (1963), 218.
44   Nkrumah (1963), 218-220.
45   Nkrumah (1962), xv.

With regard to the transition from this old and formal colonialism to a new form of exclusive domination, he argued along very reasonable lines,

> "[t]he neo-colonialism of today represents imperialism in its final and perhaps its most dangerous stage. In the past it was possible to convert a country [...] into a colonial territory. Today this process is no longer feasible. Old-fashioned colonialism is by no means entirely abolished. It still constitutes an African problem, but it is everywhere on the retreat. Once a territory has become nominally independent it is no longer possible, as it was in the last century, to reverse the process. Existing colonies may linger on, but no new colonies will be created. In place of colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism we have today neo-colonialism. The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside. [...] The result of neo-colonialism is that foreign capital is used for the exploittation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world. Investment under neo-colonialism increases rather than decreases the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world."[46]

It is important to see that Nkrumah's analysis of global inequality and dependencies has nothing xenophobic about it. It was not directed against foreigners or foreign investments, but pointed toward a particular systemic problematic – to "the extreme asymmetry in global economic relations"[47] as well as to the "extraversion"[48] of African ruling elites who look to the outside for support instead of turning inside, practicing "gate keeping" of the state instead of working for the recovery of their countries.

Nkrumah was very critical towards many of his compatriots, and he welcomed support from outside, as long as it corresponded to his developmental and political ideals. Foreign influence marks therefore only one side in Nkrumah's understanding of neo-colonialism; the other side rested with Africa herself. That is the reason why the struggle against neo-colonial structures had to be fought at the home front as well, for they rest on the existence of nominally independent African states run by Africans willing to co-operate. Nkrumah was quite frank about this point:

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46 Nkrumah (1965), ix-x.
47 Cooper (2014), 98.
48 Bayart (2009).

> "[T]he rulers of neo-colonial States derive their authority to govern, not from the will of the people, but from the support which they obtain from their neo-colonialist masters. […] 'Aid', therefore, to a neo-colonial State is merely a revolving credit, paid by the neo-colonial master, passing through the neo-colonial State and returning to the neo-colonial master in the form of increased profits."[49]

In sum, Nkrumah cautioned against the pitfall of Africa's new and precarious "independence", and against the perpetual threat of "imperial" domination by the world's global powers:

> "Neocolonialism is more insidious, complex and dangerous than the old colonialism. It not only prevents its victims from developing their economic potential for their own use, but it controls the political life of the country, and supports the indigenous bourgeoisie in perpetuating the oppression and exploitation of the masses. Under neocolonialism, the economic systems and political policies of independent territories are managed and manipulated from outside, by international monopoly finance capital in league with the indigenous bourgeoisie.
>
> The policy of balkanization pursued by the imperialist powers when forced to concede political independence in Asia, Africa and Latin America, reflects the strategy of neocolonialism – the intention being to ensure their continued exploitation and oppression.
>
> In Africa, most of the independent states are economically unviable, and still have the artificial frontiers of colonialism. They are easy prey for the voracious appetites of neocolonial empire builders."[50]

Reading Nkrumah is a permanent reminder of the simple truth that the struggle for freedom from domination by others is inevitably a constant task, at all times under threat from forces that want to keep their predominance – be they the "empire builders" proper or the wannabes.

2. Cheikh Anta Diop: The Dead Ends of a Racialised Past

Empire and imperialism played a role in Cheikh Anta Diop's thinking too. But Diop looked into the oldest empire in human history, Pharaonic Egypt, first unified 5,000

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49 Nkrumah (1965), xv.
50 Nkrumah (1973), 313.

years ago. He was a politically engaged person in his home country of Senegal where he sided with the opposition to the ruling party of Léopold Sédar Senghor (*Parti socialiste sénégalais*), but essentially he was an academic working in his own research laboratory in Dakar in an interdisciplinary and amateurish way on the origins of humankind.[51] In his view Africa appears as the cradle of everything that is or ever has been of worth to humankind. Evidently, such an extreme Afrocentric view excludes much of known global history and is therefore basically and empirically wrong. Diop's line of argument is, to put it politely, absurd: you cannot – as he does throughout – infer from original beginnings the ultimate outcome without taking into account the intermediate steps and developments of history.

Basically Diop is heir to a problematic strand of Pan-Africanism. He combines the francophone *négritude*-ethos with the racial segregationist approach developed most prominently by Marcus Garvey in the early 20th century. In all his books he draws a sharp cutting line between Black and White, Africa and Europe, Good and Bad – and he asks his readers to choose: either "Civilization or Barbarism".[52] It is clear then that Diop stuck to the simplistic racist formula of biologically based opposition inherent in both Garveyism and *négritude* until his death in 1986.

Youssou N'Dour's invocation of Diop in his *"New Africa"* does not reflect on this racist heritage that is part of these traditions, but is informed by two much more contemporary influences that are shaping his understanding. One has to do with Youssou N'Dour's acquaintance with African American (and Western) readings of Diop that came about only a few years before he created that song. They tend to ignore and turn a blind eye to Diop's racism. Most probably, Youssou N'Dour was introduced to the American reception of Diop by the famous African American film director Spike Lee who co-produced the album *Eyes Open* of which *"New Africa"* was part. In "Youssou's notes" to the international CD-release, he repeats the sugar-coated image dominant in Afrocentric circles: "Cheikh Anta Diop was a Senegalese scholar whose research on early African civilization has had a seminal effect not only on African historiography but also in the realms of politics and culture."[53] This is true enough, if slightly exaggerated, but it is only half the truth.

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51 Cf. Eckert (1995).
52 Diop (1981).
53 Youssou N'Dour (1992).

The second influence on Youssou N'Dour's positive image of Diop has to do with his native Senegal, in particular the positive way in which Diop is remembered there and revered by the young – most of whom have no recollection of the living Diop at all. With some pride, Youssou N'Dour (1992) explains in his liner notes that "Senegal's national university in Dakar was renamed Cheikh Anta Diop University upon Diop's death in 1987." However, he invokes Diop in *"New Africa"* first and foremost because he was impressed by his call for a political union of Africa. As he explains, "[a]mong his many works, *The Economic and Cultural Foundations of a Federal African State* (1960) provided a cogent argument for the very kind of African political integration which this song talks about."[54] In essence, then, what makes Diop attractive to Youssou N'Dour and a younger Pan-African generation is this call for political and social unity.

3. Bantu Stephen Biko: The Struggle for Awareness Continues

Though Stephen Biko grew up in a barbarous, segregationist, race-based society – in Apartheid South Africa – that cut short his young life, he developed a completely different attitude – an attitude of a "Black consciousness" that is basically non-racialist. One quote expresses its essence clearly: "Being black is not a matter of pigmentation – being black is a reflection of a mental attitude."[55] The "Black" consciousness that Biko spoke for conforms to an attitude that, according to him, is shared by all those oppressed, exploited and deprived of their rights – basically regardless of color. Asked about his vision for the future, Biko declared,

> "[w]e see a completely non-racial society. […] We believe that in our country there shall be no minority, there shall be no majority, just the people. And those people will have the same status before the law. So in a sense it will be a completely non-racial society."[56]

The way to achieve this non-racial society was to raise and spread awareness of the South African social situation among the masses, so as to change it radically and transform it into a new and better society. This was what "Black consciousness" according to Biko's understanding was all about. Raising awareness would lead to people's self-empowerment and this, in consequence, to actions by the people

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54   Youssou N'Dour (1992).
55   Biko (1987), 48.
56   Biko, quoted in Mangcu (2012), 282.

against their oppression and exploitation. The collection of his writings and talks that appeared soon after his premature death entitled *I Write What I Like*, bears testimony to the eloquence and sophistication with which Biko approached the intricacies of South African reality.[57]

Why then, you may ask, call this state of consciousness "Black Consciousness" in the first place? Biko calls attention to the economic, political and social realities in Apartheid South Africa, saying you cannot act color-blind in a society that is not. You must change the society first, by changing both living realities and mentalities. In the process of doing this, racism will vanish too. He reasoned that

> "Blacks have had enough experiences as objects of racism not to wish to turn the tables. While it may be relevant now to speak of black in relation to white, we must not make this our preoccupation, for it can be a negative exercise. As we proceed further towards the achievements of our goals, let us talk more about ourselves and less about whites."[58]

Thinking of the problematic developments in post-Apartheid South Africa where "race" is still playing a vital role on both levels – that of real social inequalities and of its ideological justification –, Biko's optimism seems somewhat ill-considered in retrospect. But his guess that the solution to Africa's problems must be searched for by those living in Africa is still utterly convincing.

From being a student leader Biko rapidly became a prominent figure in the non-violent anti-Apartheid struggle. His ideas of Black Consciousness evolved into a broad movement in several South African townships. He was thus under constant close surveillance of the South African state. Later he was put on trial, banned from leaving his home area, and eventually imprisoned, tortured and killed.[59] But his ideas and his influence survived his physical death. Indeed, they grew in prominence, at least among educated internationalists with access to contents mediated either by academic or mass media channels. "Many South Africans, and most foreigners, had never heard of Stephen Biko until his death," writes Ingrid Byerly: "While the story [of his violent death] became prominent news to politically involved South Africans […], and to the select segment of the international community […], the wider popu-

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57 Cf. Biko (1987).
58 Biko, quoted in Mangcu (2012), 284-285.
59 Cf. Mangcu (2012).

lace, both within and outside South Africa, were largely unaware of Biko's struggle and death."[60] This changed rapidly in the fall of 1977.

Biko even became a hero in a Hollywood movie, directed by the late Richard Attenborough, starring a young Denzel Washington (*Cry Freedom*, 1987). He attracted a series of political protest songs. One of the first songs dedicated to his memory and message, and probably the single most famous one, was written in the late 1970s and simply titled after the man: Peter Gabriel's *"Biko"*.[61] Laconically, the first verse of that song tells the story of Biko's killing leading to a chorus expressing both grief and strength, invoking, in Xhosa, the "Descending Spirit" of the dead man and humanity:

> "September '77 / Port Elizabeth weather fine / It was business as usual / In police room 619
> [Chorus:]
> Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko / Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko /
> Yihla Moja, Yihla Moja / The man is dead"

The lesson of non-racialism that Biko taught is reflected in the second verse, followed by the chorus again, while the ultimate success is evoked in the third and last proper verse of the song:

> "When I try to sleep at night / I can only dream in red /
> The outside world is black and white / With only one colour dead
> […]
> You can blow out a candle / But you can't blow out a fire /
> Once the flame begins to catch / The wind will blow it higher"

According to the British artist who wrote this song, the struggle for awareness and improvement of human life – as paradigmatically personified in the life and mind of Stephen Biko – was something worthwhile to fight for. And its success seemed in the cards. He considered it a down-to-earth guess, because the masses have started to awake from their slumber. It is not by chance that the song ending sounds both declaratory and missionary: "And the eyes of the world are / watching now / watching now".

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60 Byerly (2010), 114-115.
61 Peter Gabriel (1980); cf. Drewett (2010) on its reception within South Africa and abroad, and Byerly (2010), 125-128 for an analysis of its musical power reinforcing the song's lyrical strength.

Gabriel's "Biko" refers, in subtle and more or less implicit ways, to the three modern ideas that are at the base of Pan-Africanism, criticizing racism in vivid terms and by invoking keen images. It calls for equality ("only one colour dead"), liberty and freedom from domination by outside forces, be they of an institutional ("police room 619") or socio-historical structural kind ("the outside world is black and white"). Eventually, the song points to unity and international solidarity. The modernism and progressiveness that informs and shines through this lyric has his parallel in the modernity of the Pan-African ideology.

Its message and "consciousness", like Biko's, shines bright. It attracted many listeners formerly ignorant of the darker sides of modernity to start facing them. Certainly this popular protest song, along with many other activities that followed, boosted the memory of not just the man, but his ideas of non-racialist "Black consciousness". Along the way, such expressions of critical popular culture revitalised classic Pan-African ideas to a certain degree, and to some effect.

Is, then, all well with Pan-Africanism today? – Perhaps not. As mentioned earlier, the racist tradition unfortunately looms large in certain particularistic corners of Pan-African activities even today, which weakens its broader attractiveness and, consequently, its political effectiveness to a considerable extent. "Race" is an unsound ground on which to base unity.

But there are other ideas, much more solid and definitely progressive, as well – ideas that lie at the heart of Pan-Africanism as it developed in course of the 20th century, and stood the test of time. The establishment of the African Union is only one of the many contemporary signs hinting at the fact that, at the beginning of the new millennium, Pan-Africanism is by no means a dead ideology. If you have doubts, listen to Youssou N'Dour's rendering of what's on the agenda in order to build a *"New Africa"*, in 2008:

> "When the sun comes up / Be on your feet / Ready with the tools of your trade / The day passes quickly /
> Let's confront our problems one at a time / United we are stronger
> […]
> All you people / Africa"

For sure, Pan-Africanist thought, emotion, and mood are well alive. Africa's modernity is on the move.

References

Lyrical Variations of Youssou N'Dour's song "New Africa", 1992, 2000, 2008

NEW AFRICA (1992)

This is Youssou N'Dour /
Calling all Africans /
Asking you to share ideas and develop a
consensus /
To pool your resources and work
together /
Without regard for borders

Let's get together and let nothing come
between us /
Or pull us apart

You heads of state /
Just because you lead a nation doesn't
mean /
You own everything in it /
True leaders love their countries

And yes, it's alright to ask for help /
But let's depend on ourselves first

Drummer, play your drum /
Call everyone to the council tree so we
can discuss matters /
Oh Africa

When the sun comes up /
Be on your feet /
Ready with the tools of your trade /
The day passes quickly /
Three people can't wrestle /
And two are stronger than one

Let's make sure we're prepared for all
our challenges /
Let's get together /
Put our visions together /
As sons and daughters of Africa /
Put our thinking together /
Put our energies together /
Put together what we own

Chorus:
When I think of what our grandfathers
went through, it's sad /
If it were up to me /
I'd like to see all Africa led by one
person /
Someone to whom we'd gladly lend our
ideas, our energies /

Let's open the borders /
Let's be tolerant of one another

Change your thinking /
Come together, New Africa /
Work together /
Keep on working, for Africa

Cheikh Anta Diop, Kwame Nkrumah,
Stephen Biko

All you people… Africa

NEW AFRICA (2000)

I'm calling all sons of Africa /
To come together in spirit /
To develop the same views and wishes /
Regardless of any geographical
boundaries /
Let's put together our resources and
work as a group /
Together, no one can come between us /

As a leader, it's important to realize that /
The country's natural resources belong
to all /
A strong leader should love his country /
And help starts within /

When one thinks of what our ancestors
went through /
We are heartbroken and revenge is all
we can think of /

If it were up to me, Africa would be
united under one leader /
Then we'd put our strength and ideas
together /
Under that leadership /
Let's break the boundaries, make
communication easier for all /

Change your thinking /
Work together /
Keep on working /

Cheikh Anta Diop, Kwame Nkrumah,
Steven Biko /

Africa /
Africa united

NEW AFRICA (2008)

I am Youssou N'Dour /
Calling all Africans /
Asking you to share ideas and come to a
meeting of minds /
Without borders, let's pool our
resources and work together /
Let's come together and let nothing pull
us apart /

You heads of state /
You may lead a country, but you don't
own it /
True leaders love their countries /

Although we can ask for help /
Let's depend on ourselves first /
We are Africa /

When the sun comes up /
Be on your feet /
Ready with the tools of your trade /
The day passes quickly /
Let's confront our problems one at a
time /
United we are stronger /
A long road lies ahead /
We have much to do /
So let's get ready /

When I think of how our grandparents
suffered, I cry /
But our past must not stop us from
moving forward /
I dream to see Africa unified by a
common vision /
Let's marshal our ideas, our energies /
Open the borders, and come together /

Change your thinking /
Work together /
Keep on working /

Cheikh Anta Diop /
Kwame Nkrumah /
Stephen Biko /

All you people /
Africa

The song is sung in Youssou N'Dour's mother tongue, Wolof, except for the ending section when he switches to English. The originally English parts are expressed in italics. In general the translations are taken from CD booklets (Youssou N'Dour 1992, 2000) and from the subtitles of an official DVD release (Youssou N'Dour 2008). The variations in the song lyrics are striking. For once they give ample evidence of the dynamic tradition in African story and song telling, but they reflect the individual development of the singer-songwriter's consciousness quite as much. Finally they point to profound changes in the African political landscape that happened during the past quarter century. It would be a good idea to investigate these differences in a systematic way.

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Reflections on the Role and Production of Research Films in African Studies

Birgit Englert

"Video instead of letters. Shooting script instead of draft manuscript. Looking instead of reading." (Haring 2011: 3, translation B.E.)

Introduction

In this article, I wish to reflect on the role and production of research films in African Studies, which is – just as any area study – in itself highly diverse.[1] In the first part of the paper, I start with some thoughts on the relevance of audiovisual work in African Studies in general, and continue with some reflections on how to work with film in research processes. In the second part of the paper, I will draw on concrete examples of audiovisual work that has been carried out within the framework of the Department of African Studies at the University of Vienna in recent years. I have been involved in most of the projects that I will discuss, albeit in different roles, ranging from facilitator and producer to that of director.

These projects share a common thematic focus on issues of translocality and diaspora. On the one hand, this is due to my own interest in working with audiovisual means coinciding with my growing interest in such issues, however on the other, it is no mere coincidence, as research that is situated in postcolonial contexts in particular demands a critical examination of research practices, which includes reflections on

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1 At the University of Vienna, the curriculum in African Studies encompasses the study of African languages, linguistics, literatures, histories and societies. My reflections in this text thus refer to African Studies as understood at the Department of African Studies in Vienna, bearing in mind that African Studies has slightly different identities elsewhere.

how to open up the academic world and how to reduce dichotomies between re-searcher and "researched".[2]

Within African Studies, the analysis of images and films relating to Africa is a topic on which there has been, and there continues to be, a great deal of research. The dominant images of Africa in the mainstream media are generally perceived to homogenise and reproduce stereotypical images.[3] A lot of academic work within African Studies thus aims to contribute to "different" images of Africa. In this article, I argue that given the dramatic changes in technology, more attention needs to be given to the option of engaging in the production of filmic images, or more precisely to the consideration of film as a potential output of research processes. I summarise thoughts and experiences from the previous five years, and the second part of the article in particular, where I draw on concrete examples of film projects in which I have been involved, is a very personal account. Other people who were involved in the same projects are likely to hold different perspectives. My aim is therefore for this article to be understood as an attempt to engage in a discussion on the "Why?" and "How?" of working with film in research processes within African Studies.

Why work with film/audiovisual means in research?

Film and/or audiovisual products are gaining more and more importance in public discourse. The last ten years have seen the rise of online audiovisual portals such as YouTube (www.youtube.com) and – somewhat less popular – Vimeo (www.vimeo.com). With the popularisation of smartphones, the spread of WLAN and relatively cheap broadband Internet access, the consumption of audiovisual products has increased enormously. This is not only true for countries that are commonly perceived as part of the "West", but also for African countries, whereby class may play an even greater role in terms of who actually has access to such technologies.

Furthermore, as most smartphones have cameras with a video function that enables high-quality film footage to be shot, as well as the availability of (more or less) affordable digital camera equipment, it has become easier and more popular than ever before to produce audiovisual data. As a result of this, audiovisual products are

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2 For an introduction to postcolonial theories, see Castro Varela/Dhawan (2015).
3 See e.g. Pichlhöfer (1999); Sturmer (2013).

increasingly being generated in research processes, also when the aim as such is not to produce audiovisual output.[4]

Audiovisual data obviously offers additional layers of information, though in many cases these additional layers may not be required, as there may be a lack of capacity to take them into account in the analysis. Furthermore, some interview partners may be more reluctant to be filmed than to have their voices recorded – although the opposite reaction might also be the case. The point I wish to make here is that in many cases, it only makes sense to generate audiovisual data when the intention also exists to produce an audiovisual output.

As the sociologists Miko and Sardavar (2008) emphasise, the audiovisual pre-sentation of research outputs certainly provides additional benefits when compared to written texts. Besides the main elements of image and sound, other items such as music, voice-overs, text inserts and/or subtitles, which offer additional layers of infor-mation, can also be added. For example, the option of working with subtitles means that the original language in which an interview was conducted can be maintained. However, the film medium obviously offers less opportunity for the insertion of re-ferences, which is a key strategy for ensuring "traceability" in academic texts. This thus raises many questions about how to produce research films that fulfil the quality criteria of academic texts – a question that will be dealt with in more depth below.[5]

Besides the possibility of conveying more layers of information, film also has the potential to produce a result that has more "meaning" or "relevance" for the people who are the focus of the research, in comparison to (academic) texts. The challenges relating to this aspect will be discussed in the second part of this article.

Firstly, I wish to discuss another quite obvious advantage of producing audio-visual output in academic contexts: the potential to reach a broader audience beyond academia. However, simply choosing the medium of film does not mean that you will automatically reach more people. This rather depends on the chosen format, on

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4 Just as written notes came to be complemented by audio recordings, the option is now available to make audio-visual recordings. In many cases this is done simply because it is possible to do so at no extra cost. However, it should be kept in mind that the production of audiovisual data does in fact generate extra costs as this type of data requires a lot of storage space. Furthermore, the files are more difficult to handle than audio files and may not be accessible without specific software.

5 As Katharina Fritsch (personal communication, 1 March 2016) noted, it is problematic to judge film by the same criteria applied to texts because they are different media. Whilst I agree with this observation, I argue that in order to discuss the potential of film in communicating research outputs, a comparative perspective is helpful.

how the audiovisual product is made accessible and potentially even more on how it is then promoted. The dissemination of audiovisual products essentially presents the same challenges as faced in the dissemination of written research. Open access is increasingly being mainstreamed and is strongly promoted by major funding institutions such as the Austrian Science Fund, which requires all research results to also be published in open access formats.[6] In terms of making research films available without restrictions, portals such as YouTube or Vimeo certainly play a crucial role.

While film is broadly recognised as a tool to reach a broader audience outside of academia, there is reluctance within the academic world to recognise audiovisual products as scientific. Sol Haring argues for the recognition of video productions as scientific products:

> "In the humanities and social sciences film and text are put in opposition to each other as theory and practice. The integration of digital videos in the (daily) research practices/routine is made more difficult by the fact that videos are either seen as artistic or as media products. Further, are artistic processes for data collection and for the analysis of video data being "tolerated" as "supplements" to knowledge production; but they are not (yet) acknowledged as stand-alone form of knowledge presentation, not even within qualitative research."[7]

Haring notes a reluctance of people to watch films for academic purposes, to use them as a source or to even to cite them in written texts.[8] This lack of recognition of audiovisual products as valid sources is also reflected in the lack of guidelines on how to cite them, even by major academic publishing houses[9]. In my opinion, a positive step towards increasing the recognition of such sources is to encourage students to use audiovisual material in their classwork, so that the consideration of such sources becomes part of a research routine.[10]

There are, of course, huge differences between academic disciplines with regards to the acceptance of film as a research output, which is obviously related to the different histories of working with audiovisual means. For over 100 years, researchers have worked with film (and photography) in Africa-related anthropological research,

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6 See https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/open-access-policy (accessed 27 February 2016).
7 Haring (2011), 1 (translation B.E.).
8 Haring (2011), 2.
9 See, for example, the Style Guide of the publishing house "Intellect" at http://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/ MediaManager/ File/style%20guide(journals)-1.pdf (accessed 27 February 2016).
10 An interesting question that will not be addressed here is also how to cite a film within a film.

which was obviously shaped by the colonial and postcolonial context in which it was carried out. Since the 1950s, the use of audiovisual material has increased, as has the production of documentaries.[11] Thus Visual Anthropology has become established as a sub-discipline of Cultural and Social Anthropology.[12] Over the last two decades at the University of Vienna, related disciplines have also established research units dedicated to working on and with film; first and foremost "Visual Sociology"[13] and "Visual Contemporary History"[14]. The experiences of these research units are of great relevance to an area study such as African Studies, where the increase in working with film is relatively recent – at least in the Department of African Studies at the University of Vienna, as will be discussed in more depth in the second part of this article.

What is a "research film" and how should one be made?

"Research film" certainly belongs to the category of non-fictional film – a category that is in itself highly diverse.[15] Lipp (2012), for example, makes a distinction between documentaries based on a plot, non-verbal documentaries, documentaries, as well as *direct cinema* and *cinema verité*. These are prototypes, as he asserts, and other authors have proposed other forms of differentiating between the various approaches to non-fictional film-making.[16] Miko and Sardavar (2008) make a distinction between "documentary" and "ethnographic film"[17], whereas Sol Haring talks more

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11 Denzin (2000), 418.

12 Cf. Lipp (2010, 2012); Pink (2013).

13 Cf. Miko/Sardavar (2008); Flicker/Miko (2010). Miko and Sardavar describe their own experiences working with what they term "ethnographic film in sociology" in the teaching of research methodology and methods in a working paper published in 2008. As they discuss many similar aspects, I engage in a discussion with many of their arguments throughout this article.

14 The full title in German is "Visuelle Zeit- und Kulturgeschichte, Film und andere Medien". The research unit has been dismantled again with the retirement of Professor Frank Stern. Only some of the activities are still ongoing, see http://www.univie.ac.at/zeitgeschichte/institut/schwerpunkte/visuelle-zeit-und-kulturgeschichte-film-und-andere-medien.

15 Obviously research is part of any film-making process, whether fictional or non-fictional. However, my interest here is explicitly in films that are made for the purpose of conveying research processes and results.

16 There are also, of course, fictional elements in every non-fictional film and the distinction is thus an artificial one.

17 In a more narrow sense, "documentaries" start from a script that determines what is of relevance and what will be shot (including when and where). The script also usually develops and determines the argument the film will follow (cf. Lipp 2012, 73ff; Glynne 2008). "Ethnographic films", on the other hand, usually start from a research question and follow a more open process. However, the boundaries of these definitions are not fixed, there may also be documentaries that start from the collection of film material without a specific script, just as there may also be ethnographic films that follow a script.

broadly of "research-led digital video productions" – a term that I would like to embrace as it is not tied to a specific academic discipline and it also has the advantage of not telling us anything about the methodological approach behind the film or the specific research methods employed. However, for reasons of brevity, I will use the term "research film".

I would argue that the research process remains essentially the same, regardless of whether the aim is to produce a film, a text or both. The production of research films can be seen as part of the qualitative spectrum of research methods.[18] Therefore, as with any qualitative research, it is characterised by an open process that is usually shaped by previous knowledge, random encounters and the dynamics generated by the manifold interests of all subjects involved in the research.

As is more generally the case in qualitative research, qualitative interviews, (participatory) observation and archival material (which can either already be in film format or can be filmed in the case of artefacts) are among the most commonly used methods.[19] Audiovisual material that is generated in that way is first viewed, transcribed and coded.[20] A first structure is then developed, sub-chapters are formulated and the material is assembled, usually starting with the introduction to the main part and a concluding part, ideally following a storyline that makes sense. I wish to cite Sol Haring again, who states:

> "In artistic production there are conditions similar to those in qualitative research processes: the process of gaining knowledge is subjective but can be retraced intersubjectively; the process of cognition is documented, described and thereby theory is produced."[21]

Therefore, while the process of data collection and interpretation is essentially the same as that for a written text, there are more differences when it comes to the editing process.

With film, the film-maker has the option to leave any explicit verbal or written comments out and to make his or her "voice" visible only in the cut.[22] This does not

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18 See e.g. Flick et al. (2003); Dannecker/Englert (2014).
19 See e.g. Dannecker/Englert (2014).
20 Cf. Haring (2011), 2.
21 Haring (2011), 2 (translation B.E.).
22 As one of the editors of this volume pointed out in a comment on the draft version of this text, it would also be possible to do this in a written text – albeit only in theory, as in practice it is very uncommon and would most likely generate accusations of plagiarism.

mean however, that film is more "objective" than text. The process of data generation and interpretation is shaped by the same subjective criteria, and the same is true for the selection process during editing. However, the position of the filmmaker(s) is often more indirect, which carries the danger that his/her/their subjective position might be overlooked in the absence of voices or images that point to his/her/their presence. It is therefore important to consider strategies to ensure that this does not happen.

Certain elements of film have generated more discussion than others, especially music, which is perceived to emotionalise the viewer and thus to be unsuitable in research output.[23] My point of view is that specific images and words used in written or spoken form might equally serve to emotionalise. Furthermore, emotions should not be a taboo in research. The decision to work with film in the research process is precisely because of the desire to provide a more complete picture, thus using the multiple layers that film offers in order to add more information. I therefore do not think that it makes sense to exclude certain elements of film, and if we take the example of music, it goes without saying that it is a crucial aspect of film.

Miko and Sardavar (2008) argue that in their opinion, "aesthetic criteria need to be secondary to the necessity of 'intersubjective traceability'". It is certainly true that compliance with the quality standards of qualitative research must take priority. The need to ensure the quality criteria of any qualitative research process is the basis upon which a research film must be judged. This requirement also differentiates such films from documentary films, whereby it is acceptable to prioritise the aesthetic depiction of social phenomena.

While images that are generated throughout the research process form the basis of the film, it is also common to look for specific images that complement the film visually during the editing process. Such images might be found in archives (conventional ones or digital ones such as YouTube) to enhance the images that have been filmed as part of the data generation. Additional elements that can be used in film include drawings or other alternatives to the reproduction of "real" images (see the inspiring chapters in the volume *Experimental film and Anthropology* edited by Arnd Schneider and Caterina Pasqualino[24]).

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23 Cf. Miko/Sardavar (2008).
24 Cf. Schneider/Pasqualino (2014).

Using a camera in research generally requires a greater level of intimacy. Images are more revealing and therefore a greater level of trust is needed in order for someone to allow themselves to be filmed. This is even more the case if not just staged interviews are used, but if the camera follows the protagonists in their daily activities. The increased level of vulnerability experienced by the protagonists thus requires more extensive ethical considerations than for research that results in the production of a written text.

Miko and Sardavar (2008), for example, caution against considering everything to be acceptable as long as a person gives their consent to be filmed. This problem is amplified if the film includes images that have not been self-generated but are, for example, taken from platforms such as YouTube. In comparison to other archives, which usually make their material accessible only after a period of several decades, YouTube is a contemporary archive whose material can be accessed as soon as it has been uploaded.[25] While people are generally aware that everyone can access their material if access has not been limited by specific privacy settings, not all will be aware that their images (or quotes in the case of blogs, for example) could be used in other contexts. As it depends on what type of material is being used for what type of research, I think it is difficult to set any fixed guidelines besides the need to be aware of such issues, and to ensure in each individual case that the use of certain images or quotes is compatible with good research ethics in a broader sense.

Miko and Sardavar (2008) further demand that decisions forming the basis of the film be carefully reflected and substantiated. I think it is crucial for such decisions relating to the film to be visible in the film itself, so that the film can stand alone. However, film is also always presented in a context, i.e., it is at least accompanied by a synopsis and information on the roles of all involved.

So while there is a need to prioritise ethical criteria as well as quality criteria, I wish to emphasise that I deem it highly important to also consider aesthetic aspects, for the simple reason that audiovisual products that do not meet a certain standard in terms of aesthetics will hardly be watched – just as badly written texts are less likely to be read. There is therefore a clear need for researchers working with film to invest time in acquiring knowledge of the technical and creative aspects of using a camera and editing.

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25 See e.g. Gehl (2009).

The challenges of the required skills and infrastructure

Working with film obviously requires a certain infrastructure and the teaching of basic skills in film-making, including technical as well as theoretical aspects. Both a suitable camera and adequate computer hardware and software must be available for the purpose of conducting film projects. However, for a small department such as African Studies, it makes sense to use the infrastructure of other departments that have a more established tradition of working with film, such as the Department of Theatre, Film and Media Studies or the Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology.

It is certainly a more complicated issue to incorporate the teaching of the skills required for filming and editing into the study curriculum of African Studies, which already struggles to design courses on methodology that give justice to the various subfields of linguistics, literature, history and society.[26] My proposal is to include a brief introduction to audiovisual means in research in the methodology courses and to offer workshops for those who actually want to work with film in practice, which would allow them to gain a basic understanding of how to use a camera and a film editing program. It then largely depends on the interest and intrinsic motivation of the students as to whether they extend this basic knowledge, either through self-study, other courses at the University or external courses.[27]

It may sound complicated, but it is not so different to teaching any other method that is introduced to courses on research methods. For example, the skills required for conducting and analysing interviews or for a discourse analysis are equally rarely acquired in the obligatory "methods" course, but rather through practice outside of the requirements of the curriculum.

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26 There is also a need to include the interpretation of (audio)visual data – be it self-generated or accessed via portals such as YouTube – into the courses on methodology and methods.

27 The book *Visual Research – A Concise Introduction to Thinking Visually* by Jonathan Marion and Jerome Crowder (cf. Marion/Crowder 2013) offers a useful introduction to working with visual means without being restricted to a specific disciplinary focus.

Working with film in research and teaching at the Department of African Studies

Students and staff from the Department of African Studies at the University of Vienna have been engaging in film-making for some time now. However, this has usually been carried out in the form of independent projects in addition to their studies/ work. The know-how required for such projects has thus been acquired outside the curriculum.[28]

     To my knowledge, the first time students were encouraged to consider film as a valid form of coursework was in 2011 as part of a course held by a colleague and myself.[29] Two films of approximately 30 minutes were among the "non-written" research outputs, which also included an audio feature. Though we deliberately encouraged students to consider film as a medium of expression for their research results, we did not include any lectures on filming and editing as part of the course. Supervision was more or less limited to the thematic content of the films, which both dealt with identities in diasporic contexts, in one case focusing specifically on language and in the other on music.[30]

1. "Identitäten/Realitäten"

In 2012, the purchase of a camera by the Department of African Studies and funding for workshops on technical aspects of film-making, made it possible to offer a research course that ran for two terms and that aimed to produce a research film.

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28 The following people, who have studied or worked at the department of African Studies while working on their film projects, come to mind: Sonja Ohler, "Maybe Austria – Maybe Tanzania" (2004); Florian Förster and Johanna Dellantonio, "Jenseits die Statistik? – Aidswaisen Kinder in Kenia" (2005); Mischa Hendel, "Literary Voices of Equatorial Guinea. Subvaloradas, sin ser vistas. Voces Literarias de Guinea Ecuatorial" (2009); and Marie Rodet, "The Diambourou: Slavery and Emancipation in Kayes" (2014).

29 The course which I led together with Daniela Waldburger was called "Sprachliche und kulturelle Ausdrucksformen im transnationalen Raum – Schwerpunkt afrikanische Diaspora in Europa." More information on this and other projects can be found on the website of the working group "Translocal Africa", online at: https:// translocalafrica.wordpress.com.

30 The two films were "Über Sprachen sprechen. Sprachengebrauch in der afrikanischen Diaspora Wiens" by Kristina Kroyer, Christine Schordan and Miriam Weidl (https://vimeo.com/36564142) and "Music as Mouthpiece of Diasporic Identity" by Mathias Augdoppler and Melissa Ari (https://vimeo.com/31110641). Both films were screened at the department on 24 April 2012.

The film was produced collectively by all of the students that took part in the course, which proved to be a very time-consuming but rewarding process.[31]

We began by reading literature on the topic of the course – diaspora in an African context – as well as literature on film in research processes. Eventually, a focus was chosen, research questions were developed and a film treatment was written, which contained specific interview questions as well as ideas on how to produce the film visually. A two-day workshop on how to use the camera, led by film-maker and visual anthropologist Andrés Carvajal, prepared the students for the filming and interviewing of interview partners who they had identified via personal contacts. The second term began with the transcription of interviews, the selection of relevant passages and the development of a storyline. Another important discussion that was held was on how to include the process of film-making in the film, and it was decided that the group would film itself during discussion processes so that the team and the process of reflection would be visible within the film. However, it later proved impossible to use the audio files of these discussions and the presence of the researchers in the film thus remained silent. Another two-day workshop, in which Andrés Carvajal introduced the students to the film editing software, was the basis for the long editing process. The students worked in teams of two on sub-chapters of what eventually came to be called "Identitäten/Realitäten. Eine filmische Annäherung. Afrikaner*Innen der Zweiten Generation in Wien"[32] (Wien, 2014, 28 minutes)[33]. The editing process was characterised by numerous controversial discussions on a variety of issues, such as the use of additional footage and music. Discussions also revolved around the experience of one of the interviews having to be cut from the film. This was due to one of the protagonists refusing to be included after watching the rough cut because he felt uncomfortable appearing in the film.

Controversial discussions that included questions of representation not only characterised the process of film-making itself but also the film's presentation, which eventually took place at the Department of African Studies on 8 May 2014

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31 Ten students participated in each term; half of them registered on both courses. The participants in alphabetical order were: Michaela Daxl, Daniel Fleck, Anna Fox, Marion Haberl, Agnes Hoffman, Muriel Holzer, Zsolt Horvath, Eva Maria Höritzauer, Lisa Klein, Kristina Kroyer, Sabine Lehner, Eileen Mirzabaegi, Valentin Neundlinger, Ela Posch, Miriam Weidl.

32 From today's perspective, my preference would be for the term "Afro-Austrians" instead of "Second Generation".

33 See https://vimeo.com/91160201.

with one of the protagonists in attendance. She underlined that her experience of being interviewed for the film had been a positive one, as she felt that she had been given enough time to express herself. She compared this to her experiences with interviews she had given for certain media outlets that had included her as an "African voice", only to then shorten her statements beyond recognition. However, there was also some negative feedback. One African man in the audience raised questions on the issue of representation, relating to the fact that a team of *non-African* students had done a film on students of (partly) African background. This was certainly a valid point, the relevance of which goes beyond film-making. Feminist postcolonial theorists in particular have critically questioned modes of representation for almost three decades and have contributed greatly to debates on the question of who speaks in the production and transmission of scientific knowledge[34] – a debate which I am not in a position to take up here.[35]

For the purpose of this paper, I would just like to note that questions of positionality and representation are even more prevalent in a film as it is clearly visible who is behind and who is in front of the camera. I would therefore claim that in general, film projects generate more criticism than research that is presented in written texts – for the very reasons the films are being made: because they reach a broader audience, they are able to show more dimensions of the research subject and they are perceived as relevant by more people. They therefore achieve the aim of getting research out of academic contexts. I have never received as much feedback on papers that I have written, neither have they stirred up so many emotions. And it is precisely due to this increased resonance that questions relating to research practices gain even more relevance.

2. "Creating Comoria"

The issue of who speaks for whom was also prevalent in the reactions to the first film project in which I was involved as a co-director[36] together with Andrés Carvajal. The main research for the film whose title came to be "Creating Comoria – a documentary

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34 Cf. Minh-ha (1989), hooks (1992).

35 See e.g. Krenceyová (2014).

36 I had previously been a co-director together with Andrés Carvajal of another short film on (Franco-)Comorians living in France, more precisely in Bordeaux: "'Je viens du Grand Parc et je suis Comorienne' – Swahili Identities among the Comorian Diaspora in France – Part I" (https://vimeo.com/11982449).

on the Franco-Comorian Afro-folk music group *Afropa* in Marseilles" took place in Marseilles in February 2012, and was followed by a second shorter period in September 2012. During the second stay, a rough cut of the material shot earlier that year was presented to the two main protagonists and some new filming took place. The film material used in the film consisted of official interviews, informal conversations or statements, rehearsals, footage from various parts of the city and different events.

The film features the work and life of its two main protagonists, Ali Cheikh Mohamed and Abdoulwahab Chaharani, two musicians who were born in Comoros, the Indian Ocean archipelago, and came to France at different stages in their lives. They met in Marseilles in 2008 and formed the group *Afropa*, which plays "Afro-Folk", based on Comorian rhythms combined with music inspired by their youth icons, Santana, Dire Straits and Pink Floyd. They sing about politics, violence, racism and the challenges of life in general – mostly in Comorian but also in French. Their main aim is to show the heterogeneity of Comorian music, especially to the younger generations of Franco-Comorians who have grown up in France. However, their music is also aimed at the general public, which usually reduces Franco-Comorian music to its most popular style, *Twarab*. The music, messages and strategies of *Afropa* are at the centre of the film – as well as their encounters with other Franco-Comorian artists. Through their artistic work, all of them contribute to the creation of a "Comoria", in the sense of a transcultural space that is shaped by the realities of postcolonial France and the Union of the Comoros.

As musicians who have so far not received much attention, Ali Cheikh Mohamed and Abdoulwahab Chaharani were both enthusiastic about the idea of making a film and did not hold any reservations about appearing on camera. For them, the camera represented an opportunity to become seen, heard and thus known to a wider public. In this specific case, I am certain that the enthusiasm to be the focus of our research would not have been the same had we not aimed to produce a film.

Although the research was not based on a participatory design as such, their interest in the film generated a specific dynamic that significantly influenced the whole process: they decided how they wanted to be seen and chose the places where the official interviews were held. For example, Ali Cheikh Mohamed chose the "hip" artist quarter "Cours Julien" as the location for the main interview, a place that they do not frequent as often as the images in the film might suggest. They therefore chose places where they wanted to imagine themselves, rather than places

where they are actually situated. The choice of these places gives a certain "image" to the film.[37] The research was also guided by the interests of the main protagonists in many other respects. For example, they organised meetings with people they had not met in person until we came along with the camera: slam artists Ahamada Smis and Mohamed "Soly" Mbae, a Hip hop pioneer in Marseilles and founding director of the "Sound Musical School", whose classes are the starting point for many well-known rappers in the city. Two sessions at the radio station *"Radio Galère"* were also facilitated by our presence – with the presence of our cameras functioning as a kind of "proof" of the relevance of their music. More importantly, our interest in their work gave a boost to the self-confidence of the two artists, who later revolted against the person who had acted as their manager and who had actually played an important role during the main research process in February 2012. Upon our return a few months later we found out about the complete breakdown of the relationship between the artists and their manager, which had also resulted in the physical destruction of their guitars. Six months after the start of our research, we were thus confronted with a situation that would most likely not have happened without our research interest – for better or for worse. We bought new guitars and experienced a challenging phase in the project reflecting on how to deal with this conflict in the film. Together with the main protagonists, we decided not to address this matter in the film and instead attempted to turn the manager into a side figure who appears on several occasions but is not given a prominent voice.

The first phase of the post-production process then lasted until May 2014, when an initial version lasting 96 minutes was presented at an academic conference. The feedback we received led to modifications and more importantly a reduction in length, thus at a second screening within an academic framework, a version lasting 86 minutes was shown. Much of what was cut showed one of the protagonists participating in a *Maulid*, a religious ceremony, and a *Wadaha*, a women-only dance event that neither the protagonists nor we would have been allowed to attend had it not been for our status as researchers. While both the *Maulid* and the *Wadaha* are events that are important to Franco-Comorian communities, they were not directly related to the storyline and we thus decided to cut them in order not to generate stereotypical images.

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37   I regret that this issue is not dealt with in the film itself.

However, this was still not the end of the process. Further feedback resulted in yet more changes and editing. The result was the final version of the film, which is 76 minutes long and is available online via the Vimeo portal.[38] A website (http://creatingcomoria.com) was created to present the project and more screenings of either the complete film or excerpts were held at academic venues. In Marseilles, the film was not screened at a venue organised by the film-makers but rather at an event organised by the main protagonists of the film. Furthermore, DVDs were produced that were distributed in Marseilles, mainly by the protagonists themselves.

The main protagonists turned out to be completely satisfied with the film, but there was also one person[39] who criticised the project as continuing the vein of research conducted on the Comorian community by outsiders. While it is certainly true that the film was directed by non-Comorians and was not based on any participative concept as such, I would claim that the main protagonists participated in many respects – by guiding the selection of acquaintances and events as well as the choice of venues that would appear in the film.

From today's perspective, I see a major problem with the original title of the film, which was "Creating Comoria. Popular Culture and the Comorian Diaspora in Marseilles" and which contained two terms that are as broad as they are contested: "popular culture" and "Comorian Diaspora". During the revision process that followed the second screening, the title was therefore changed to the present one: "Creating Comoria. A Documentary on the Franco-Comorian Afro-folk music group Afropa in Marseilles". It highlights the focus of the film more accurately and reduces the impression that the film might wish to make any authoritative statement on "the Comorian diaspora". Further, as the film was actually a pre-study to the research project "Popular Culture in Translocal Spaces", which also focuses on forms of popular culture among Comorians in Marseilles[40] and which aims to produce research films, the question arose as to how to produce a film that was more based on a genuinely participatory research design.[41]

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38 See https://vimeo.com/112961750.

39 I do not give further details on the identity of this voice for reasons of anonymity.

40 The project, which is funded by the Austrian Science Fund (2014-2018), also includes a focus on Cape Verdeans in Lisbon. See the project's blog for more information: http://translocalculture.com.

41 See e.g. Pink (2007) and Gubrium/Harper (2013). Similar to the debates on issues of representation (see above), my aim is not to engage here with the wealth of literature on participatory research design from a critical perspective, but to reflect on certain issues based on practical experiences of working with film in research contexts.

Participatory research design essentially means including those upon whom research is being conducted in the process of knowledge production right from the beginning. In my opinion, among the many questions to be asked when designing participatory research, are: who decides on the roles in the first place and who is thus considered to be a researcher? Who decides on the topic? Who develops the research question? Who selects the interview partners? Who prepares the interview questions? Who conducts the interviews? Who transcribes them? Who selects the passages to be used? Who creates a storyline? Who uses the camera and who edits the film?

It is quite common for interviews to be conducted by people other than the researcher, in many cases for reasons of language competence or access in general. The same holds true for transcriptions. It is also increasingly common for the camera to be handed over to others.[42] In my opinion, the crucial point is when it comes to interpretations. Although I am convinced that it is quite common in qualitative research practices to develop interpretations of data in collaboration with research assistants, their contribution is rarely made explicit.[43] More often, the participation ends when it comes to developing the storyline and the editing process. These considerations were taken into account in the most recent research film project, which is still ongoing at the time of writing, and about which I write from the perspective of producer as I am leading the research project "Popular Culture in Translocal Spaces", which provides the funding for this project.

3. "Twarab in Marseilles"

The film, which has the working title "Twarab in Marseilles", is directed by Andrés Carvajal and Mounir Hamada Hamza in cooperation with Katharina Fritsch, who works as pre-doc researcher in the project.[44] The focus on Twarab, which is the most popular form of music in Marseilles was not clear from the beginning, but was chosen at an opening workshop held in Marseilles in March 2015, whereby Katharina Fritsch

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42 See, for example, projects such as Ipsum at http://www.ipsum.at/en/content/idea, which aim to enable people to express themselves through photography. Cf. also Brandner/Vilsmaier (2014).

43 In 2010, I chose the formulation "Birgit Englert with Nginjai Paul Moreto" in an attempt to acknowledge the role of my research assistant Nginjai Paul Moreto in the development of the arguments that I presented in the article "Inserting Voice: Foreign Language Film Translation into Kiswahili as a Local Phenomenon in Tanzania", which I wrote for the *Journal of African Media Studies*.

44 Katharina Fritsch is writing her PhD thesis in Political Science at the University of Vienna.

and Andrés Carvajal met with four Comorian artists with whom there had been previous cooperation.

Interviews with musicians, organisers of concerts and other people involved in the "Twarab business" were mainly conducted by the Comorian artists involved in the project, albeit with varying degrees of participation. As Mounir Hamada Hamza turned out to be the person with the most interest in the project, he conducted the majority of the interviews and agreed to participate in the editing process. The interviews were transcribed by Abdul-Malik Ahmad[45] and during another workshop lasting several days at the beginning of September 2015, Andrés Carvajal, Mounir Hamada Hamza and Katharina Fritsch developed the concept of the film, based on the reading and watching of the interviews that form its basis. Throughout autumn 2015, Andrés Carvajal and Mounir Hamada Hamza met regularly to select which parts were to be included in the film and the latter wrote a text that he performed as the common thread to connect the different subjects that are dealt with in the film.

Mounir Hamada Hamza has taken over the role of interviewer, co-editor and protagonist and his agency has shaped the film significantly. As a Comorian musician and comedian living in Marseilles, he is obviously in a different position with regards to the object of the film than the others involved in the project. However, he is not working on the topic of Twarab from an insider position in a more narrow sense, as despite singing also Twarab songs he is not involved in the business himself. Although Mounir Hamada Hamza became co-director of the film, it must be noted that the involvement of the other protagonists is no different to that of the previous film project.

A recurrent point of discussion among the team members was to what extent self-representation and self-reflection should form part of the research, given the risk of the subject of the film being overtaken by the topic of self-reflection. The team eventually decided that self-reflection should be included in the middle of the film, placed where it would fit within the storyline. It was considered that placing it right at the beginning would award it too prominent a role and distract from the film's main subject, whereas placing it at the very end would equally overemphasise the importance of the self-reflection.[46]

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45 Abdul-Malik Ahmad is a PhD student at the *Laboratoire d'Economie et de Sociologie du travail*, Aix Marseille Université, who works for the project on a contractual basis.

46 Katharina Fritsch and Andrés Carvajal, personal communication, 10 February 2016.

Whereas self-reflection has been awarded a relevant yet not overly-prominent place in the film on *Twarab* in Marseilles, it is the main subject of a different format that we are currently experimenting with as part of the research project: the so-called "Kitchen stories".

4. "Kitchen stories"

The thinking behind the "Kitchen stories", as proposed by Katharina Fritsch, was to point the camera not at others but at the researchers themselves, and to use the camera to reflect on things that are often not made explicit during the research process. This would not only allow us to rewatch the discussions at a later stage, but also enable us, as researchers, to experience being filmed as well as the sense of vulnerability this process can generate.[47]

The recordings of the "Kitchen stories" thus consist of conversations between two people involved in the research project, discussing issues such as positionality or specific aspects such as the role of the film in this research project and in academic research in general. This thus provides an alternative space for more extensive self-reflection, which cannot be included in the other film project discussed above. The idea is not to produce a long format film but rather to publish short clips on the research project blog, possibly accompanied by an analytical text – as texts in which project members reflect on the research process have also been produced. A first outcome remains to be seen.[48]

Conclusion

The film projects discussed above are characterised by varying degrees of reflection and participatory design. While film certainly has the potential to reduce the dichotomy between the researcher and those who are the focus of the research, it is far from being an automatic outcome and instead requires specific strategies. Participatory research designs are, of course, not specific to film but are of importance in research in general. However, somewhat cynically, it could be stated that as writing

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47 Katharina Fritsch, personal communication, 1 March 2016.
48 See the interesting article by An van Dienderen (2009) who made the process of a film project itself the object of analysis. In her case she turned this into an article, but of course this analysis could equally be turned into a film.

continues to have (much) more prestige in academia, it is usually done by the researcher alone. Film on the other hand, which is not valued as much as an output within the academic system, is a kind of "playground" for more comprehensive forms of cooperation that are not limited to the phase of data collection, but might also include the editing process.

In conclusion, I wish to state that my aim with this paper was not to propose film as the better instrument for the dissemination of research, but to argue for the recognition of approaches to publishing research results that go beyond written texts, whereby film is just one option of many, though it is a means that is gaining more and more importance in a world increasingly dominated by audiovisual products.

The production of research films is not an easy task and besides the technical equipment and skills required, a profound reflection on many questions relating to research ethics and issues of representation is also necessary. I therefore wish to advocate the inclusion of reflections on the "Why" and "How" of working with research films in the curriculum of African Studies, as this raises important issues with regards to research practices more generally. In that sense, these issues are of importance even if not all students will decide to engage in film-making, and in fact some students may also consciously decide against it as a result of this reflection process.

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"Teach Them Our History": Nigerian Identity Formation in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Maximilian Feldner

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), a historical novel dealing with the Biafran War, constitutes a literary work of symbolic national identity formation. John Hawley, for example, argues that Adichie's novel "is a national novel in the sense that Ben Okri's *Famished Road* (1991) is a national novel, getting at the spirit of the Nigerian people, recreating that spirit in the specific lives of compelling characters, but at the same time refusing to be overtaken by the events of the war to the degree that some earlier novels may have been"[1]. Madhu Krishnan notes that the novel has some collective identity in mind, when she states that "the construction of a new communitarian identification is evident. This new identification is one that simultaneously transcends the confines of national consciousness while refraining from discarding the nation, as community, entirely"[2]. Susan Andrade sees Adichie as part of a tradition of Anglophone female novelists from Africa who have "increasingly become more nationally engaged"[3]. According to Andrade, "Adichie's novels represent a politics of the family while quietly but clearly telling stories of the nation"[4].

Indeed, Adichie herself explicitly links her literature to the idea of the nation. In an article for the *New African*, "The Role of Literature in Modern Africa", she offers her understanding of the concept of nation: "A nation is not about the geography of land but the geography of the mind. It is an idea, or a collection of ideas"[5]. This geo-

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1 Hawley (2008), 23.
2 Krishnan (2013), 187.
3 Andrade (2011), 93.
4 Andrade (2011), 91.
5 Adichie (2010), 96.

graphy of the mind is what literature can provide, as it "is about memory, history, reconciliation, and identity"[6]. She thus asserts the importance of literature in the service of identity construction in contemporary Nigeria. Her article makes clear that she believes a project of nation building to be relevant and necessary. Considering the problems that hold contemporary Nigeria in its grip, among which the tensions between the different ethnic groups and the aggressive expansion of the terrorist organisation Boko Haram are currently most prominent, the development of a strong collective identity would appear to be beneficial for a more peaceful future. That Adichie herself is a member of the African diaspora and therefore not a permanent resident of Nigeria only plays a minor role and is no real impediment to her commitment. The African diaspora generally plays a decisive role in the task of nation building and homeland development.[7] As a novelist, Adichie's contribution to this task lies in the field of literature. While the argument that *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a novel of national identity formation has generally been met with agreement, the question of how exactly the novel achieves this effect has been less satisfactorily answered.[8]

In this paper, I will investigate Adichie's storytelling methods to establish in what sense her novel can symbolically contribute to a collective Nigerian identity. I will discuss the literary techniques and narrative strategies she employs within the frame of the novel to tell a story of the nation. Generally, using the genre of the historical novel, Adichie's narrative serves as an account of Biafra's existence, and thus contributes to a diachronic sense of identity in a Nigerian context. Importantly, the novel foregrounds its characters which makes it a character-driven rather than an event-driven novel. This narrative importance of the characters enables Adichie to construct a novel of national identity in several ways. Adichie's central character, Olanna, is a realistically drawn character who makes comprehensible the experiences of a family that finds itself in the middle of a war. At the same time, she can be viewed as making possible a symbolic mapping of Nigeria as well as allegorically representing the idea of Nigeria as a whole. Other characters perform similar functions in the service of Adichie's literary nation building. Ugwu, as the author of a fictive

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6 Adichie (2010), 96.

7 Cf. Arthur (2010), 12.

8 While critics have approached this question, and explained some aspects of Adichie's project, no extensive collections of the rhetorical and literary devices Adichie uses have been presented so far. Krishnan mentions certain "rhetorical techniques that together address an imagined collectivity" (Krishnan 2013, 196), without elaborating in more detail on these techniques. Coffey (2014) presents an intriguing and valuable allegorical reading of the characters Olanna and Kainene, but mainly focuses on this one aspect and ignores important others.

history of the war, raises questions concerning historiography and the position of the historian. In addition, his story, which is a story of formation, resembles the structure of a *Bildungsroman*, a genre closely associated with the emergence of the nation. Odenigbo's character, finally, serves as a medium for political ideas connected to post- and neo-colonialism. Despite these complexities, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (hereafter abbreviated as *HYS*) is by no means an abstract novel of ideas. Indeed, it is worth mentioning that due to Adichie's abilities as a storyteller her novel is also engaging on an emotional level. Her characters are convincing and relatable human beings who easily allow emotional attachment and therefore make the world of the novel readily accessible.

A Historical Novel about the Biafran War

On the level of content, the novel quite obviously deals with the Biafran War, or the Nigerian-Biafran War, that raged between 1967 and 1970, and resulted from the secession of Nigeria's south-eastern region, which was renamed Biafra. This war, "Africa's first modern conflict,"[9] is usually attributed to the inter-ethnic tensions between the Igbo and the Hausa. Together with the Yoruba, these ethnic groups belong to the largest and most dominant among the more than 250 groups that can be found within the boundaries of Nigeria. As these boundaries were arbitrarily drawn by the colonial powers, without regard for established cultural or linguistic areas, it is not surprising that the potential for conflict was already visible at the time of Nigeria's independence in 1960. In her novel, Adichie writes that "Nigeria was a collection of fragments held in a fragile clasp" (*HYS*, 155). The tensions were exacerbated until they led to Biafra's secession. This is not to say, however, that the origins of the war lie solely in the conflicts between groups with different ethnic or religious backgrounds. Such a line of argumentation is too simplistic and ignores the lasting impact of colonialism and the influence of foreign, neo-colonial agents in the region. Nevertheless, ethnic reasoning is prevalent in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* because it has become the historical narrative about the war that is most commonly accepted by the majority of those who were involved.

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9 Krishnan (2013), 188.

The novel's title already indicates that Biafra and the conflict that characterised the state's existence are of central importance. The expression "half of a yellow sun" serves as an intermedial reference to the Biafran flag, whose symbolism is explained in the novel: "Red was the blood of the siblings massacred in the North, black was for mourning them, green was for the prosperity Biafra would have, and, finally, the half of a yellow sun stood for the glorious future" (*HYS*, 281). The novel's spatial and temporal settings also contribute to the notion that Biafra is the subject matter of the novel, as its events are set in Nigeria and Biafra before and during the three years of the war. Since an awareness of a common history is an indispensable part of any national imaginary[10], the fact that *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a historical novel is the most obvious way in which Adichie's novel constitutes a text of national identity formation. In her article on the role of literature, Adichie explains that "We [Nigerians] are a people conditioned by our history and by our place in the modern world to look towards 'somewhere else' for validation to see ourselves as inhabitants of the periphery"[11]. She then claims that "[...] what has made other modern states succeed is a faith in its own idea of what it is and its place in the world [sic!]"[12] and thus implies that she thinks that Nigeria lacks the cohesion a common historical consciousness usually presupposes. However, her article shows that she believes that literature can assist in creating a collective identity.

It is significant that her novel is a historical recreation of the Biafran War, an event that still exerts significant influence on contemporary Nigeria[13]. It was a war that made apparent the rift in Nigerian society, a rift that arguably still has not been resolved. The lack of healing and reconciliation is also due to the fact that a significant portion of the Nigerian people found themselves on the losing side and their position has found little acknowledgement. It is their perspective that Adichie presents in the novel. The three central characters, Olanna, Ugwu and Richard are all aligned with Biafra. Like Adichie herself, Olanna and Ugwu are Igbo, the ethnicity of most citizens of Biafra. The novel is a touching and detailed portrait of a people at war, who have

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10 Smith argues that a national identity refers to "those feelings and values in respect of a sense of continuity, shared memories, and a sense of common destiny of a given unit of population which has had common experiences and cultural attributes" (Smith 1990, 179). See also Benedict Anderson's seminal work on the national imaginary, *Imagined Communities* (1983).

11 Adichie (2010), 96.

12 Adichie (2010), 96.

13 "The legacy of the Biafran War (itself the legacy of colonial policy) continues to shape life in Nigeria. Occasionally, *Half of a Yellow Sun* makes the connections more or less explicit" (Hodges 2009, 11).

to cope with the immediate circumstances of austerity and lack of food. The region became known for extreme poverty and starvation during this war, images which have considerably shaped the Western image of Africa at large.

In her narrative, Adichie makes the Biafran perspective accessible. She manages to reclaim a version of history that is largely absent from official accounts. History is proverbially told from the side that proved victorious, and the Biafran War remains relatively unspoken of in official Nigerian historiography. Krishnan claims that

> "Statistics and dispassionate historical records of the war remain difficult to find, in part due to the absence of an official account of the conflict, despite the appointment of a four-man task force for the job, and in part due to the charged nature, rife with competing and discordant interests, of reporting from the time […]. The Biafran War is perhaps most notable for the fact that its international narrativization was largely controlled by Western interests and Western journalism."[14]

For this reason, it is not surprising that Hawley locates the best sources for information about Nigerian history in art, and by extension in literature: "Contemporary fiction, though, suggests that time, and art, may by default have become the only effective means to digest the poison of the past, and to slowly heal from within the damage that has been done"[15]. Thus, when Adichie rewrites local history from a Nigerian perspective in order to counter prevailing Western views of the country, her fiction makes possible a coming to terms with the past and subsequently perhaps even healing.

Adichie goes a step further than merely depicting the side that lost. She suggests that Biafra was not a project bound to fail. In her account, at least for the Biafrans their fate was by no means as obvious as it might look in retrospect. Coffey presents an argument according to which *Half of a Yellow Sun* questions the conclusiveness and finality of the project of Biafran statehood.[16] This can most clearly be seen in the characters' belief in Biafra's success. When the war is already lost, and its end just not announced yet, for instance, Olanna still believes in a victorious outcome of the conflict (*HYS*, 409). Even when she accepts that the war is actually over, she does not feel defeated: "Hers was not a feeling of having been defeated; it was one

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14 Krishnan (2013), 189-191.
15 Hawley (2008), 16.
16 Cf. Coffey (2014), 71.

of having been cheated." (*HYS*, 415). Similarly, Ugwu for a long time, is convinced that the Nigerians will be blown to hell. When Ugwu watches Biafran children at play, he observes that they adopt the roles of the leaders of Nigeria and Biafra (*HYS*, 400). In their games, it is always the Nigerians who suffer a loss and not the Biafrans. The fact that the children adopt the narrative of a final success so seamlessly into their games indicates that Olanna and Ugwu's optimism is not an exception, but that the belief in a positive outcome of the war must have been wide-spread. While this might be attributed to successful war propaganda, it also shows that Biafra does not necessarily need to be seen as a project that was doomed from the outset. Instead, there is potential for it to be perceived as a source of pride for the descendants of the Biafrans.

In addition, the novel includes several instances where the past is reinterpreted, which helps to show Biafra in a more positive light. At one point, for example, the official justification for the invasion of Biafra is related as a "police action to bring the rebels to order" (*HYS*, 180). This declaration is immediately countered by one of the characters, Kainene, Olanna's sister. According to her, this is merely a ploy to cover the fact that Nigeria does not want to lose its access to the oil that is extracted from fields in the Niger Delta. Kainene's statement makes clear that inter-ethnic conflicts alone do not account for the war and thus evokes Walter Rodney, who, in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, argues that "The civil war in Nigeria is generally regarded as having been a tribal affair. To accept such a contention would mean extending the definition of tribe to cover Shell Oil and Gulf Oil!"[17] Nigeria's war efforts are thus reinterpreted from a noble venture to a materially motivated act of power preservation. This shows how Adichie cleverly uses the means of the novel to counter specific lines of argumentation in order to present an alternative view of history.

The discourse level also features numerous elements that contribute to Adichie's nation building in *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Her work represents a certain "Nigerianness" by including elements from an Igbo folk tradition. Krishnan argues that despite the realist narrative registers of *Half of a Yellow Sun*, "mythic elements permeate the narrative, notably through its manipulations of the tropes of the *ogbanje* and the twin"[18]. Her narrative renders ordinary Igbo ritual and mythology, for example when Ugwu resorts to traditional herbs to prevent a crisis, or when Olanna visits a *dibia*, a

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17   Rodney (1974), 228.
18   Krishnan (2013), 199.

kind of seer, to find her missing twin sister Kainene. In this way, the novel can be seen as a "reconfiguration of Igbo mythopoetic tropes and rhetorical techniques that together address an imagined collectivity"[19]. Adichie's style is to some extent also influenced by Igbo culture, as she inserts untranslated Igbo words and phrases into her narrative. The narrative style altogether stands in the tradition of Chinua Achebe, who pioneered the translation of Igbo language patterns into English prose, including the extensive use of proverbs and rhetorical questions.[20]

Adichie generally evokes a tradition of Nigerian literature, not only in her references to Achebe, but more specifically by crediting the influence of other Nigerian novelists who wrote about the Biafran War. In her "Author's Note", included after the end of the narrative, she explicitly mentions books such as Flora Nwapa's *Never Again* (1975), Chukwuemeka Ike's *Sunset at Dawn* (1976) and Buchi Emecheta's *Destination Biafra* (1982). Adichie also alludes to the poet Christopher Okigbo by creating Okeoma, a character explicitly based on Okigbo (*HYS*, 435). Using a fictionalised version of the poet in her novel allows Adichie to pay homage to him in several ways. Odenigbo, for example, calls him "The voice of our generation!" (*HYS*, 51) and Ugwu is influenced by his style, even imitating it in a poem he writes (*HYS*, 375). In addition, popular Nigerian music pervades the novel. It is played in the background, listened to or sung along to by the characters. It is relevant that the popular Highlife musician Rex Lawson is repeatedly mentioned. He can be seen as a symbol of national unity and a collective Nigerian consciousness, especially because, as one character in the novel points out, "Rex Lawson is a true Nigerian. He does not cleave to his Kalabari tribe; he sings in all our major languages. That's original – and certainly reason enough to like him." (*HYS*, 109)

The Narrative Importance of the Characters

The main feature, however, that makes the novel effective as a story of the nation is its complex multidimensionality. According to Krishnan, Adichie demands "a multidimensional view of the war and its effects through narrative forms that encourage a multivalenced engagement with history, cultural affiliation, and collective conscious-

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19 Krishnan (2013), 196.
20 Cf. Boehmer (2009); see also Hodges (2009).

ness"[21]. This multidimensionality is most clearly achieved by dividing the narration among three different characters. Alternatingly, the chapters present the third-person perspectives of Olanna, her houseboy Ugwu, and Richard, the lover of Olanna's twin sister Kainene. Kainene and Odenigbo, Olanna's husband, are the other two central characters, but readers get access to them only through the perspectives of the first three characters. By telling the story through characters as diverse as Olanna, Ugwu and Richard, the novel is structured to represent multiplicity.

Richard's character is a good example for the novel's multiperspectivity. As a white Briton, he is the only main character in the novel who is not Igbo, or even Nigerian. However, his presence is not that of a coloniser but of someone who is genuinely involved and invested in Nigeria. Interested in Igbo art, he came to Nigeria where he fell in love with Kainene. After having lived in Nigeria for many years and being married to a Nigerian woman, he considers himself Nigerian, and regrets that to a certain extent he will always remain an outsider. This is different with Biafra. Having been there at the inception of the state, he feels he has as much claim to it as the other Biafrans, which is another motivation for his involvement in the country's fate. His main function seems to be that of an entrance point for foreign readers. He facilitates exposition that fits naturally into the narrative. Explanations that would be obvious to Nigerian readers and would therefore stick out, are rendered plausible through his character. In addition, he symbolises the hybrid identity of Nigeria. Richard attests to the fact that, due to their shared past, Britain necessarily plays a certain role in any Nigerian nation. However, despite his centrality in the narrative, his character still seems to inhabit a subordinate position to the two Igbo characters, Olanna and Ugwu, whose narrative functions I will outline in more detail below.

1. Olanna

Because all the characters in the novel are connected to and through her, Olanna inhabits the central position in the novel's character constellation. When she marries Odenigbo she moves into his house, where Ugwu becomes her houseboy. She is affiliated with the third protagonist Richard through her twin sister Kainene. In addition, her connections extend to all the other characters of the novel, which symbolically links her to the different strata that make up Nigeria's society. As the daughter of

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21 Krishnan (2013), 193.

chief Ozobia, she comes from the wealthy and politically influential class. Her husband Odenigbo, the intellectual radical, connects her to the intellectual elite. Among Odenigbo's friends are Okeoma, representing the artists, and Professor Ezeka, who rises in the ranks of the Biafran government to become the Director for Mobilization. In addition, through her sister Kainene she is connected to Major (later Colonel) Madu and thus the military class. Ugwu forms her link to the lower, the servant class, embodied by Jomo and Harrison, Odenigbo's gardener and Richard's houseboy. Even if she rarely interacts with members of the servant class, she still makes a point of being friendly to them, remembering their names and thanking them for their services, which distinguishes her from the rest of her family. Also, she is able to connect even with chance encounters. For instance, she calms an elderly lady at the airport, which is rewarded several years later, when the lady's son provides her with food at the relief centre in Umuahia.

Her symbolic association with the different strata of Nigeria's society can be extended beyond these examples. Unlike Odenigbo, who at one point is identified as "tribalist" (*HYS*, 20), and thereby associated with the proud identification with one specific ethnic group, foreign-educated Olanna is able to transcend the boundaries of ethnic structures. When she flies home from visiting her family in Kano, a city in the north of Nigeria, the man sitting next to her involves her in conversation. While she is annoyed by the derogatory things he says about the Igbo, she is pleased because he evidently does not recognise her as Igbo: "His prejudice had filled her with possibility […]. She could be a Fulani woman on a plane deriding Igbo people with a good-looking stranger" (*HYS*, 229). Also, while she enjoys the notion of not being tied down to one ethnic group, she wants to be able to communicate better with members of other groups: "She wished she were fluent in Hausa and Yoruba, like her uncle and aunt were, something she would gladly exchange her French and Latin for" (*HYS*, 41). Her openness to interaction and inter-ethnic affiliation can be seen in the fact that she was in a relationship with Mohammed, a Hausa, and thus a representative of the opposing side in the conflict. But unlike the partition of Nigeria into Biafra and Nigeria, Olanna's and Mohammed's relationship does not break apart due to conflict and strife, but because Olanna falls in love with Odenigbo. This indicates the complexity of Adichie's characters. Even though Olanna is open-minded enough to be in contact with members of other ethnic groups, her eventual husband is an Igbo, just like herself. This reflects the fact that Olanna chooses to side unequivocally with Biafra, although she and Mohammed remain on good terms even during the Nigerian-Biafran conflict. In the war, the "Nigerians" represent the enemy, an unspecified me-

nace that expresses itself in air raids and news from the front, and that otherwise remains mostly anonymous and removed from Olanna and Ugwu and thus from the readers. This does not, however, diminish the fact that Olanna can be seen as representing a united Nigeria before and after the war. Instead, it testifies to the ability of the novel to reflect "both the very range of identity constructions within Nigerian society and the multiple articulations of coexistent and sometimes contradictory subjectivities and subject positions that continually shift in register and alignment"[22].

In addition to Olanna's social interactions, her spatial movements also contribute to her character's symbolic potential. The depiction of her trips across the country constitutes a literary mapping of Nigeria. The various settings of the novel, all visited by her at some point or another, include Nsukka, Umuahia, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Abba, Umunnach, Orlu, and the unnamed village where Ugwu is from. This covers a large portion of the region that forms Biafra. But just as her choice of partner is originally not limited to the Igbo, Olanna also travels to other parts of the country as well, most notably to Kano in the North, where her relatives and Mohammed live. On one of these trips she travels by train and reflects upon the differences in the Nigerian landscape. When Olanna "got to Kano, it struck her once again how different it was from Lagos, from Nsukka, from her hometown Umunnachi, how different the North as a whole was from the South" (*NYS*, 37). The differences in the landscape that are subsequently described enable readers to mentally recreate and imagine the scenery. Nigeria is represented as a country that exhibits a great social as well as topographical variety. During the war, Olanna then remains within the boundaries of Biafra, which reflects her allegiances but also social realities of the war that make it difficult to impossible to move freely between the regions. Within Biafra, she covers a lot of ground, even though her movement is often motivated by the approaching Nigerian troops. In the beginning she lives in Nsukka with her family. This is a relevant symbolic gesture because this town is the intellectual centre of Biafra,[23] and, as Odenigbo emphasises, "free of colonial influence" (*HYS*, 32). Umuahia, where they move later, is similarly important, as it represents Biafra's capital.

The symbolism of Olanna's character thus makes possible an allegorical reading of *Half of a Yellow Sun*. There are further reasons, such as the novel's narrative structure, that point to the fact that the novel can be read as a national allegory in

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22   Krishnan (2013), 204-205.
23   Cf. Hawley (2008), 17.

Fredric Jameson's sense, when he writes that "the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society"[24]. A notable trait of the novel's structure is that it is divided into four parts, the first and the third dealing with the early 1960s, the second and the fourth with the late 1960s. The first part is about Ugwu coming to Odenigbo's house as a boy, around the time Olanna and Odenigbo's relationship begins, and about Richard's arrival to Nigeria and his settling in. In this part readers get acquainted with the main characters well before the war even starts, which enhances the possibility to empathise with them more strongly as they live through the experience of the war. Their story is told with such emotional depth that a bond is created between readers and characters. The second part sets in a few years later, and traces the outbreak of the war, from the first coup to Olanna and Odenigbo's wedding, which is interrupted by an air raid. The fourth part is the longest – with almost 200 pages, as opposed to the 100 pages of the first two parts each – and describes the characters' lives during the three years of war. The parts are arranged chronologically; the only deviation from this sequence is the third part, which interrupts the depiction of the war with a flashback to the early 1960s. About 50 pages long, it is the shortest of the four parts, but details some decisive developments in Olanna's family. While she is away, Odenigbo sleeps with a young woman from his village, resulting in her pregnancy. Olanna is eventually able to overcome her anger and pain, and she returns to Odenigbo accepting the baby as her own. But before that she sleeps with Richard, which causes a conflict with her sister Kainene. This means that the second part, set in the late 1960s, is filled with references to family conflicts that took place a few years earlier. Readers are not yet privy to what exactly happened as the causes of the conflict are only outlined in the third part. This contributes to a build-up of suspense, because readers are aware that events have occurred without knowing which exactly.

This emphasis on the conflicts within the family highlights the fact that *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a novel of family as much as of the politics of war. This does not fully explain, however, why the story of the familial relationships so prominently interrupts the narrative of the escalating war. It seems that the family is supposed to serve as a kind of microcosm of the nation, and that the family conflicts mirror the national conflicts on a smaller scale. For instance, Odenigbo's daughter, Baby, is born a few

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24 Jameson (1986), 69. Despite justified accusations of wild generalisation and other criticisms that have been mounted against Jameson's essay (see especially Ahmad 1992, 95-122), his concept of the "national allegory" is still useful enough to be retained.

years before the secession, but in the narrative this birth is presented in close proximity to the war events. It is thus not unreasonable to suggest that the baby represents Biafra, the newly-born state. Olanna accepts this baby, Odenigbo's creation, as her own. This reflects her joining Biafra's cause, which has previously been mainly associated with Odenigbo. Like Biafra, Baby experiences all stages of the war and is changed by it, losing her hair and weight. Significantly, however, Baby does not die at the end of Biafra. Together with Ugwu she represents the future of the Igbo. Instead, Olanna loses her twin sister Kainene, who disappears after illegally crossing the border to Nigeria shortly before the end of the war. Coffey presents a plausible and convincing reading of Olanna and Kainene representing the relationship between Nigeria and Biafra, a reading that is supported by the idea that Olanna is thoroughly affiliated with Nigeria at large:

> "Specifically, the relationship between the sisters Olanna and Kainene aligns with the relationship between (Northern) Nigeria and Eastern Nigeria, the latter known as the Republic of Biafra between 1967 and 1970. In the way that Kainene grows emotionally distant from Olanna, eventually stops speaking to her, and suddenly disappears, so Eastern Nigeria increasingly clashed with Northern Nigeria during the early 1960s, seceded as the Republic of Biafra in 1967, and eventually 'disappeared' at the end of the war in 1970, as it was absorbed back into Nigeria."[25]

In this reading, the two affairs that led to the conflict between Olanna and Kainene mirror the two coups of 1966 that resulted in the war. In the first coup the Northern premier was supposedly killed by Igbo leaders, which led to a counter-coup in which General Gowon seized power, which intensified ethnic tensions in the country. Odenigbo, an Igbo character, is responsible for the first affair, Olanna, as the "Nigerian" character, initiates the second affair, which hurts her "Biafran" sister. In both cases, the second event comes as a reaction to the first.[26] Assuming that Kainene actually stands for Biafra, it is notable that readers never have direct access to her thoughts. She can only be seen through Olanna and Richard, who both struggle to understand her. Biafra thus retains a certain inaccessibility for them and the readers.

According to Boehmer, in its use of the twin motif, the novel once again points to the influence of Chinua Achebe. Kainene's character and her disappearance con-

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25 Coffey (2014), 64.
26 Cf. Coffey (2014), 73.

firms the function of the characters to represent the nation, or a national destiny, as this "fratricidal war, which reduces all relationships to their bare bones, does not permit the twoness of the twins to last. One of the twins has, it seems, to be sacrificed to familial and national destiny"[27]. Furthermore, the fact, that Kainene's death is not confirmed, but that she has only disappeared, is interpreted by Coffey as a certain political possibility that Adichie presents here, because the project of Biafra is not closed and shelved.[28] Baby's survival also contributes to the notion that the idea of Biafra does, to some extent, survive. In a similar vein, Hodges argues that Kainene's "disappearance, which remains unexplained at the end of the book, makes a more fitting metaphor for what's lost at war's end than her death would have been. [As] her absence remains irresolvable […], there is no closing of the book"[29]. In Adichie's national allegory, the twins Olanna and Kainene thus represent the two halves of Nigeria, which are simultaneously united and locked in conflict and struggle.

However, as argued above, the characterisation of the protagonists is too complex for them to be mere allegorical figures. The correspondences are neither simple nor one-sided. Although Olanna in this analogy represents Nigeria, she is still a citizen of Biafra and a believer in its cause. During the last months of the war, after not having spoken to each other for a long time, Olanna and Kainene get close again and re-establish their bond. Their close relationship makes Kainene's disappearance even more painful for Olanna. However, in terms of the analogy this close relationship at the end does not work. The characters of the novel are fully-fledged and thus complex enough not to be reduced to allegorical figures. This means that Adichie employs a kind of symbolism that adds layers to the narrative but that is not too oppressive or one-sided to overwrite the narrative itself.

One of the novel's strengths is the depiction of every-day life during the war, which is mostly conveyed in a realistic mode. It is this combination of realism and symbolism that makes the novel so successful in its recreation of the war. Adichie depicts the materiality of life in war chiefly through the perspective of Olanna's character. The reason is that *Half of a Yellow Sun* is less a war novel than "primarily a domestic novel focusing on the everyday as the characters try to maintain normal lives in the midst of chaos"[30]. Although the novel is set during the Biafran War, it

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27 Boehmer (2009), 149.
28 Coffey (2014), 76.
29 Hodges (2009), 11.
30 Highfield (2013), 265.

focuses not so much on the depiction of the war in terms of the actual fighting and the action at the front, but rather on the indirect effects the politics of war have on the people. The emphasis on the experiences of the normal people, embodied by Olanna and her family, enhances the realism of the depiction. Adichie's characters have restricted access to information about the political and strategic aspects of the war. They concentrate on their survival, which is why their discussions and reflections on politics, prominent in the early chapters, increasingly retreat to the background with the continuation of the war. There is little in the way of historical exposition[31], and the politics that shape the war only play a role in the novel when their effects are felt by the characters. This emphasis on the human scale makes the novel's representation of the war persuasive and comprehensible. In addition, Adichie's approach avoids sacrificing her characters' complexities so they do not become mere ciphers in the statistics compiling the victims.

Olanna is the character who most readily offers readers access into her world. She has to struggle for her family to survive. She has to make sure they have a place to live, she has to provide for them and find food, and she has to care for her sick daughter, look after Odenigbo and keep Ugwu out of trouble. Through her readers experience the war most vividly, especially as her family's situation deteriorates. Their lives are disrupted by the war when they have to leave their hometown Nsukka to avoid the approaching Nigerian troops. In the process, they move from their spacious house in Nsukka to a smaller house in Umuahia, Biafra's capital. When they are no longer able to afford the rent there, they have to relocate to a small room. Towards the end, after the fall of Umuahia, they have to go to Orlu where they move in with Kainene and Richard. In this way, their spatial movements mirror the declining of their living conditions. Their first relocation already means a severe change, but living in a small room seems impossible to Olanna. "Olanna looked at it and could not imagine how she would *live* here with Odenigbo and Baby and Ugwu, eat and dress and make love in a single room" (*HYS*, 326, original emphasis). Olanna's discomfort registers strongly in passages like the one quoted below:

> "Olanna glanced at the clutter that was their room and home – the bed, two
> yam tubers, and the mattress that leaned against the dirt-smeared wall, the
> cartons and bags piled in a corner, the kerosene stove that she took to the

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31   Cf. Hodges (2009), 8.

> kitchen only when it was needed – and felt a surge of revulsion, the urge to run
> and run and run until she was far away from it all." (*HYS*, 337)

This passage details well her frustration and discomfort with her situation. Implicitly, it also informs readers about the growing shortage of space, as Biafra is flooded by Igbos fleeing the war. Olanna eventually gets used to the room, but the room remains an indication for the sacrifices the civil society has to make in the war.

Olanna's character is exemplary of the human ability to cope with and adapt to changed circumstances when necessary. She is terrified of the frequent air raids, for instance – her own wedding ceremony is interrupted by such a raid –, but she forces herself to stop being afraid, deciding that "the vandals would no longer dictate the terms of her life" (*HYS*, 280). There are other worries as well. Money is central among them, as she cannot access her account at the bank in Lagos anymore. Running out of money, she has to rely on food from the relief centres. Initially, her pride makes her feel "as if she were doing something improper, unethical: expecting to get food in exchange for nothing" (*HYS*, 268). But soon enough "Olanna surprised herself by how easily she joined the inward rush of the crowd, how she moved nimbly from queue to queue, dodged the swinging canes of the militia, pushed back when somebody pushed her" (*HYS*, 272). Another source of her worries are the physical changes she observes on herself and the others, and which are caused by the deprivations and stress of the war. She is, for example, surprised when she realises that she has actually lost a lot of weight during the months of food scarcity. Other, more dramatic changes in their bodies include her daughter's loss of hair or her periods. "She worried about […] how her periods were sparse and no longer red but a muddy-brown, how Baby's hair was falling out, how hunger was stealing the memories of children" (*HYS*, 389, 409). The war literally inscribes itself in the characters' bodies. As a result, Olanna's experience of the war is comprised of seemingly small details, especially in view of the grand scheme of things. But because of this emphasis on everyday details, her experiences become tangible and real. Just like the novel, Olanna's character can therefore be read both in allegorical and realistic ways.

2. Ugwu

The realistic and allegorical reading holds true for the second main character, Ugwu, as well. In the following, I will focus on two functions he performs for an allegorical reading of *Half of a Yellow Sun*. The first is that he turns out to be the author of a fictive book about the Biafran War, and the second that his story fulfils the pattern

of a *Bildungsroman*. At the end of several chapters, excerpts from *The World Was Silent When We Died,* have been inserted. This mise-en-abyme, or book within the book, is represented in eight sections, in which the narrator summarises the content of the respective chapters. These cover Nigerian history from the creation of Nigeria by the British to the problems that followed independence, the coups and secession, the starvation of the Biafrans and the silence of the world during the war. The book is framed by a prologue depicting Olanna's traumatic experience of the massacre of the Igbos and a poem about the war, which is fashioned after Christopher Okigbo's style. Thus, it provides some contextualisation and adds to the narrative scope which would otherwise be restricted to the limited perspective of the novel's characters. For most of the novel, the author of this fictive book remains unidentified, although the extracts, which can also be regarded as section summaries, are always placed at the end of Richard's chapters. Throughout the novel, he is depicted to be working on the book, which suggests that he is its author. The "title of the book came to Richard: 'The World Was Silent When We Died'. He would write it after the war, a narrative of Biafra's difficult victory, an indictment of the world" (*HYS*, 374). Importantly, however, it is finally Ugwu who is revealed to be the actual author. The last sentence of *Half of a Yellow Sun* simply states: "Ugwu writes his dedication last: For Master, my good man" (*HYS*, 433). But the torch was passed from Richard to Ugwu before that. Influenced by Richard, Ugwu started writing after returning from his service in the war. When Richard notices the quality of Ugwu's writing, he gives up his own plans about writing a book about the war and gives the title to Ugwu, arguing that "The war isn't my story to tell, really". As a response "Ugwu nodded. He had never thought that it was" (*HYS*, 425).

That *Half of a Yellow Sun* is not merely a historical novel but is also occupied with reflections on the issue of history writing, evident in its use of mise-en-abyme, makes the novel an example of what Linda Hutcheon calls "historiographic metafiction". It serves an important function in Adichie's literary project of nation building. With the highly symbolic transfer of authorship from Richard to Ugwu, Adichie claims the right to tell the history of Nigeria for her own people. Instead of a white Briton, however sympathetic he might be, it falls to a Nigerian, an Igbo boy, to tell the story of his country. This view is confirmed by several of the critics writing about Adichie's novel. Meredith Coffey, for example, explains that the "authorial voice, then, belongs to an African, and specifically to a young servant who witnesses the conflict from both

refugee camps and the front lines, during his compelled service as a Biafran soldier – all making him a kind of 'national scribe'"[32]. Andrade correctly points out that this ending is an inversion of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. It "parallels the shift of perspective at the end of *Things Fall Apart*: from the familiar Igbo to the alien British, from Okonkwo to the district Commissioner whose writing constitutes the official view of the world"[33]. Ugwu originally wanted to call his book "Narrative of the Life of a Country" (*HYS*, 424), influenced by the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, which he reads during his time as a soldier. This clearly shows his intentions for his work, as does the cover he draws for his book. Ugwu "draws a map of Nigeria and traces in the Y shape of the rivers Niger and Benue in bright red. He uses the same shade of red to circle the boundaries of where, in the Southeast, Biafra existed for three years" (*HYS*, 82). Drawing such a map, where the course of the rivers Niger and Benue serves as synecdoche not only for Biafra but for the whole of Nigeria, is a highly symbolic act. It mirrors the literary mapping of Nigeria through Olanna's trips through the country. Ugwu and Olanna thus render concrete the existence of Biafra, even if it lasted for only three years.

Adichie places the power to tell the story in the hands of the Nigerians but she also indicates that writing about the civilians' stories and experiences of the war can be empowering in itself. This is exemplified in one passage where Olanna tells Ugwu about a traumatic experience from the beginning of the war: "Ugwu was writing as she spoke, and his writing, the earnestness of his interest, suddenly made her story important, made it serve a larger purpose that even she was not sure of" (*HYS*, 410). Since Adichie's novel is primarily a family novel focusing on the experience of inno-cent victims of the war, it can be argued that this act of narration renders them and their stories important. Ugwu's writing depicts the ability of literature to provide hea-ling. He starts writing after he returns from his time in the military. Writing about the war he realises that he "would never be able to depict the very bleakness of bombing hungry people. But he tried, and the more he wrote, the less he dreamed" (*HYS*, 398). This shows that for him the writing process contributes to his overcoming the trauma of war. By writing his book, Ugwu follows in the footsteps of his "Master", Odenigbo. His ambitions in that direction can be seen early on. Already at the age of twelve, shortly after starting to work for him, he pictures himself in Odenigbo's po-sition: "Late at night, after Master was in bed, Ugwu would sit on the same chair and

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32 Coffey (2014), 76.
33 Andrade (2011), 92.

imagine himself speaking swift English, talking to rapt imaginary guests, using words like decolonise and pan-African, moulding his voice after Master's" (*HYS*, 20).

Depicting Ugwu's trajectory, from his humble beginnings as a servant to the status of an author, the novel reflects his process of formation. It thus assumes the status of a *Bildungsroman*, which is a second important narrative function of Ugwu's character. The novel opens with Uwgu still being a boy of about twelve years. Odenigbo enables him to go to school and get an education. His teenage years are cut short by the onset of the war, which requires him to become a responsible young adult. Aside from caring for Odenigbo's baby daughter, he works as a teacher before he is conscripted and forced to join the war effort. His increasing disillusionment about the war is indicative of this development. The use of the structure of the *Bildungsroman* is relevant in the context of Adichie's effort to create a sense of national identity. After all, the *Bildungsroman* is the genre most typically associated with nation formation. The growth and development of the protagonist can be seen in analogy to the emerging nation. In *The Way of the World*, his study of the *Bildungsroman*, Franco Moretti makes visible the connections that exist between revolution and the *Bildungsroman* when he shows that the major works of that genre were written in the aftermath of a revolution. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Jane Austen, for example, wrote *Bildungsromans* after the two great revolutions of the late 18th century, and Gustave Flaubert did the same after the failed revolution of 1848. While the situation in post-revolutionary Europe and post-independence Nigeria should be compared only very hesitantly, Adichie's novel has a similar function to the one Moretti ascribes to the 19th-century *Bildungsroman*. It is supposed to help make sense of a new sociopolitical situation and to help establish an identity in a new order. In addition, for Moretti, youth is modernity's "material sign", its "essence". It is, in other words, "the sign of a world that seeks its meaning in the *future* rather than in the past"[34]. Although *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a novel about the past, it doubtlessly seeks meaning for Nigeria's future. The youngest characters of the novel, Ugwu and Odenigbo's daughter Baby, can be taken to represent some optimism for the future.

At the same time, Ugwu might be seen to stand allegorically for Biafra and the loss of its potential. Highfield reads Ugwu's war experiences in a way that shows that even a person that the readers have gotten to know as a kind and friendly person throughout the novel, can commit such an act as the rape he is involved in, exempli-

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34   Moretti (1987), 5, original emphasis.

fying how war dehumanises people: "Though Adichie is clear about not wanting to create a utopia out of Biafra, it is difficult to read Ugwu as anything but a symbol for the potential of Biafra, snuffed out by the war"[35]. Either way, it is clear that Ugwu's character performs important functions in Adichie's attempt at writing a story of her nation, both as representing the Nigerians' right to tell their own story and as a substitute for the nation's development.

3. Odenigbo

Although Hodges claims that Adichie rarely resorts "to contextualizing historical exposition"[36], the novel in fact offers such an exposition in terms of the historical, political and philosophical underpinnings of the Biafran War. Some of them can be found in the sections from Ugwu's book, such as in the extracts that present Nigeria's history leading up to independence, but most of them are unobtrusively presented in the form of the characters' conversations and dialogues. To Adichie's credit these dialogues do not appear to be there only for the purpose of exposition, but they actually feel realistic and engaging. The main vehicle of political ideas and arguments is the character of Odenigbo. A radical intellectual, living in the university town of Nsukka, he represents the intellectual elite of Biafra. Like Kainene, Odenigbo is not directly accessible as a character. Instead, readers experience him through the perspectives of Olanna and Ugwu. Their excitement and fervour for the cause of Biafra is to a large extent due to his influence. He is Ugwu's role model and the person he dedicates his book to. Olanna notices him for the first time when he confronts an act of prejudice (*HYS,* 29), reacting against the preference of a white person in a ticket line. Olanna is instantaneously impressed by his attitude and attracted to him.

Through Odenigbo's character the novel revisits several of the political discussions that have characterised postcolonial Africa. He especially infuses Ugwu with postcolonial ideas. In his first conversation with the boy, for example, he shows him a map of the world and explains that the fact that Europe is depicted on top of Africa is a symbolic representation and not indicative of any "natural" order (*HYS*, 10). In his regular meetings with his friends, Odenigbo also frequently discusses political issues, such as the concept of pan-Africanism. Odenigbo sees blackness as a constructed notion, arguing that "I am Nigerian because a white man created Nigeria and gave me

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35 Highfield (2013), 272.
36 Hodge (2009), 8.

that identity. I am black because the white man constructed *black* to be as different as possible from his *white*. But I was Igbo before the white man came" (*HYS*, 20, original emphasis). Due to the novel's complexity, however, different viewpoints are provided, and so Odenigbo's attitude does not go unchallenged. His friend, Professor Ezeka, makes the point "that tribe as it is today is as colonial a product as nation" (*HYS*, 20). In addition to the influence of European ideas on African self-conceptions, they debate the issue of racism. At one point, Odenigbo traces racist ideas back to their appearance in the Enlightenment philosophy of Hegel, Voltaire, Hume and Locke (*HYS*, 50), at another they talk about the racism employed to keep blacks in control in various countries, such as South Africa, Rhodesia, Congo and the United States (*HYS*, 110). At yet another occasion, racism is discussed as a basis of conquest (*HYS*, 402). In this way, Adichie manages to weave political arguments into her narrative without succumbing to moralizing, preaching, or turning the novel into a manifesto.

The politicising retreats to the background in the later sections of the novel. Instead, staying true to the realistic depiction of the war, the focus is directed at the increasing strain of the war and the necessity of basic survival. "Even the momentous event of Biafra's surrender signifies to Olanna, whose sister has disappeared behind enemy lines, only one thing: she can go and find her sister"[37]. As politico-philosophical ideas become less important, Odenigbo's character, in the beginning such a dominant and imposing figure, also slowly vanishes from the focus of the story, as he yields to alcohol and self-pity. His decline might represent the decline of the idea of Biafra. On the other hand, a new generation emerges with Ugwu, which seems to suggest a future in which the heritage of Biafra is not swept under the rug, but informs the identity of a unified Nigeria.

The key to such a future, for Adichie, appears to be education, which is an issue that assumes central importance in the novel. Early on, when he realises that Ugwu was rarely allowed to go to school before he came to Nsukka, Odenigbo exclaims that "Education is a priority! How can we resist exploitation if we don't have the tools to understand exploitation?" (*HYS*, 11). He sends Ugwu to school, which is crucial for the boy's development to become a teacher and writer. In this sense, Odenigbo is responsible for Ugwu's becoming a prototype of Achebe's "novelist as a teacher". Odenigbo's pronouncements about education belong in the same category as those of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, who famously spoke about "decolonizing the mind". This is

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37   Hodges (2009), 9.

most obvious when Odenigbo says that "It is *now* that we have to begin to decolonise our education! Not tomorrow, now! Teach them our history!" (*HYS*, 75, original emphasis). Despite the urgency of this statement, it is only registered in passing by Richard. He hears it the first time he meets Odenigbo but is too busy coming to terms with his conflicted feelings about Olanna to really notice it. This again demonstrates how Adichie unobtrusively inserts postcolonial philosophy into a narrative that is concerned with social interaction and matters of the family. Olanna equally emphasises education. Instead of making grand statements like Odenigbo, she puts her philosophy into practice, teaching the children when the schools are closed during the war. Even when the situation is at its worst, she wants to make sure that education is not neglected. She notices that "[…] hunger was stealing the memories of the children. She was determined that their minds be kept alert; they were Biafra's future after all" (*HYS*, 389). Unlike some of the other political issues, education remains important and central, even as poverty and hunger leave their mark on the characters. As a result, education emerges as the main tool in Adichie's project of nation building. "Teach them our history!" she has Odenigbo exclaim, and the implementation of this notion is exactly what lies at the heart of her novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*.

Concluding Remarks

In sum, Adichie has written a novel that pursues the symbolic formation of a collective identity on several levels. Writing a novel about the Biafran War, she revisits the conflict from a Biafran perspective and thus presents and claims the point of view of the losing side. Her characters are allegorically aligned with Nigeria and can be seen to represent a collective Nigerian cultural identity. Her narrative can be read as a literary mapping of Nigeria and as a national allegory, without ever abandoning the realistic depictions of war experiences. Finally, her use of genre and the fact that she interlaces her narrative with elements from Nigerian cultural traditions testify to the fact that she is concerned with identity construction. The question which identity exactly is under construction here, however, is generally left open. It is no coincidence that I have only somewhat vaguely talked of the formation of a collective or even national Nigerian identity, without specifying which collective or nation is meant. *Half of a Yellow Sun* is clearly about Nigeria and also about Biafra but the novel's implied author argues neither for a united Nigeria nor an independent Biafra. That the novel mostly depicts a Biafran perspective does not imply an argument in favour of a "New

Biafra", an Igbo nation independent from Nigeria. While it is true that Baby's survival points to a survival of the idea of Biafra, this seems to concern the state's lasting impact on Nigerian affairs rather than an actual reactivation of the secessionist state. More than anything, it is the complexity of Olanna as an allegorical character which makes exact parallel readings impossible. She is at once a citizen of the state of Biafra and aligned with Nigeria, which is depicted as the opposing force throughout large parts of the novel. This seemingly paradoxical situation is enabled by the format of the novel which can accommodate her shifting identities and affiliations. While Olanna's loyalties are never in doubt, her hybrid identity, as well as the novel's "'floating' or transferable structure of allegorical reference"[38], prevents *Half of a Yellow Sun* from being claimed by current Biafran nationalists such as the "Biafra agitation" movement.

The fact that the implied author provides conflicting evidence and generally remains vague about the exact extent and shape of the Nigerian collective or nation she discusses, indicates that the novel is not so much a contribution to a conversation around a new partition of Nigeria. The thrust of the novel's argument rather goes along the lines of establishing Biafra's legacy as a part of Nigerian history. The novel seems to invite discussion by offering an account of this decisive moment in Nigerian history from the perspective of one of the affected parties. Krishnan argues that *Half of a Yellow Sun*, "through narrative frames that question authorship and reframe tradition, create[s] narrative spaces in which the ever-shifting floating signifiers of an incomplete national trajectory may be reconfigured into a coherent community of belonging"[39]. Adichie employs narrative literature in her attempt to make Nigeria's history usable for its present and future. To some extent, her novel has already managed to raise awareness about the existence and circumstances of Biafra and thus contributed to a more balanced perception on the Nigerian-Biafran conflict. This can be seen, for instance, in the fact that her novel is mentioned as a source for further information in the "See Also" section of the Wikipedia page on Biafra. Adichie claims that "Literature can lead to change, not by espousing crude propaganda but by creating a collective sense of who a people are"[40]. Approaching the question of national identity via culture, literature and art, *Half of a Yellow Sun* is not only an alternative but actually the ideological opposite to formations such as Boko Haram

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38   Jameson (1986), 78.
39   Krishnan (2013), 206.
40   Adichie (2010), 96.

and its close ally Daesh, the self-professed Islamic State. In light of the aggressive political nation building pursued by these terrorist organisations, politically conscious literature such as *Half of a Yellow Sun* can therefore provide alternative ideas and present a peaceful counter-stance in the endeavours to create a national identity.

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Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: Storyteller and Activist

Silvia Lercher

> "For the prologue, he recounts the story of the woman with the calabash. She sat on the floor of a train squashed between crying people, shouting people, praying people. She was silent, caressing the covered calabash on her lap in a gentle rhythm until they crossed the Niger, and then she lifted the lid and asked Olanna and others close by to look inside.
>
> Olanna tells him this story and he notes the details. She tells him how the bloodstains on the woman's wrapper blended into the fabric to form a rusty mauve. She describes the carved designs on the woman's calabash, slanting lines crisscrossing each other, and she describes the child's head inside: scruffy plaits falling across the dark-brown face, eyes completely white, eerily open, a mouth in a small surprised O." (HYS, 82)

Introduction

In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie creates an imaginative reality about Nigeria's civil war that lasted from 1967 until 1970, a war to counter Biafra's secession from Nigeria. But rather than focusing on the hard-core facts, she imbues the narrative with multiple voices and thus creates a genuine portrayal of the history of her country, stemming from within the ethnic group of the Igbo. By including the fates of the various social strata affected during the war, the author ranges across the majority of the society who sought safety and a corruption-free life through secession. Although the story is held together by the authorial voice, it is narrated by the various characters in the novel – their corresponding stories deliver what

Robinson calls a "plurality of consciousnesses"[1]. The various stories unfold similarly to a legal case, demonstrating all the evidence that eventually led to the war. Adichie furthermore corroborates the stories by referring to far-reaching historical events such as slavery, colonisation, and the 1884 Berlin Conference in her novel.

The epigraph refers to the riots in May 1966 in Northern Nigeria prior to the civil war that were incited by a previous coup, eventually resulting in a countercoup in July 1966. The misrule and corruption in the country climaxed in a failed attempt to overthrow the Nigerian government. As the ethnic group of the Igbo had long been envied for their ambition and advancement in the Nigerian society, they were made a scapegoat for all the shortcomings since independence. Over thirty thousand civilians were slaughtered in these riots; hundreds of thousands were injured and lost their homes and businesses to looters.[2] At the time, close to a million Igbo were displaced and fled back to Eastern Nigeria, Igboland.[3] In the novel, Olanna, an educated Igbo woman, experiences the riots and escapes the massacre at the last minute by fleeing on a train, where she encounters the mother who carries her daughter's severed head in a calabash.

With increasing scholarly interest in trauma theory concerning history, the focus has shifted from "what" to "how" and "why" something is remembered.[4] Belonging to a generation that has not experienced the war first-hand, Adichie clearly draws on the collective memory of her family and people to create the story of *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Her engagement with the people, who have experienced a kind of transformation as a result of the civil war, rather than with the conflict itself, gives a novel approach to a history that was told innumerable times by the media, the military elite, and world leaders, and was 'tailored' each time to suit each audience. Adichie allows various perspectives by giving the naïve houseboy Ugwu, Olanna, the educated Igbo woman, and Richard, the Englishman, a voice. Their accounts of the historical incidents in West Africa become a literal manifestation of post-independence Nigerian history. This paper will discuss why a young Nigerian third generation author wants to raise awareness about a very traumatic past by engaging with the conflict anew. This contribution, in particular, will shed light on *how* the author tells the story of the civil war by lingering on specific details and *why*.

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1 Robinson (2011).
2 Achebe (2012), 82; see also in Ekwe-Ekwe (2011).
3 Achebe (2012), 83.
4 Whitehead (2004), 3.

"Nigerian Identity is Burdensome"[5]

West African, that is to say Nigerian, history is part of an identity and legacy the author claims to carry. In the interview "Nigerian Identity is Burdensome", Adichie claims that literature affects the way we think and helps to broaden our awareness of world knowledge. She furthermore emphasises her vocation as a storyteller and assures us she does not "write just for [her]self".[6]

> "I grew up in the shadow of Biafra. I grew up hearing 'before the war' and 'after the war' stories; it was as if the war had somehow divided the memories of my family. I have always wanted to write about Biafra – not only to honor my grandfathers, but also to honor the collective memory of an entire nation. Writing *Half of a Yellow Sun* has been my re-imagining of something I did not experience but whose legacy I carry. It is also, I hope, my tribute to love: the unreasonable, resilient thing that holds people together and makes us human."[7]

> "For me this book is not an act of closure, it is an act of remembering. I don't believe in the concept of closure. I think that the traumas we have experienced remain an indelible part of who we are; we carry it with us always."[8]

The quotes above strongly demonstrate the author's motivation behind writing *Half of a Yellow Sun* and her other stories of the Biafran war.[9] Her engagement with the past is intended to provoke other Nigerians to also grapple with their country's history. The author clearly does not want to bring about closure on the historical event. Rather, she expresses hope that her fellow Nigerians will enter into a dialogue with *their story*. The act of remembering, as she claims, may be a first step when dealing with one's past. Reading the novel authorises an active involvement with the past, personally experienced or not, and furthers the (re)processing of the trauma. The resistance to closure allows the traumatic story of the civil war to journey across generations, perpetually nuancing its accounts and significance within a national and international context.

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5 Adichie (2004).
6 Adichie (2004).
7 Adichie (2006a).
8 Adichie (2007).
9 The author wrote a play, *For Love of Biafra*, the short stories "Harmattan Morning", "Ghosts" and "Half of a Yellow Sun", before turning the theme of the civil war into a novel of the same name.

Adichie is one of many Nigerian writers who took up the task of writing about the war. But what has changed with her generation's literature is that the writers are emotionally and temporally distanced enough to assess the past and write a more objective account of the war.[10] Decades before, Hawley states, "those closest to the Biafran fighting wrote scathingly and with immediacy … [like] reporters seeking to draw the world's attention to an ongoing injustice".[11] Adichie has a different access to the past than other writers before her as she did not experience the war first-hand. She, nevertheless, claims the civil war to be part of her psychological makeup; it is a legacy she carries. By engaging with the war via her novel, the author confronts *the story of the trauma* of a nation.

Theorising Trauma

Many scholars in recent years have asserted the necessity of elaborating on trauma theory. Caruth's theories, among other cultural theories on trauma, are centred on white Westerners within a Euro-American context.[12] While the founding principles of trauma theory generally encapsulate the traumatic experience of the individual based on psychoanalysis and post-traumatic stress disorder, the theory was modulated to also include collective trauma such as the Holocaust. Soon, however, scholars challenged the uniqueness of the Shoah by approximating it to (post)colonial atrocities.[13] The intersection of postcolonial studies and trauma studies has become a promising one – some scholars insist on a "rapprochement between trauma studies and postcolonial studies"[14] and the potential of actually "postcolonializ[ing]" trauma theory.[15] Nevertheless, some researchers see the projection of something constructed within a white and Western context as problematic and incompatible with non-Western cultures. In this process, the conceptualisation of trauma also needs to be redefined. According to Visser, trauma studies entail two competing currencies: on the one hand, there is the tenet of the trauma's "unspeakability"; on the other, there is the notion that the narrativisation of the trauma becomes an act towards "healing

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10 Hawley (2008), 18.
11 Hawley (2008), 17.
12 Craps/Buelens (2008), 2.
13 Craps/Buelens (2008), 2.
14 Craps/Buelens (2008), 3.
15 Visser (2011), 270.

and recovery".[16] The doubt whether trauma affords the right framework for dealing with the aftermath of colonisation remains. However, by means of rejecting the Euro-centric hegemonic notion of trauma theory and including "complex issues of compli-city, guilt and agency"[17], Visser hopes that a revised theoretical framework may allow postcolonial studies to further its understanding of a traumatic history and open new possibilities of analyses and readings. She furthermore asserts that a "reorientation towards narratives that are forward looking, striving for subversion of the traumatic experience rather than its containment in melancholia" is essential.[18]

Half of a Yellow Sun represents such a narrative. Adichie has no qualms about addressing the "unspeakable", or – in other words – the collective trauma of her nation, nor is she trapped in melancholia. She is emotionally and temporally dis-tanced enough to articulate the traumatic events that had befallen the ethnic group of the Igbo. In her novel, for instance, she describes the riots in the North with the maimed and slashed bodies:

> "She paused for a moment because of how glaringly bright and hot it was, with flames billowing from the roof, with grit and ash floating in the air, before she began to run towards the house. She stopped when she saw the bodies. Uncle Mbaezi lay facedown in an ungainly twist, legs splayed. Something creamy-white oozed through the large gash on the back of his head. Aunty Ifeka lay on the veranda. The cuts on her naked body were smaller, dotting her arms and legs like slightly parted red lips." (*HYS*, 147)

Later, as Olanna escapes the ordeal, the author very visually describes Olanna's encounter with the woman who carries the severed head of her daughter in a cala-bash. Also, with the story of Ugwu's participation in the bar girl's gang rape, the author addresses some of the realities of war and its repercussions on seemingly the most innocent of people:

> "On the floor, the girl was still. Ugwu pulled his trousers down, surprised at the swiftness of his erection. She was dry and tense when he entered her. He did not look at her face, or at the man pinning her down, or at anything at all as he moved quickly and felt his own climax, the rush of fluids to the tips of himself: a self-loathing release. He zipped up his trousers while some soldiers clapped. Finally he looked at the girl. She stared back at him with a calm hate." (*HYS*, 365)

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16 Visser (2011), 274.
17 Visser (2011), 280.
18 Visser (2011), 279.

Furthermore, the acuteness of famine and disease are captured by Adichie in the description of the refugee camps:

> "They were naked; the taut globes that were their bellies would not fit in a shirt anyway. Their buttocks and chests were collapsed into folds of rumpled skin." (*HYS*, 348)

> "The thick, ugly odours of unwashed bodies and rotting flesh from the shallow graves behind the buildings grew stronger. Flies flew over the sores on children's bodies. Bedbugs and *kwalikwata* crawled; women would untie their wrappers to reveal an ugly rash of reddened bites around their waists, like hives steeped in blood. (*HYS*, 390, original emphasis)

By addressing the people's plight rather than the conflict itself, the author intrinsically directs her writing towards the experienced traumata of the Biafrans before and during the war. And although she did not experience the war herself, she becomes the representative of this trauma. Adichie becomes the agent of change engendering reconciliation of the collective trauma. By communicating it to the reader via her novel, she unleashes a slice of history that has deeply impacted not only on the Igbo, but also on the rest of the Nigerians. The Nigerian war is not taught at school in Nigeria and remains a silenced narrative[19] or an *unspeakable story*. Adichie, however, felt morally obliged to write about her country's history and "to take ownership of a history that defines [her]".[20] The author bluntly names and evokes the brutal violations of the conflict in her novel. While addressing her nation's traumatic past, Adichie even incorporates traumata experienced by nations other than hers [Igbo] in the novel:

> "After he writes this, he mentions the German women who fled Hamburg with the charred bodies of their children stuffed in suitcases, the Rwandan women who pocketed tiny parts of their mauled babies. But he is careful not to draw parallels." (*HYS*, 82)

What Adichie accomplishes here, is what Rothberg calls "*multidirectional memory*".[21] The traumatic events are not set in competition. Rather, they stipulate a collective memory on "singular yet relational histories".[22] This approach sustains a transcultural approximation of the suffered or enduring traumata and subverts ob-

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19 Achebe (2012), 228; Ouma (2012), 34.
20 Adichie (2006b).
21 Rothberg (2008), 225, original emphasis.
22 Rothberg (2008), 225.

stacles of race. The white and Western, particularly the European, reader might not necessarily be capable of empathising with the violence occurring in Africa, but he or she can certainly identify with his or her own past concerning two catastrophic World Wars. The devastating experience of a mother losing her child in a most unnatural way becomes the universal symbol of trauma. It is a notion that breaks the boundaries of nations, religion and race, facilitating retrospection and understanding of the past trauma.

Furthermore, Adichie's engagement with the past resists melancholia, as described by Visser, by also shaping a story of Nigeria's abundance, particularly in the earlier chapters before the situation climaxes. Adichie is capable of bringing into play the rich culture she inherited. By conveying to the reader Igbo phraseology and expressions throughout the narrative, she provides an insight into a culture full of tradition and custom, allowing the reader a glimpse of Igbo society and entrepreneurism. Her focus on Nigeria's assets or the highly educated Nigerian workforce to which also Olanna, Kainene and Odenigbo belong, thus destabilises the traumatic background and draws the reader away from the ills of the conflict, depicting an era of short-lived prosperity. The narrative of *Half of a Yellow Sun* is forward-looking, defying closure. Therefore, the novel, although avoiding a "happy end" since Kainene is still missing,[23] provides a dynamic picture: A future where everything is possible – bygone affluence or the return of a loved one – despite the devastating experienced trauma. The author's endeavour of weaving together as many different stories concerning her country's history deconstructs the perception of incessant trauma and catastrophe and may aid to construct a new collective memory and a reanimated agency on behalf of the Igbo.

A powerful message is also conveyed in the film adaptation. I believe Adichie agreed to the film adaptation with the proviso that it be shot in Nigeria, so that her country's story would reach as many people as possible. The themes of the film, as in the novel, put the war atrocities in the background, focusing primarily on the challenges people were facing. All of the cast interviewed agree that the film is about how Nigeria is perceived in and outside its borders. The actors felt strongly about the need for Nigeria to process some of its most difficult past.[24] The film also lays the foundation for the processing of the traumatic history as it literally visualises the

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23 Kainene fails to return from afia attack, a trading opportunity across the Biafran border.
24 Bandele (2013), DVD.

story it seeks to tell the audience. It being shot in Nigeria elevates the story's authen-
ticity. It creates an ambience, which, according to the cast, turned the film into an
even more powerful and genuine story,[25] especially since Biyi Bandele's interspersed
archive footage by BBC and ITN journalists shows the blunt reality of the British
post-imperialism damaging legacy.

Adichie – Twentieth Century Spokeswoman

After the publication of *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Adichie maintained in an interview that
in some respects her nation was still at war.[26] The post-civil war era marked by cor-
ruption and disunity continues until this day. On the one hand, a lot of Igbo believe
that corruption in the aftermath of the civil war was a tool to marginalise the ethnic
group; on the other, within the Igbo community corruption was resorted to as a
"survival strategy".[27] In the light of ethnic marginalisation, corruption and perpetual
crime, Adichie argues, "[i]f we had a real middle-class, if jobs and security and energy
were things we could fairly take for granted, then I think the conflicts that mas-
querade as ethnic or religious would reduce".[28] Concerning the religious conflicts
that have escalated over the last decade with the insurgency of Boko Haram, Adichie
in the article "The President I Want" in *The Scoop* refers to the failure of the Nigerian
government to protect its citizens in the face of continuous violence. According to
Adichie, her nation is experiencing "the most violent period […] apart from the Biafran
war".[29] The author of *Half of a Yellow Sun* has become an activist in many ways, dis-
regarding the fact that activism has cost others their lives or imprisonment in the
Nigerian history of misgoverned regimes. In the speech "Community and Consensus:
My Hope for Anambra",[30] Adichie praises the State's recovery from its vulnerability,
concerning safety, education, health and agriculture. She outlines the inherent values
of Igbo culture, namely "[t]he values of conscience and integrity" and "[o]f com-
munity and consensus", and delivers a very forward-looking account of the social
and economic possibilities and potential in Nigeria from the example of Anambra.

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25 Bandele (2013), DVD.
26 Adichie (2007).
27 Smith (2014), 791.
28 Adichie (2007).
29 Adichie (2014b).
30 Adichie (2014c).

But Adichie does not solely comment on political issues of her country. Recently, she has also addressed her disapproval of Nigeria's law that criminalises homosexuals. She demands a repeal of the law and argues a strong case against it in the article "Why Can't He Just Be Like Everyone Else?"[31] While the majority of Nigerians supports the law, she claims that a true democracy can only then be in place when minorities are also protected. She furthermore points to the irony of prioritising the condemnation of homosexuality in a country that is rife with deficiencies and grievances of a more challenging nature than romantic love between people of the same sex. Furthermore, in "I Decided to Call Myself a Happy Feminist",[32] Adichie declares her stance on gender and that she simply refuses to be disconcerted about well-meant but unsolicited advice concerning feminism. She talks of the dynamics of culture and its intrinsic potential of adaptability and change, attainable by women and men for an equal future. Adichie feels a strong obligation towards her past and her people and truly demonstrates her adherence to Achebe's belief "that it is impossible to write anything in Africa without some kind of commitment, some kind of message, some kind of protest".[33] She successfully transmits her concerns via her writing but also via her communication directly with the public through speeches and lectures, initiating a valuable educational process.

Conclusion

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, who describes herself as a storyteller, addresses the ultimate story concerning her nation, namely the *story of trauma*. By doing so, Adichie not only focuses on the historical timeframe around the Biafran war, she also conjures up images of slavery, oppression, and colonisation. Her engagement with her nation's devastating past, then, becomes rumination on history, revealing new aspects and perspectives, which aims at (re)processing trauma. Thus, a fresh dialogue between the past and the present is established, which will shed new light and significance on Nigerian history. The author's temporal and perhaps emotional distance from the civil war allows her to address some of the atrocities directly by referring to names and sites of the past crimes that some authors have avoided in their

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31 Adichie (2014a).
32 Adichie (2014d).
33 Achebe (2012), 58.

accounts of the war.[34] However, while Adichie openly conjures up massacres, broken political agreements, and ambushes, she predominately focuses on the people and their transformation as a result of the conflict. The stories of her main protagonists mirror Adichie's perception of Biafran history, whereby *how* she narrates the selected stories is of importance rather than *what* stories she tells. The addressed stories synthesise the larger *story of trauma*. The author thereby initiates a critical examination of the past that includes the reader. The fragmentary plot is typical in trauma fiction to illustrate an incomprehensible event. Thus, the reader is taken from a safe time to the midst of the struggles and back again. By doing this, Adichie disrupts the notion of the seeming perpetual *single story of catastrophe* concerning the country. Some of the stories in the novel also change this perception by highlighting the resourcefulness of the Igbo people in general and in times of hardship. The author's multi-voiced novel is then transformed into an instructive tale and incentive for reassessing the past. The educational aspect of the novel is interesting insofar as over half of the Nigerian people are under the age of thirty and 44 per cent are under fifteen years of age[35] and therefore were not alive during the time of the war. The author underwent an epistemic journey by engaging with the history that defines her and her nation. Her assessment of the past is not an indictment of the world, but an attempt to understand a traumatic event and to raise a new awareness about it. Reiterating the stories about the war resists closure. Adichie's narrative, particularly, adds to the already existing ones and therefore enables the construction of a well-documented history of the traumatic past of Nigeria in the consciousness of the people. At the same time, the narrativisation of the trauma offers an opportunity for psychological healing. The inclusion of other nations' traumata, such as the shelling of Hamburg, evokes and embodies, for the Western reader in particular, a devastating European background, which calls upon humanity and arouses awareness of a comparable damaging past, whereby Westerners are also educated on a story most prefer to eschew. The same applies to the Rwandan history. The reference to the Rwandan genocide in the narrative furthermore points to the global repercussions of colonial intervention and the neo-colonial countries' ensuing struggle for power, highlighting that the story of the Igbo has not and will not remain an isolated one.

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34 For example Ken Saro-Wiwa in *Sozaboy* (1996).
35 Hawley (2008), 16-17.

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African Manpower Development during the Global Cold War: The Case of Tanzanian Students in the two German States

Eric Burton

Introduction[1]

States from both opposing blocs, including the two German states, hoped for political influence and improved trade relations by providing scholarships and training future decision-makers and administrators, while Tanzanian authorities hoped that students would return as highly skilled labour to fuel Tanzania's development process, an expectation also held by donor countries. As Tanganyika's (and later Tanzania's) political leader Julius Nyerere pointed out in an interview in the early 1960s, the lack of qualified manpower was a fundamental obstacle to development: "You can never begin to develop this country until you have sufficiently educated people within [y]our own borders."[2] Yet the overarching interests of the Tanzanian, East German and West German governments could never fully determine the trajectories, experiences and

2   Interview with Julius Nyerere, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_-LW7rNiCg (accessed 23 Dec 2015). The interview is thought to have taken place shortly after Nyerere was elected Prime Minister of Tanganyika in 1961.

decisions of the students who went overseas to study on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Quite the opposite, personal circulations and mobility of African students during the Cold War could bring about unintended effects. A Tanzanian who had studied in the United Stated recalled a bon mot that was widely used at the time:

> "The most capitalist people who came back here are the ones who had gone to the Soviet Union. Frankly. (laughs) […]. [T]hey learned the bad side of socialism by going to the Soviet Union. But for us, it was mainly theoretical and the only socialism we knew was the one in Tanzania. Which had a human face. […] So we used to joke and say that if you want a capitalist, send them to study to the Soviet Union or to Cuba. If you want a socialist, send them to a Western country."[3]

This joke was apparently in circulation around the globe.[4] It tells us that the supposed ideological transformations of individuals were grounded in their experiences of material realities abroad. Students saw and felt the practical outcomes of ideologies. Living abroad and making sense of these experiences was not just knowledge accumulation and qualification, as the sending states would have it. The experiences encompassed also more than disillusionment or resistance to paternalism and compulsion, aspects emphasised in recent studies about "Third World" students in the "First World" and "Second World".[5] As the quote also makes clear, not everything was about the East and the West: there was, as the central point of reference for any comparison, an "own" kind of socialism. For Tanzanian students it is also true what Odd Arne Westad postulated for the era of system competition, namely, that the "most important aspects of the Cold War were neither military nor strategic, nor Europe-centered, but connected to political and social development in the Third World".[6]

With decolonisation and the exodus of colonial officials and other expatriate staff, the political elites of African states were confronted with a serious lack of qualified personnel to run the newly independent states. Compared to other British colonies such as the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya or French territories,

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3   Interview #4, Tanzanian PhD student in the USA (with DAAD scholarship).
4   Anne Dietrich (University of Leipzig) encountered the same bon mot in narratives of Cuban interview partners. See also an article about business practices entitled "How the Soviets create African capitalists" (*New African*, October 1987).
5   This argument is eloquently made by Quinn Slobodian, see Slobodian (2008).
6   Westad (2006), 396.

the investments into the education system of the UN mandate territory Tanganyika had remained minuscule. As a result, a study by the Ford Foundation from 1962 found that the numbers in Tanganyika were "amongst the lowest figures of high-level manpower encountered in any country even the least industrially developed."[7] Of university graduates present at the time of independence in Tanganyika in 1961, only a tiny fraction were Africans: of 164 doctors, 16 were Africans, of 57 lawyers, only two, and of 84 engineers, only one.[8] In neighbouring Zanzibar, which was to join Tanganyika to form the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964, the situation was by no means less aggravating.

In the Five-Year Plan 1964-69 the government proclaimed the objective to reach personal self-sufficiency: by 1980, no expatriates from overseas should be needed anymore.[9] Political and popular pressures for Africanisation and nationali-sation contributed a great deal to the urgency with which this project was pursued. While the build-up of a national educational infrastructure was still on-going, two strategies were implemented by the Tanzanian as well as other African governments to meet the demand of qualified personnel: first, the recruitment of expatriate advisors, experts and volunteers to "fill the gaps"; second, the deployment of young men (and, more rarely, women) to obtain the required qualifications at universities and other higher institutions of higher learning abroad.

"Abroad" would increasingly refer to countries other than the former colonial power. In the 1950s, even those states east and west of the Iron Curtain without (recent or contemporary) colonies began to take an interest in awarding scholarships to students from countries that were on the verge of or had just attained political independence.[10] In the context of the Cold War, many states of the global South were keen to diversify their foreign relations. Sending students to different countries in the "First", "Second" and "Third World" was a means to cross-cut and balance spheres of influence as well as making efficient use of available resources, wherever these might come from. Few countries were able to diversify aid relations and desti-nations for scholarship holders like Tanzania. The political objective of self-reliance did not preclude politicians from going "aid-shopping" around the world, thereby

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7   Cited in Pratt (1976), 21.
8   Iliffe (1979), 573.
9   Pratt (1976), 129-130.
10 de Saint Martin et al. (2015), 20.

playing superpowers and other donors off against each other.[11] Through *Ujamaa*, the Tanzanian model of development, Nyerere envisaged a distinct form of "African Socialism" which found adherents in Western countries of social democratic orientation and also the Bretton Woods institutions.[12] At the same time, Tanzania attracted large amounts of aid from China and – to a smaller extent – from countries of the Eastern Bloc and Cuba.[13] Tanzania was a sought-after ally also because of its leading role in the non-aligned movement and its geopolitical position in Sub-Saharan African, being a politically stable country that served as a major hub for African liberation movements. That was the particular context Tanzanian students came from.

As a recently evolving body of literature about "Third World students" has shown, neither sending nor receiving countries remained unaffected by these exchanges and circulations of persons who were crossing political, ideological, economic, and cultural boundaries. In contrast to earlier scholarship on the topic that focussed on stays in Western countries, discussions of experiences in state-socialist countries have prevailed and enlarged our understanding of these practices of solidarity to be ambiguous, being neither simple indoctrination nor a one-way street. A number of authors have juxtaposed the lofty rhetoric of international solidarity, comradeship and peoples' friendship with frictions and discriminatory practices on the ground.[14] Drawing attention to shortcomings of real existing socialism, students from Africa (and elsewhere) were "probing the limits of internationalism" as it was understood and sanctioned by East European authorities.[15] Studying experiences and practices of students thus reworks the understanding of real existing socialism and its connections to the larger world. Accounts looking beyond the Iron Curtain found "Third World students" as important catalysts of student activism, arguing that the emergence of a West German New Left in the 1960s and its global perspective would remain inconceivable without these actors.[16]

Students' trajectories, especially when seen in the perspective of life-stories, were often transnational. Individuals had to deal with difficulties arising from de- and re-valuations of social, economic, cultural and political capital in the process of

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11 Engerman (2011), 196.
12 Eckert (2007), 221.
13 Gleijeses (2002), 243-244.
14 Slobodian (2015); Hong (2015).
15 Matusevich (2009); Hessler (2006).
16 Slobodian (2008); Brown (2009).

border crossing.[17] Mobility was not only a way to enhance capital, at times border crossings also put it at risk. The feasibility of venturing was itself dependent on individual life trajectories and resources available to the students. Strategies of students sent overseas are, however, only conceivable if we have an understanding of the sending and receiving mechanisms, of selection criteria and opportunity structures in sending and receiving countries. The diversity of trajectories should be seen against the background of this larger canvas.

This contribution is an attempt to link the debate about Third World students in European states with the development project that states in the global South pursued. The case of Tanzania and the two German states seems particularly appropriate for an enquiry regarding these postcolonial exchanges, given the fact that both countries maintained substantial relations with Tanzania and hosted Tanzanian (until 1964: Tanganyikan and Zanzibari) students from the late 1950s. The Tanzanian efforts to achieve self-reliance in terms of qualified personnel are reconstructed through an analysis of the manpower reports to the president, giving the perspective of the administration. While the reported numbers are notoriously unreliable, as the authors of the report frequently lament, the information about manpower development efforts and failings is insightful, as the actual scope of action and constraints of state action are visible in material. The state comes out as willing, but feeble in its efforts to plan and control the development of a qualified workforce. In character, these reports are marked by dry technocratic prose totally unimpressed by discursive shifts.[18]

Aside from archival materials accessed in both Germany and Tanzania, qualitative interviews[19] conducted with former first degree, postgraduate and PhD students constitute the major sources to reconstruct differing scopes for agency and positionalities. These are at the heart of the second part of this contribution. A typology will illuminate the different kinds of channels through which students could go abroad. The institutional background affected the experiences students had in West or East Germany and also determined expectations for the return. A striking aspect of

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17 Kelly/Lusis (2006); in the definition of the various forms of capital, I follow this article, which is close to the conceptions of Pierre Bourdieu who introduced this multivalent use of the term capital.

18 An exception can be found in URT, *Manpower Report 1975*, vii-viii.

19 I would like to thank Berthold Unfried, who conducted some interviews together with me, and Atuswege Burton who assisted greatly with conducting, transcribing and interpreting interviews. In total, we interviewed 18 Tanzanians who studied in the GDR as well as 20 Tanzanians (some already included in the first group) who studied in the FRG.

the trajectories is that students often crossed borders – especially from East to West
Germany – and deviated from the designated pattern of departure, sojourn and re-
turn. As will be shown, Tanzanian students, although often "sent" rather than choo-
sing to go to the German states, employed mobility as a means to enhance their
economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. Yet, the feasibility of transnational
mobility, especially from the East to the West, was itself dependent on resources
available to the students. The transnational strategies were also informed by expec-
tations of the political and economic situation upon return in Tanzania.

Tanzanian manpower development: Plans and realities

Directly after Independence in 1961, Nyerere had been reluctant to follow the advice
of advisors from the Ford Foundation to quickly "Africanise" the high- and middle-
level ranks in the civil service and the military (not speaking of the private sector).
His main argument was to ensure efficiency of the administration lest to put the
smooth operation of state institutions and development projects in jeopardy. The
more wide-spread opinion was, however, that Africanisation was necessary to dis-
mantle the colonial racial hierarchy of Europeans, Indians and Africans and thus an
indispensable corollary of political economic independence.[20] When Nyerere stepped
down after just nine months in office to – so the official explanation went – streng-
then the party's organisation, Vice President Rashidi Kawawa took over government
affairs and sped up Africanisation.[21] In the course of the 1960s, Tanzania became

> "the only country in Africa to adopt and implement a policy of investing in post-
> primary educational and training institutions only in accordance with the kinds
> and numbers of such skills needed for the economic development of the na-
> tion".[22]

The planning practices were underpinned by the assumptions of human capital
theory which was promoted by US-American economists since the late 1950s and
became the globally dominant mode of thinking about education. Manpower de-
velopment planning was a sub-component of the larger endeavour of state planning
and the state's responsibilities to generate and attract sufficient human capital for

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20 Buchert (1994), 93-94.
21 Pratt (1976), 122-126.
22 URT, *Survey of Manpower Requirements*, 1, original emphasis.

socio-economic development. The surveys carried out in Tanzania corresponded to the recommendations formulated at the UNESCO conference for African states held in 1961 in Addis Ababa, considering education "to be an economic investment destined for consumption by other economic sectors".[23]

The realisation of Tanzania's first development plans after independence fell short of many a hope but certainly not the drive towards self-sufficiency in terms of manpower. The establishment of the territory's first own university college in 1961 which was to become the University of Dar es Salaam in 1970 was a success as significant as the rapid expansion and nationalisation of secondary school education. The problem was that these advances had come at the price of slower expansion of primary and adult education and had done little to make society more equal. The explicit turn towards *Ujamaa* and African Socialism with the *Arusha Declaration* in 1967 increasingly problematised the privileges that the educated few were enjoying. Degrees and certificates continued to form the major criterion of access for better jobs with higher pay, more decision-making power and fringe benefits.[24] Functionaries of the ruling party as well as leftist academics demanded that education serve wider, social and political purposes instead of just economic rationalities. Education "had to become a vehicle for mobilization, for class organisation, and for constraining elites."[25] Nyerere's influential pamphlet *Education for Self-reliance*, which was published shortly after the Arusha Declaration and remained the rough guideline for education policies until the 1980s, called for "co-operative endeavour, not individual advancement".[26] Schools should become self-reliant units of production, instilling practical skills and socialist values instead of purely academic knowledge.

There was thus a tension between *Ujamaa*'s egalitarian vision of education and technocratic manpower planning processes which were also implemented mainly through the education system.[27] With primary-school leavers being excluded from the state's manpower qualification and allocation measures, manpower planning had an elitist edge.[28] Allocation numbers depended upon the projected needs, and adjustments could easily be made through quota limitations of scholarships for higher edu-

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23 Buchert (1994), 93-94.
24 Sachs (1980).
25 Samoff (1994), 92.
26 Nyerere (1967), 7.
27 URT, *Survey of Manpower Requirements*, 1; Bienefeld (1972), 174-178.
28 URT, *Manpower Report 1969*, 2.

cation, as the government decided how many persons were to receive scholarships for university studies.[29] During the 1960s, projections and realisation matched fairly well. Tanzanian manpower planning officers were invited to international conferences and seminars to talk about the success story and train planners from other African countries.[30] A commenter observed that "[o]n balance manpower planning in Tanzania has been conscientiously and effectively implemented, but orientation has tended to be technocratic and de facto conservative by making the future conform to the present."[31] In 1980, however, Tanzania was still far from self-sufficiency, i.e., from the ability to qualify students and fill posts using own resources. The hands-on optimism of the early 1960s had evaporated and the perspective plan from 1980 to 2000 did not even include manpower projection figures anymore. What had happened along the way? Why did the state lose track of the manpower planning process, so successful in the 1960s?

Essentially, the future turned out to be quite unlike the present. Despite its strong rhetoric and appeal beyond Tanzania's boundaries, *Education for self-reliance* did neither significantly alter the pyramid-like structure of the education system nor the structures of tertiary education. Neither did the call to pursue an anti-elitist education policy curb the de facto production of an educated elite that occupied key positions in government, administration, parastatals and private companies, although class, gender and regional discrepancies were partially levelled.[32] Tanzania's educational system continued to contribute to "stratification and the perpetuation of an educated elite class."[33] In the longer run, the manpower policy was only partially successful. Nationalisation proceeded with great strides and the ranks of the civil service filled with citizens. By 1980, 99.5% of all civil servants were Tanzanians, but numerous posts with higher requirements remained vacant due to a lack of qualified persons.[34] The majority of youths could not go on with education and did not have access to the sector of formal employment. The education system, especially as far as higher education was concerned, remained highly dependent on external funds, training opportunities abroad and expatriate staff. The gap between plan and reality could not be closed, despite – and partly even because of – education migration

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29   URT, *Survey of Manpower Requirements*, 25-27; URT (1989), 66.
30   URT, *Manpower Report 1969*, 19.
31   Bienefeld (1972), 174.
32   Buchert (1994), 93-94.
33   Block (1988), 113.
34   URT, *Manpower Report 1980*, vii-viii.

overseas. Additionally, many highly qualified Tanzanians like doctors and engineers were dissatisfied with government salaries and difficult working conditions and often opted for alternative options in parastatal or private enterprises, or abroad.[35]

Other negative influences after the mid-1970s could not possibly be avoided by Tanzania: the sharp rise in oil prices, protracted droughts and the Uganda war all contributed to a depletion of foreign exchange reserves, further aggravated by the drying up of sources of foreign capital. When the economy of the country took a dive in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Western donors became disenchanted with *Ujamaa* and demanded the abandonment of the socialist experiment. Tanzania had hoped that more aid would be forthcoming and was unprepared when it did not. This included offers for scholarships.[36] Relations soured and improved only after Nyerere stepped down in 1985. *Ujamaa* and *Education for Self-reliance* were quietly abandoned, making way for structural adjustments as demanded by the IMF.[37]

Tanzanian university students at home and abroad

During the time of *Ujamaa*, the Tanzanian state intervened directly in education and career, but tried to strike a balance between individual preferences and "society's needs". After graduation, students were obliged to work for the government for a minimum of five years as a matter of reciprocating the education paid for by Tanzania's farmers and workers. Starting in the late 1960s, the government had tried to regulate education abroad in stricter terms. As educational contents were increasingly nationalised and geared towards Tanzania's socialist project, citizens should be allowed to go abroad only for the courses unavailable in Tanzania. Authorities particularly feared an alienation of young Tanzanians and emphasised that only local training would enable graduates to develop problem-solving capacities adapted to the environment.[38] Scholarships should be awarded only to fulfil (expected) requirements. In contrast, countries such as Kenya, India or Egypt implemented a supply-based manpower training policy that led to unemployed graduates on the hand, but on

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35 Iliffe (1998), 208-214.

36 URT, *Manpower Report 1970*, 13-14.

37 Edwards (2014), 51-54.

38 TNA, FA/E90/7, Part E, UDSM, "A Brief for the Danish Parliamentarians", Dar es Salaam, 27 February 1978; TNA, FA/E90/7, Part E, UDSM, "Welcome Speech by the Chief Academic Officer I.N. Kimambo to the Six Parliamentarians from Denmark", Dar es Salaam, 2 February 1978.

the other hand opened up the possibility to "export" qualified staff.[39] Having a group of educated, but unemployed persons was seen in the Tanzanian administration as an "overproduction of skills" to be avoided, as it could generate a discontent group of educated people threatening the stability of the vulnerable nation-state.[40]

Two political decisions should ensure that graduates felt a sense of duty to serve their country, and both of them had an immediate impact on the life trajectories of university students. The first one was the introduction of the mandatory enrolment of secondary school leavers in the *Jeshi la kujenga taifa*, (literally "Army of Nation-Building", usually called National Service) in 1966. Instructors instilled, in a paramilitary training, discipline and obedience (*utii*), a sense for duty and patriotism (*uzalendo*) and the readiness to defend the country against enemies. Including lessons and lectures, the National Service was a "para-military-cum-political institution".[41] Living and working side by side with other volunteers with less or no formal education – and taking orders from officers with lower levels of education – should break the elitist attitudes of the students. The second political decision with a direct impact on life trajectories was the *Musoma Resolution* in 1974 which stipulated that students were to work two years after National Service in order to prove that they were ideologically mature to deserve the privilege of tertiary education.[42] Adverse side effects were empty seats at university and unused offers for studies overseas.[43]

The total number of Tanzanian students sent overseas rose steadily until 1970 and then gradually dropped as more degree courses were established at the University of Dar es Salaam. The number of students selected for courses abroad de-

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39 Mnzava (1978), 17-18; Mnzava was responsible at the University of Dar es Salaam for handling scholarships; see BA Koblenz, B 212/59064, Dr. H.J. Niesel, Bericht über eine Dienstreise nach Dar es Salaam, 24.1.1977; Nairobi, 26 January 1977.

40 URT, *Manpower Report 1974*, X.

41 CCMA, 1091, E.M. Anangisye, Report on National Service as Submitted to the Second Vice President Mr. R. M. Kawawa, without date [ca. 1966].

42 The new policy implied that "student performance will no longer be appraised by considering the students' academic ability only. Students attitude to such things as nation building, national ideology etc. will be included in the final selection. That is why direct entry to University had to be abandoned to enable the people concerning, through working with the prospective candidate, to get a clearer picture of the candidates to University." (URT, *Manpower Report 1974*, 25).

43 URT, *Manpower Report 1975*, 30, 33, 37; a major problem was that workers who were generally fit and ready to join university would not forsake their salaries in exchange for a meagre allowance.

creased by 65% until 1975/76.[44] According to the manpower reports, which some-
times had to rely on estimations when statistics from the Ministry of Education
were unavailable, between 1,000 and 1,500 Tanzanian students were constantly
abroad following degree courses. The actual number seems to have been much
higher, amounting for roughly 2,500 students being trained at East African universities
at the time.[45] Receiving countries of all ideological colours could be found all over the
world. While some students had gone to Eastern Europe already in the late 1950s
and early 1960s, the number increased significantly in the years thereafter. Tanzania
diversified its aid relationships, including grants for academic qualification, following
political and diplomatic rows with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Great
Britain and the United States in 1965 which had the side effect of significantly re-
duced assistance.[46] Apart from the U.S. and the UK, major destinations receiving at
least 40 students from Tanzania included Canada, the USSR, Yugoslavia, East Germany
and West Germany, India, Romania, Hungary, Cuba, China, Australia and Italy.[47] In
1979, for instance, the largest groups of Tanzanians were in India (206, almost all
Geology or Engineering), the UK (186), the United States (165) and the Soviet Union
(145), followed by Romania (86, mostly medicine) and Cuba (85, mostly medicine).[48]
In total, Tanzanians were studying in over 30 countries.[49]

The number of Tanzanian university students in the German Democratic Re-
public (GDR) was around 30 in the mid-1960s and reached 98 in 1974, making them
one of the largest groups of African students in the GDR by that time.[50] Between 1965
and 1979, 57 Tanzanians had obtained a university degree from GDR universities, 5
had secured a PhD and an additional 21 individuals had been awarded the title of an
engineer. Another 299 Tanzanians had by then undergone a formal job training
(*Ausbildung*), and 227 had pursued various courses from union, youth, journalist and

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44 URT, *Manpower Report 1975*, 38.
45 URT, *Manpower Report 1971*, 29; if one includes students that had gone abroad with private funding, the
     number would definitely exceed 2,500. In Great Britain alone, the British Council counted 1,011 Tanzanian
     students, as opposed to 455 according to the manpower report; see Gee (1980), 246.
46 Pratt (1999), 140; Mnzava (1978), 48.
47 URT, *Manpower Report 1972*, 30; PAAA, MfAA, C 345, Übersicht über Studenten Tansanias, no date [probably
     1965], Fol. 29.
48 URT, *Manpower Report 1979*, 64
49 URT, *Manpower Report 1980*, 104-107.
50 PAAA, MfAA, C 345, Übersicht über Studenten Tansanias, Fol. 29; URT, *Manpower Report 1975*, 94.

cooperative associations.[51] 67 Tanzanian students were still present in 1988, mean-while outnumbered by students from the GDR's more recent focus countries Ethiopia, Mozambique and Angola.[52] Only during the 1960s there were more Tanzanian students in West than in East Germany. 75 Tanzanians studied in the FRG by 1965, twice as much as in the GDR.[53] After the diplomatic fallout in the same year between Tanzania and West Germany over the opening of a GDR consulate on the mainland, the number fell. The manpower report lists only 15 students for 1971. The number increased to 70 students until 1977 as a result of the improved relations between Tanzania and the West German social democratic government between 1969 and 1982.[54] As both German states gradually reduced the intake of new Tanzanian students in the late 1970s due to political and economic reasons, the 1970s represent the peak of education migration between Tanzania and the German states. Common to both German states was the minuscule participation of women in state-sponsored programmes, reflecting the gender ratio of Tanzanian students abroad: of 1,170 Tanzanians students registered to be abroad in 1977, only 31 (or 2.6%) were female. Of the few female students going to East and West Germany before 1990, some were women who secured scholarships following their husbands.

A persistent tendency was that cooperation with countries in the "East" and "South" on the academic level served mainly to acquire first degrees, while Tanzanians travelling to the "West" were more likely to follow postgraduate courses, including PhD programmes. This is, of course, not to say that there were no Tanzanian PhD students in East European countries, but they represented a smaller share of the total number. One reason for the East-West difference was the re-orientation of Western countries' development policy towards poverty alleviation and rural development, meaning that less money was made available for scholarships. To ensure the highest possible impact and influence of scholarship programmes, official funds were increasingly channelled to serve postgraduate education. After 1965, scholarships were whenever possibly provided "sur-place", i.e. to finance studies at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania instead of overseas.[55] The perceived (more than empirically researched) phenomenon of the "brain drain", of students not returning

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51   BA Berlin-Lichterfelde, DE 1/58694, „Zusammenarbeit zwischen der DDR und der VRT in den Bereichen Kaderausbildung/Experteneinsatz", without date [1980/1981].

52   BStU, MfS, HA II 28716, Bl. 100.

53   PAAA, MfAA, C 345, Übersicht über Studenten Tansanias, no date [probably 1965], Fol. 29.

54   URT, *Manpower Report 1971*, 30-31; URT, *Manpower Report 1977*, 62.

55   DAAD, 40 Years Supporting Excellence. DAAD Regional Office for Africa, Bonn 2014, 16-17.

to their home countries, played a significant role in the policy shift. East European countries, in contrast to Western countries, were chronically short of foreign exchange. They tried to pay whatever costs in national currency. This implied that scholarship programmes were bound to a stay in the country which provided the scholarship. The Tanzanian Ministry of Education also sponsored students, especially for first degree courses.[56] It preferred countries like India, where eight students could receive a degree in engineering for the same costs that would be incurred by a single student in Sweden.[57] During the early 1970s, most Tanzanians in East European and Asian countries studied engineering, medicine, agricultural sciences, geology or veterinary medicine. Only few read economics, political economy or philosophy.[58] In Western countries, as in the East, the majority of students followed science courses, but a significant share also studied accounting (the most popular course in Great Britain) and economics.[59]

By and large, sending students worked quite well. Tracking the progress of students abroad, however, was more difficult; and ministries quarrelled over the responsibility for their reintegration.[60] Expressing a state of ignorance and helplessness, the manpower report for the year 1970 posed the questions: "Where are they [the graduates from overseas universities]? Have they left the country? Did they ever return from overseas? Are they in lower level posts?"[61] A survey conducted among Tanzanian students in Great Britain raised concerns. 92% of the 563 students that the embassy knew of had departed with a government scholarship, and most of these were willing to return – but very few had actually done so.[62] The fear not to get an appropriate job loomed large among the reasons to extend the stay abroad, both in the UK and in West Germany.[63] To East German (and East European) authorities such concerns were of little relevance: after graduation, students had to leave. En-

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56 URT, *Manpower Report 1980*, 104-107.
57 Personal conversation with a Tanzanian student who studied in India in the 1970s, Dar es Salaam, 30 November 2014.
58 URT, *Manpower Report 1975*, 36; in Romania and Cuba, most Tanzanians studied medicine, whereas in India, most studied engineering or geology.
59 URT, *Manpower Report 1971*, 29.
60 URT, *Manpower Report 1974*, 46.
61 URT, *Manpower Report 1974*, 102.
62 URT, *Manpower Report 1970*, 92-94.
63 PAAA, ZW 119384, Seminarbericht Reintegrationsseminar für tansanische Studenten vom 2. bis 5. Mai 1976 in Bad Godesberg, Bonn, 31 May 1976, 2; Court (1979), 543.

forcement of this principle, agreed with Tanzania, was stricter than in the West. But this did not mean that all of the students directly returned to Tanzania.

Pathways from Tanzania to East Germany and West Germany

The figures given above are problematic especially because they usually exclude privately paid studies and mask important differences between the students. What kind of experiences students made in East and West Germany depended not only on time and place, but also on the mode of education migration. There are at least five groups of Tanzanians that were eligible for regular university courses in the two German states, having different social backgrounds and perspectives. The typology presented here works best for the time from the late 1960s to the late 1980s. During the 1950s and 1960s, on-going political transformations and the still unaccomplished ossification of donor institutions and regulations made for trajectories that were far too diverse to be pigeonholed into exclusive categories. A couple of hints to these years will illustrate that limitation.

The first group are secondary school leavers with good or excellent marks and appropriate subject combinations for fields like medicine or engineering sciences. These students would naturally be very young and have little or no work experience, apart from the stays described above in the National Service and (especially after the Musoma Resolution) possibly a brief period of employment. This group formed the majority of students who were sent to the GDR and the Eastern Bloc, usually within the framework of bilateral aid agreements. If they returned successfully with their first degree, they mostly filled the middle ranks of administration.

The second group comprises academic staff of the University of Dar es Salaam, especially young tutorial assistants and lecturers who had gained their first (and eventually second) degree in East Africa, or in few cases overseas, and were now expected to continue with their studies so that postgraduate courses might also be offered in Tanzania. In contrast to other countries, the close and institutionalised bond of the PhD student to his or her supervisor at a German university (tellingly called *Doktorvater* or *Doktormutter*), required that in most cases an agreement be reached between candidate and supervisor before any application could be accepted. This meant in turn that personal networks played a decisive role in facilitating the contacts between a Tanzanian PhD student and his or her supervisor in Germany. Returning students or German lecturers teaching at the University of Dar es Salaam

were often instrumental in giving a hint as to which professor or department could be approached. As a result of such personal and institutional legacies, there exist a "Konstanz group" and a "Hamburg group" among Tanzania's most notable legal practitioners.

A third group, also sponsored, are so-called counterparts and other project staff employed in (or seconded to) German-funded development projects. This would be the case in a wide range of projects supported by West Germany, like the set-up of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Dar es Salaam – which in fact shows an overlap with the second group – and a few undertakings from the GDR, most significantly a commercially oriented joint venture in Mbeya in southern Tanzania. Local engineers and technicians were trained in the GDR to run the textile mill after its completion. Personal contacts between German development workers were often crucial for the selection of beneficiaries. If the required courses were not offered in West Germany, bursaries were also given out for other Western countries. This arrangement gained importance in the late 1970s and 1980s when counterpart training was increasingly seen as a prerequisite for the sustainability of projects. As both German states were more or less powerless in Tanzanian staff transfer matters, they could not avoid that many counterparts did not or only shortly return to work in the project, especially when the qualification had opened up new avenues.[64]

The fourth group is made up of students whose stays were facilitated by the party, mass organisations and political foundations. Courses could last from weeks to several years and usually aimed at strengthening counterpart organisations in Tanzania – workers' and cooperative unions, the party's Youth League etc., although in some cases, the East German organisations also financed stays leading to regular university degrees. Ties on this level were particularly strong with the GDR, also due to the fact that they served as a surrogate for official state relations until 1972.[65] Partly because of these historically close relations between GDR and Tanzanian mass organisations, their West German counterparts (including the foundations close to the largest political parties) had difficulties to establish any meaningful cooperation.[66]

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64 Interview #110 with former GDR diplomat serving in the GDR embassy in Tanzania; Interview #25 with former FRG development worker

65 In the 1960s, West Germany had constantly upheld the pressure on Tanzania (and other aid recipients) not to establish full diplomatic relations with East Germany; see Gray (2003); Engel/Schleicher (1998).

66 Vinnai (2010), 112, 114, 120, 158.

A fifth and enormously heterogeneous group of students went abroad for studies as a matter of privately sponsored sojourns – through churches, companies, or personal and family funding. These only played a role for West Germany, as the GDR accepted students from Tanzania only when they were "delegated" by the institutions named above, also to ensure that graduates would indeed be in a position to make an impact in Tanzania and improve relations. The mode of sending was also significant for the return: While university graduates who had received government bursaries (practically all from the University of Dar es Salaam and all of those who went through bilateral agreements) had to serve at least five years in official positions, those who could afford to pay for courses abroad or received private scholarships were free to choose their place of employment.[67] Individual trajectories within these groups did, of course, still vary enormously.

The tendency observable for Zanzibar in the 1960s – that the elite could go West, but "ordinary people" were sent to the East[68] – might also apply, though less clear-cut, to Tanzania mainland. Students leaving Tanganyika or Zanzibar in the tumultuous and heated years shortly before or after dependence seem to have gathered also more travel experiences than later generations; three first degree students arriving in the GDR in the early 1960s, for example, had gone through party and union channels to Guinea, Liberia and Egypt.[69]

In the following years of postcolonial Tanzania, the passage from secondary to higher education was crucial. Secondary school leavers could express their preferences for further education through filling in standardised forms. In these forms, students were asked *what* they wanted to study, but not *where* they wanted to study.[70] Germany, no matter if East or West, was not a first choice-destination. As in other African countries that were still aligned towards Anglophone and Francophone school systems, going to German-speaking and East European countries meant the additional trouble of learning another language which inevitably prolonged the duration of the stay. Full recognition of school certificates and academic titles on

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67 BA Koblenz, B 212/26037, Dr. Scheibe (DAAD) to Dr. Hellmann (DAAD), without place, 12 September 1967; this would be for example the case for scholarships from the Aga Khan Foundation, but not for those from the Rockefeller Foundation.

68 Burgess (2009), 65-66.

69 UAL, WIFA 0411, CV of student Kassim M. G., Bl. 20; ibid., StuA 12291, Confirmation of Cairo University concerning student M., 5 January 1963; Adam Shafi, Mbali na nyumbani, Nairobi 2013.

70 Interview #63, Tanzanian student in the GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).

arrival and return was often hit-or-miss, and the degree one would acquire would not come from a university that had any prestige in Tanzania. Others had hoped to be allocated to universities in Dar es Salaam or Nairobi and were quite hesitant to go to Eastern Europe, knowing that they would be unable to return and see their relatives for several years. If *ulaya* (Europe), many thought, then better prestigious destinations like "Mother England"[71] or the United States.[72] Several interviewees selected by the state for GDR scholarships said that they first protested and then accepted only because they knew that this might well be the only opportunity to get their hands on a degree. Some respondents mentioned that they and their relatives were happy to get this opportunity to go abroad, and young students especially seem to have been quite unaware of Cold War binaries when they left in the 1970s:

> "Those days we didn't really know that there is East Germany – at least me – or West Germany. We didn't know that there is a big difference between the Eastern Bloc and the Western Bloc. For us, Europe was Europe and we were happy that we were going there. […] We didn't know how different it is, but we knew it is something better."[73]

Respondents who had studied in the GDR in the 1970s also told that they had been surprised to find themselves in *East* Germany, not even knowing that a meaningful difference to the West existed.[74] This might partially be explained by Tanzania's consequent politics of non-alignment which was also reflected in the country's education policy. From Tanzania during *Ujamaa*, the boundaries between African socialism, East European state-socialism, Maoism, Titoism and social democracy in Scandinavia and West Germany were of little significance. The North-South dimension was relevant due to Tanzania's commitment to decolonisation, anti-imperialism and the erection of a New International Economic Order, the East-West competition of systems much less so. Songs sung in the camps of the National Service were reminding young Tanzanians "that we were on the frontline of the African liberation

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71 Interview #66, Tanzanian student in the FRG.

72 The Swahili term for Europe, *ulaya*, stretches its semantics easily to embrace all privileged parts of the world with white majorities. It may include the United States, Australia and Russia, but not Japan or Saudi-Arabia.

73 Interview #63, Tanzanian Student in GDR (graduate) and FRG (postgraduate).

74 GDR teachers in Tanzania – who were supposed to instruct students and colleagues about the differences between East and West Germany – also reported difficulties in communicating their vision of East-West competition; see BA Berlin Lichterfelde, DR 2/25494, DDR-Lehrerexperte B. an MfVobi, Dar es Salaam, 13 August 1971; BA Berlin Lichterfelde, DR 2/25494, Günter R., Bericht 1. Halbjahr 1970, Mzumbe Secondary School Morogoro, Mzumbe, 15 June 1970.

struggle"[75], not that they belonged to East or West. If specific arguments were brought forward for choosing[76] a German destination, these would usually refer to the high reputation of "German" technology or work attitudes.[77] Only in very few cases did students state that they had particularly wanted to study in the GDR, and if so, for political reasons or because possibilities elsewhere were exhausted.[78]

Experiences of integration, indoctrination and discrimination

In West Germany, Julius Nyerere's popularity in left-wing circles as a model for en-lightened political leadership and enthusiasm for *Ujamaa* also informed the image of Tanzanian students, described by a sympathetic social democrat as "among the politically most conscious from the African continent", an "ideologically firm and ho-mogeneous" group with the self-perception that they were among the chosen few selected to serve their people.[79] Teachers and functionaries in the education system of the GDR – some of whom might even have had weaknesses for *Ujamaa*, but could impossibly let these sentiments influence their judgement – routinely dismissed as immature and wrong the views of those Tanzanians who publicly aired their pre-ference for African Socialism or what East Germans identified as "Maoism".[80] In con-trast, Tanzanians who criticised their country's official development philosophy from a Marxist-Leninist perspective were evaluated in the most positive language.[81]

The ideological endowments of those sent abroad were far from monolithic, and they did change in the course of their stay, though it seems impossible to pin-point particular transformative moments. Both German states expected foreign stu-

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75 Mwakikagile (2006), 33-34.

76 In some cases, the selection processes could be influenced. In the case of the GDR, registration forms required an answer to the question of why one wanted to study.

77 Cf. Burgess (2009), 65-66.

78 UAL, StuA 109 336, Application, Bl. 5; Interview #104, Tanzanian student in the GDR.

79 PAAA, ZW 119384, Klaus Wedel (Stv. Leiter der Internationalen Abteilung der FES), Projektbeschreibung für Reintegrationsseminar für tansanische Studenten vom 3. bis 5. Mai 1976 in Bad Godesberg, Bonn, 31 March 1976, 2; views were less enthusiastic in the 1960s and, again, in the 1980s, but still very positive, at least in the left spectrum.

80 UAL, StuA 12291, Beurteilung des Studenten K., 27 November 1963, Bl. 28; UAL, StuA 116549, Dr. jur. P. Ter-zopoulos (Institut für Völkerrecht), „Einschätzung des Studenten O.G.C.", 5 January 1968, Bl. 7; UAL, StuA 116549, Zeugnis des Herder-Instituts für Y.A.H., Leipzig, 6 June 1964, Bl. 43.

81 UAL, WIFA 0411, Prof. Kramer, Gutachten zur Dissertation „Die volkswirtschaftliche Planung in den Entwicklungs-ländern, dargestellt am Beispiel Tansania" von Kassim Mrisho Guruli, no date [1969], Bl. 19.

dents to integrate into regular university life, in the case of the GDR even to share rooms with East German fellow students (often suspected to be spying on foreign students). Political and cultural attitudes where transmitted through obligatory preparatory language courses at *Goethe Institutes* in West Germany or *Herder-Institut* in Leipzig. In the first months of the stay, students often engaged in some haggling over the full recognition of qualifications and a tug-of-war with institutions (both German and Tanzanian) when they wanted to switch courses, also employing the language of manpower development and arguing that the change would be in the interest of the nation.[82] Many interviewees described themselves as having been apolitical or at least not politically committed, but even those admitted having participated in demonstrations and sit-ins in West Germany's 1968 or state-sanctioned political rituals in the East. A detailed evaluation of political activities would require sensitivity to legal contexts and global as well as local political settings beyond the scope of this paper.[83] A more constant aspect than political activism seems to have been the political education in the GDR and how it was perceived.

Even though most Tanzanians in East Germany did not study social sciences, the attendance of classes in Marxism-Leninism was required, at least after 1969.[84] Interviews with students who had studied in the GDR often contained references to the obligatory nature of these courses, and that failing or refusing to participate in the subject would have lead to expulsion. Several former GDR students recalled threats and pressure from authorities to join extracurricular activities sanctioned by the ruling party. Some interviewees compared the content of Marxism-Leninism classes with the subject of Development Studies taught in Tanzanian secondary schools and at the University of Dar es Salaam, often drawing on (neo-)Marxist theories and being similar to GDR policies in terms of its anti-imperialist outlook.[85]

Most graduates from the GDR argued that their knowledge – the cultural capital they had appropriated through years of hard work – was just as good as that of returnees from Western states. They claimed to have received "very solid" and altogether non-ideological training in the GDR,[86] also alluding to the universality of

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82 UAL, R 280, Bd. 5, Chief G.P. Kunambi (University College of Dar es Salaam) an den Rektor der KMU, 10 November 1968, Bl. 114-115; Interview #65, Tanzanian student in the GDR.
83 Slobodian (2008).
84 For details about subjects taught, see Müller (1995), 90-91.
85 Interview #76, Tanzanian student in the GDR; Interview #14, Tanzanian PhD student in the FRG.
86 Interview #63, Tanzanian student in the GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).

knowledge: "If you add two and two, whether you are in East or West, it is four. […] In medicine or wherever, the principles are the same."[87] On one level, such statements illustrate the belief in neutral, globally applicable knowledge. They can also be read as a re-validation of degrees and knowledge obtained in East European countries against bipolar Cold War discourses more generally and Western-trained administrators in particular who would regard Eastern Bloc returnees as indoctrinated stooges unworthy to man important positions in Tanzania's state institutions (see also below). De-politicising the knowledge was one strategy to counter these suspicions. But there was more to this statement than just a rhetorical strategy to defend oneself and re-valorise one's symbolic and cultural capital. GDR authorities were always aware that sound qualification was the best propaganda. It was not for nothing that graduates of engineering or tropical agriculture were able to pursue PhD programmes in West Germany without problems.

Some students likened the disciplinary methods encountered in the GDR with experiences from Tanzania: like in the National Service, one respondent said, one was supposed to "shut one's mouth" (*kufunga mdomo*).[88] All emphasised that political activities – in the sense of opposing authority – were impossible in the GDR lest one be sent home, having wasted the opportunity to get a degree. Even the former leader of the union of Tanzanian students in the GDR reported that he was "shut up" by authorities when, in 1980, he wanted to enquire into the death of a Tanzanian student that had upset the community.[89] A similar incident in the Soviet Union had sparked a demonstration of African students on Moscow's Red Square against widespread racism seventeen years earlier in 1963.[90] In this case, the death – suicide according to the official version, just like in the 1963 incident – did not lead to open protests. This was probably not only due to the stifling of doubting enquiries, but also because living conditions were significantly better and discrimination not experienced as threatening as in the early 1960s Soviet Union. In the GDR, too, conditions seem to have been harsher in the 1960s. In 1968, the Committee of African Students and Workers in the GDR sent a letter to GDR authorities in which it expressed serious criticism of wide-spread feelings of racial superiority in the population, leading repeatedly to provocations, brawls and physical assaults of groups

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87   Interview #92, Tanzanian student in the GDR.
88   Interview #43, Tanzanian student in the GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).
89   Interview #65, Tanzanian student in the GDR. The death is documented in UAL, DIB 346, Bl. 50.
90   Hessler (2006).

against individual students.[91] As Julie Hessler pointed out for the case of the Soviet Union, African students who felt and observed racism as part and parcel of their host society seriously challenged the orthodoxy of authorities which held that discrimination and violence was not part of real socialism, but only an aberration brought about by individual hooligans.[92] That also applied to the situation of African students in the GDR, who mentioned in their letter that salespersons, taxi drivers, waiters, conductors and post office employees were the groups with which there were the largest tensions.[93] As counter-measures, the authors proposed an improved introduction to German culture for new arrivals, meetings with GDR authorities and citizens to settle salient issues and several measures to educate East Germans about contemporary life-realities in Africa, since movies usually only showed the barbarities of colonialism and not the bustling contemporary life at the universities of Nigeria and Ghana.[94]

Kuruka ukuta – *Transnational strategies of capital accumulation*

Like any border, the Iron Curtain, too, was selectively permeable, and Tanzanians (unlike some Africans whose governments told GDR authorities to restrict mobility) were in principle free to travel to countries on both sides of the Wall. Most were drawn westwards. GDR authorities could not keep Tanzanian students from going to West Berlin to visit friends and relatives, go jobbing and shopping. Some went regularly to earn money in car factories and slaughter houses, perform housekeeping work in private homes or pursue other occasional jobs. While West Berlin was the most convenient destination in terms of border-crossing, two interviewees stated that they had left the GDR for as far as Sweden to make some cash during their summer vacations. Others also stayed in the GDR to work there during holidays. The crucial door-opener for ventures beyond the Wall was, as several interviewees

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91 UAL, R 0280, Bd. 5, Schreiben des Komitees der afrikanischen Studenten und Arbeiter in der DDR, ohne Datum [1967/68], Bl. 86-90; the letter of complaint was addressed to the leading organs of the GDR.

92 Hessler (2006), 37-38, 56-57.

93 UAL, R 0280, Bd. 5, Schreiben des Komitees der afrikanischen Studenten und Arbeiter in der DDR, ohne Datum [1967/68], Bl. 86-90

94 UAL, R 0280, Bd. 5, Schreiben des Komitees der afrikanischen Studenten und Arbeiter in der DDR, ohne Datum [1967/68], Bl. 90

emphasised,[95] having a contact person at hand: an uncle in Sweden who could send some US dollars to make the journey, a friend in West Berlin who could borrow the ID that was needed to work in the factory or an old, friendly German lady offering both work and accommodation.

Students without a social network extending beyond the Wall did rarely go West, possibly also influenced by repeated calls of GDR authorities to abstain from doing so. A Zanzibari unionist who had gone to the GDR in 1961 to pursue a 2-year-course in trade unionism remembered how "trapped" he felt when he and other course participants from Africa, Asia and Latin America were warned in the opening session: "Whoever goes to West Berlin is an enemy."[96] Even in later years, students had to direct a request to the responsible department of the university to be allowed to leave and get a visa, stating the reason for the journey. Since 1978, the authorities collected statistics about these requests. On the list of students from African countries at the Karl Marx University of Leipzig, Tanzanians ranked first with 34 requests for a trip to West Berlin and 11 requests for a trip to the "capitalist foreign countries" (*kapitalistisches Ausland*) in 1977/78.[97] With 28 Tanzanian students enrolled, this meant that the travelling activity exceeded the GDR's limit of tolerance of one visa per person per year and that measures had to be taken, including personal conversations and more involvement in state-sanctioned extra-curricular activities and excursions.[98] Reasons most frequently given for journeys to West Berlin were visiting compatriot friends and relatives, shopping of goods "ostensibly" not available in the GDR's foreign currency-based shops offering exclusive goods (*Intershop*)[99], running errands (e.g. concerning passports or luggage) and settling financial matters (cashing cheques, withdrawing money).[100]

Trying to maintain at least some kind of relationship with the students in Eastern Europe, the Tanzanian government also sacrificed some of its meagre foreign

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95 Traces of these activities can also be found in the archives; see, for instance, UAL, StuA 116549, Dr. jur. P. Terzopoulos, Einschätzung des Studenten Oscar G. C., 5 January 1968, Bl. 7.

96 Shafi (2013), 471; to ensure that all participants would understand, the warning was written on a board in German, English and French.

97 UAL, DIB 259, Statistik zu Visaanträgen, 6 November 1978, Bl. 25.

98 UAL, DIB 259, Analyse über Feriengestaltung ausländischer Studierender der KMU 1978, Leipzig, 16 November 1978, Bl. 63-65.

99 For GDR *Intershops* and official GDR strategies to attract foreign exchange see Judt (2013).

100 UAL, DIB 259, Analyse über Feriengestaltung ausländischer Studierender der KMU 1978, Leipzig, 16 November 1978, Bl. 63.

exchange reserves to pay a small once-per-year-allowanc of US$ 150[101] channelled through the Tanzanian embassy in Moscow to the scholarship holders. Recipients called this annual payment *Ahsante Nyerere* (Thank you Nyerere). The hard currency which students received from their embassy or earned in Western countries gave them access to prestigious luxury goods that were out of reach for the majority of the East German population: jeans, hi-fi systems and records, whiskey and cigarettes of a kind not available in the GDR. Some students also sent care packages to their relatives in Tanzania where the economy had collapsed in the late 1970s and even basic commodities like soap and tooth paste were scarce. Sending remittances was, according to one respondent, mostly done by students in West Germany who received larger stipends and had more opportunities to earn additional income.[102]

Journeys from the GDR to other Eastern countries were less popular and mostly realised through the party-affiliated youth organisation or university programmes and thus had an official or semi-official character. Few were interested in going there, knowing that East Germany was still having the highest standard of living in the Eastern Bloc, and those that went came back with confirmed expectations.[103] West-East journeys also occurred, although it was mostly Tanzanians studying in West Berlin who would use that opportunity.[104] Compared to the multi-purpose journeys of their fellow students living in the East, GDR-bound tours were usually confined to private visits and occasional shopping, taking advantage of cheap prices of consumer goods.

Through everyday life, industrial placements and small jobs, Tanzanian students received deep insights into the actual workings of capitalism and socialism in the German states. They were able to compare what they had heard in class with reality, and confronted teachers in Marxism-Leninism with their observations.[105] Those who did not cross the Iron Curtain might still come to the conclusion that many fellow East or West German students and even some teachers at university were in

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101 TNA, Acc. 597, FA/E160/11 (Part C), Malipo ya posho 1979/80 – Wanafunzi wote wasomao G.D.R. toka Tanzania; the document lists 1,200 Tanzanian Shillings for every student, equal to US$ 150 at the contemporary exchange rate.

102 Interview #76, Tanzanian student in GDR (graduate) and FRG (postgraduate).

103 Interview #47, Tanzanian student in GDR, Interview #104, Tanzanian student in GDR.

104 Others felt repelled by the menacing atmosphere at the border (Interview #41, Tanzanian PhD student in the FRG) or were discouraged by their supervisors (Interview #1, Tanzanian PhD student in the FRG).

105 Interview #75, Tanzanian student in GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).

fact "against the system".[106] Students had access to the unofficial scripts of socialism and social democracy and their experiences made them particularly sensitive for the shortcomings of the societal orders. The meaning of these experiences and trans-national exchanges went far beyond material aspects. They spoke to wider topo-graphies of ideology in the global Cold War. The material flows were, however, the most tangible ones, and they influenced decisions a great deal, as one interviewee remembered. Together with other Tanzanians, he had finished the course and

> "we were then ready to go back to Tanzania, but we applied for a [postgraduate] course [in West Berlin]. You know, I wanted to continue right away with PhD. Some of the students were able to do that. [...] Nobody wanted to stay in East Germany for some further training there because we thought we will go back much poorer than those who are studying in West Germany. Yes. We got a bit more money and bought a car."[107]

In the 1970s and 1980s, when Tanzanian import regulations were extremely strict, students returning from overseas were still keen on transferring as many assets as possible to Tanzania. They imported, sometimes illegally, refrigerators, cars[108], music systems, gas cookers, tools and later also computers, using the money they had earned in the jobs mentioned above or also through the omnipresent black market economy. Cars and fridges were used to run small businesses and were thus valuable assets to complement meagre salaries with an additional income.[109] West German currency could also be sold with wide profit margins on the Tanzanian black market in the 1980s.[110] Many interviewees admitted having traded or smuggled goods and currencies between East and West in small quantities, and mentioned that they knew others who were more diligent in these commercial activities. A group of four Tanzanians leaving the GDR in 1988 (when customs regulations in Tanzania had relaxed) was spectacularly successful not only in saving up money, but also in converting good relations with a church community into material gains: they

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106 Interview #75, Tanzanian student in GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).
107 Interview #63, Tanzanian student in GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).
108 Concerning the drastically reduced import of cars to Tanzania in the course of the 1970s, see Biersteker (1980), 241-243. Some interviewees were able to take several cars from West Germany to Tanzania, while others mentioned that they would have liked to do so, but could not because of regulations.
109 Tripp (1997).
110 Apart from interviews, this is also mentioned in BStU, MfS, HA II/28716, Hauptmann Wessler, Information vom 30.4.1985, Magdeburg, 2 May 1985, Bl. 74.

shipped to Tanzania electric and household devices valuing over 20,000 Mark, partly financed through donations from benevolent church community members.[111]

Other students, PhD students especially, tended to focus on academic achievement and put less energy into economic ventures. In fact, very few really had the necessity to do so: Tanzanian students coming through institutional arrangements received monthly stipends exceeding those of their fellow East and West German students. Tanzanians who had come to West Germany equipped with scholarships also enjoyed better conditions compared to the majority of other students from Latin America, Asia and Africa. Only one in five students from the global South received official support, and with diminishing job opportunities in the late 1970s and early 1980s, many fell into poverty.[112] In economic terms, Tanzanian students could thus rightly consider themselves as privileged, and some indeed did, also mentioning that these privileges were not always well-taken by members of the local population in the GDR.[113]

In the 1960s, there seem to have been many foreign students who decided to leave East European countries, particularly the Soviet Union, before they had ended their studies, escaping for academic reasons or because of experiences of racism.[114] Another type of East-West-migration was pursued after the main objective of the educational visit, as seen from the state's perspective, had been achieved. Graduates from GDR universities went to West Germany to continue with PhD studies or postgraduate courses targeting students from the global South, as mentioned in the quote above. Information about these courses spread in students' word-of-mouth networks. Others simply wanted to earn additional money before returning to Tanzania where adequate employment, income opportunities and the next possibility to go abroad were all uncertain. Commonly, motives of pursuing higher degrees and accumulating

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111 BA Berlin Lichterfelde, DQ 4/5432, Eingabe des Superintendenten des Kreiskirchenrates des Ev. Kirchenkreise Halle (Saale) an das Afro-Asiatische Solidaritätskomitee DDR, Halle (Saale), 8 November 1988; BA Berlin Lichterfelde, DQ 4/5432, Stv. des Ministers für Außenhandel der DDR Gädt an Ministerium für Elektrotechnik und Elektronik, 8 June 1988; the share of the donations was 4,000 Mark for the purchase of the goods and another 4,000 Mark available for shipping.

112 BA Koblenz, B 138/34578, Rainer Henseleit, Die Rolle der deutschen Hochschulen im Nord-Süd-Dialog, November 1978, p. 40; BA Koblenz, B 138/34583, Anton Pfeifer (BMZ) an Bundestagsmitglied Helge Schmedt, Bonn, 29 March 1984.

113 Interview #65, Tanzanian student in the GDR; Interview #104, Tanzanian student in the GDR. Confer also the autobiographical writing of the Rwandan student Nsekuye Bizimana; Bizimana (1989), 93.

114 Mac Con Uladh (2005), 180-181.

more money were intertwined with each other.[115] Decisions to stay or go were, of course, also significantly influenced by love relationships, especially when they led to marriages and the birth of children. Tanzanians with the necessary contacts "jumped over the wall" (*kuruka ukuta*), as one interviewee expressed it[116], to further pursue economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital. Students already in West Germany simply extended their stay, sometimes even asked to do so by their supervisors.[117] Several stayed six, eight or even twelve years in the FRG, even PhD students. That is a striking difference to the four to six years that were usual in the GDR,[118] although in many cases one needs to add the time they spent in West Germany afterwards.

Some students applied for a scholarship from West German institutions while they were still in the GDR, though this seems to have been unsuccessful if they had no additional contacts and no backing from Tanzanian state authorities.[119] Postgraduate courses specifically targeting Third World students and development workers, like the *Seminar für Landwirtschaftliche Entwicklung* (Seminar for Agricultural Development) at the Technical University of Berlin or the trainee programme at the Technical University of Clausthal, included visits to Tanzania and thus enabled the participants to knit new professional bonds. Credentials from a Western state were particularly sought by those who hoped for employment in Tanzanian enterprises.[120]

Risks of return and mobility

No matter if one had studied abroad or in Tanzania, it was still the state's prior claim to allocate university graduates who had received official scholarships. Several interviewees remembered that upon return, they reported to the respective ministry which then allocated them to certain positions. Of course, contacts were instrumental in influencing these processes: Three students returning from a postgraduate course

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115 Interview # 63, Tanzanian student in the GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).

116 Interview #40, Tanzanian PhD student in FRG.

117 According to a survey from the 1980s, only 17% of all students from "developing countries" in West Germany intended to return directly after graduation; Schmidt-Streckenbach (1987).

118 UAL, DIB 346, Liste der Absolventen der Karl-Marx-Universität aus Tansania, 25 March 1974, Bl. 143-150; medicine students needed more time.

119 DAAD Archives, B212/91392, DAAD an BRD-Botschaft Dar es Salaam, ohne Ort, 7 June 1979; DAAD Archives, B 212/91395/4, A.A.A. an DAAD, Magdeburg, 2.5.1989; some were still able to continue directly; Interview #64, Tanzanian student in the GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD)

120 BStU, MfS, HA II/28716, Hauptmann Wessler, Information vom 30.4.1985, Magdeburg, 2 May 1985, Bl. 74.

in Berlin managed to be sent to a development project supported by West Germany, as the project leader and other expatriate development workers had also taken the same course.[121] Academic staff and project counterparts returned, usually, to their earlier employer, as their stay had been part of staff qualification schemes.

It is striking that Tanzanians who have studied in the two German states have in large part returned, especially if compared to those in the U.S. or the UK.[122] Despite economic hardships, Tanzania has always been a politically stable country, which cannot be said of many other states in Africa. The wish to put one's knowledge to work and help Tanzania were also cited as reasons for the decision to return, echoing discourses of moral responsibility that were shared between *Ujamaa*, Western development aid discourses and state-socialist practices of solidarity. Restrictive legal frameworks of the two German states also played a role, as did experiences of discrimination and feelings of not belonging. Three interviewees (both GDR and FRG) said that they had received job offers, but felt it impossible to stay in Germany because of rampant racism and physical violence (one respondent told that he was almost killed during a skinhead assault in his own apartment). They referred to the years between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s.

In a few cases, graduates returning from the GDR were able to pursue a PhD in West Germany after having worked a few years in Tanzania. Language skills, established contacts, full recognition of degrees and less competition as compared to the Anglophone world facilitated a second long-term stay. Noteworthy is that a couple of students returned to the GDR to obtain their PhD, sometimes after more than 10 or 15 years of absence and – in the case of one returnee – postgraduate courses in India, Ireland, Italy, the U.S. and Belgium.[123] One reason for these candidates to leave Tanzania and (re-)turn to East Germany once more might well be the age restriction for scholarships in Western countries. This regulation hit Tanzanians in particular because of the duty to attend National Service and, after the Musoma Resolution, have work experience before being selected for university.[124] The fact that their

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121 Interview #63, Tanzanian student in GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).

122 This impression is based on numbers of returnees given in the manpower reports as well as information from interviewees.

123 UAL, Grad A 0068, Application, Bl. 8.

124 Until 1986, the DAAD accepted to support PhD programmes only for persons with a maximum age of 32 years. Of 81 applications for DAAD scholarships between 1976 and 1989, 41 were refused – 19 (or 46%) of which because the candidate was deemed to be too old (own calculations using correspondence from BA Koblenz, B 212; DAAD Archive, B 212; there were more applications in total, but not for all correspondences available).

qualification was fully recognised in the GDR, but not in other states also played a role.[125] Ideological sympathies might have played a role, but even when they did, they did not determine agency after return. A case in point is Lucian Msambichaka who had obtained both his first degree and PhD in the GDR and became, in the beginning of the 1980s, one among a small group of influential economists advocating for liberalisation of the economy.

But reintegration into the contested and transforming institutional landscapes of Tanzania was often a delicate matter, far from the technocratic allocation of human capital. In 1968, Member of Parliament Stephen Mhando complained that Eastern bloc returnees were treated with "hostility from Western-educated senior civil servants" who would "only recognise British qualifications when employing the youths." He cited the example of two doctors returning from the GDR who were being "kicked around" by senior officials in the Ministry of Health and Housing, "questioned about their Marxist-Leninist political indoctrination, and initially told that their academic qualifications were not recognised."[126] In 1970, all Zanzibari doctors who had studied in the Soviet Union were required by Zanzibar's Minister of Health Ali Sultan Issa to declare that their qualification was insufficient to practice and that they resign from their posts. They did resign, but refused to let their qualification be devalued. Ali Sultan Issa forbade them to leave the island and made a secondary school leaver the new head of Zanzibar's Lenin Hospital.[127]

In the second example, it was the competition between rivalling kinds of socialism which was responsible for the devaluation of their qualification: Zanzibar increasingly relied on Chinese assistance in the health sector, and Chinese pressure demanded that obnoxious elements were ousted from influential positions.[128] In the first example, the dividing line runs between administrators who were silent proponents of a "technocratic" ideology of Western style and adherents of Soviet-style communism. In both examples, the returnees from the Eastern Bloc had to bear the brunt of these divisions. Even in later years, when the system conflict had cooled down, holders of East European degrees and PhDs were often regarded with sus-

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125 Only in 1982 was East Germany able to talk Tanzania into signing a treaty in which the value of academic grades was put on record; BA Berlin-Lichterfelde, DC 20/5425a, Vfg. Nr. 185/82 vom 21.10.1982.

126 Cited in Aminzade (2013), 159.

127 BA Berlin-Lichterfelde, DC 20/11525, Konsulat Sansibar, Zusammengefaßter Aktenvermerk über die Gespräche mit SU-Konsul Genossen Bogow am 11. und 19.5.1970, Sansibar, 21 May 1970, Bl. 244.

128 Altorfer-Ong (2010).

picion[129] and viewed as "not marketable".[130] In many cases, they had to struggle to find adequate positions. Apart from some political sympathies in party union and circles, there was little additional value seen in experiences within state-socialism in the GDR, although East German degree and PhD holders were still in the best position if compared to other returnees from other COMECON countries. As a Tanzanian who obtained his PhD in the GDR remembered, the ideological trench-fighting was quite moderate in comparison to other countries like Kenya because of *Ujamaa*:

> "It depended on where you came from. If you came from Kenya and you went to the Eastern Bloc instead of going to Western Bloc you would be looked down [upon] but if you came from Tanzania which was *Ujamaa* oriented […]. I will tell you that so many big people went to the East to study. […] And what people actually try to find out was what you offer in the classroom, but there was also this material view in the sense that if you went to the Western Bloc you were likely to come back with a good car or something like that but if you came from the east […] you didn't get a chance to work like those who went to the West, were they would work and find jobs work and get those cars, so there was that difference."[131]

Studying abroad was about more than just about education and also about more than just ideological conflicts, it was deeply embedded into material inequalities and possibilities to make use of them. The prestige of GDR degrees, certificates and PhDs was substantially reduced in Tanzania, unless they were bolstered up by some Western credentials.

Conclusion

The joke quoted in the introduction of this text could also be taken as a riddle. How could it possibly be that Tanzanian students sent to communist countries returned as capitalists, and vice versa? The argument was that this question had to be answered by including the invisible third party, the sending country, and by opening the analytical focus for transnational practices which undercut the Cold War binaries of East vs. West.

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129 Interviewees who had studied in Western countries cited examples of "political doctorates" which were finalised after several months, e.g. Interview #4, Tanzanian PhD student in the United States.

130 Interview #75, Tanzanian student in the GDR (graduate) and FRG (PhD).

131 Interview #47, Tanzanian PhD student in the GDR.

As Quinn Slobodian noted referring to 1960s West Germany, "Third World students studying abroad arguably felt the pressures of an economic-utilitarian approach to education more acutely than any others. They were also the first to resist against it by acting publicly as both students and political actors, in the face of vigorous state attempts to silence them."[132] Tanzanians, especially the ones leaving for a first degree, doubtlessly also felt these pressures, as the Tanzanian state decided about their destination and also allocated graduates to jobs. This power ceded beyond Tanzania's borders. On top of that, political activity pitted against state authorities was not the only way of subverting managerial state perspectives. The empirical material presented suggests that for students in East Germany, opposition against state authorities was not inexistent, but stifled. Nevertheless, they employed transnational strategies to enhance their social, cultural, symbolic and economic capital, strategies which were more tolerated than accepted by authorities, and definitely not initiated from above.

As a result of the return to Tanzania, some kinds of capital were devalued, while others could be converted or used in another instance of mobility for the sake of education and economic gains. Access to Western contacts, currency, goods and qualifications was particularly valuable. Some students in the Eastern Bloc might indeed have become entrepreneurs under the particular circumstances of a communism which was unable to fully de-link itself from the capitalist world system,[133] while Tanzanians in West Germany might have played a role and been transformed in leftist student activism. Partly, however, the joke also tells something about the situation in Tanzania. Tanzanian students returning from communist countries had to de-politicise their qualifications to advance, while students returning from capitalist countries were well-advised to distance themselves from colonial attitudes, imperialism and career-oriented individualism through some left-wing rhetoric. Whatever explanation provides more insight can only be determined through individual trajectories and life-stories. Meanwhile, a perspective paying attention to economic aspects of transnational mobility and the vulnerable prestige of qualifications may help us to understand why students acted as they did – seeking border crossings or not, choosing insubordination, adaptation or – most likely – a path that could be reduced to neither.

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132 Slobodian (2008), 48.
133 The point that the Soviet Union could never escape the world market is made by Oscar Sanchez-Sibony (2014).

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BA Berlin-Lichterfelde = Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde.

BA Koblenz = Bundesarchiv Koblenz.

CCMA = Chama Cha Mapinduzi Archives, Dodoma.

DAAD Archives = Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Bonn (these files will eventually be transferred to the BA Koblenz).

PAAA = Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Berlin.

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The Role of the United Nations in the Congo-Crisis: An Instrument to Enforce National Interests?

Thomas Lechner

"avant l'indépendance = après l'indépendance" – nothing expresses the important national interests during the Congo-Crisis in the background more, than this comment written on a blackboard in the Congo in July 1960 by Belgian army chief General Emile Janssens.[1] Of which nature those significant interests were, was shown a lot earlier.

The African continent was not in the lens of the superpowers after World War II. That changed when most African states were on their way to independence. In April 1955, at the first Afro-Asian conference in Bandung, twenty-nine third world leaders met to form a third bloc. The goal was not to become involved in the Cold War struggle of the superpowers. The participants were committed to the principles of the United Nations and opposed to colonialism and imperialism. Both Moscow and Washington were not eager to see a third bloc. While U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower did not even send an observer to this event, Moscow publicly welcomed the efforts of the participants not to become part of the western bloc. Although there was no U.S. involvement, the United States did not turn a blind eye to the actions taking place on the African continent. Eisenhower's Secretary of State John Foster Dulles reported to the administration that none of the soon independent African states were ready for self-government by the time of independence and thus could be a favoured Soviet target. Dulles tried to convince third world leaders that the African "neutralism" would benefit the Soviet Union.[2] Seen from this angle, the U.S.

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1 Leimgruber (1990), 53.
2 Namikas (2013), 21-23.

saw the Bandung conference as a drift of the participating states toward the Left. Krushchev, although officially welcoming it, worried that too much independent international organising among Third World leaders could make it more difficult to gain influence.[3] In one school of thought, the U.S. foreign policy was not only determined by the political and strategic Cold War struggle but also characterised by American capitalism. A detailed knowledge of its expanding economic role helps to understand U.S. involvement around the world.[4] The U.S.-Africa policy was first written down in the position paper of the National Security Council NSC5719/1 in July 1957. The National Security Council agreed that the African continent was going to have an increasingly important influence on the course of world events and depended on Europe as a source of imports from undeveloped countries and as the major supplier of private and public investments. On the other hand, the U.S. estimated that Europe needed the African market, as well as Africa's minerals and agricultural products. Therefore the U.S. saw it as desirable that the European powers and Africa kept their economic relationship on-going after the colonial period had ended. The American economic interest in Africa at that time was not comparable with other areas, being about $500 million in investments. The continent was a source of strategic materials such as asbestos, cobalt, columbite, corundum, industrial diamonds, tantalum ore, palm kernel oil, chemical chromite, and uranium. Besides these materials, the strategic value of Africa was the area's geographic location as air and sea route to the Far East. Therefore the primary strategic interest of the U.S. was to prevent Communist control over the area. The National Security Council suggested bringing American influence to bear by acting through the United Nations and to seek to influence any consideration in the UN along constructive lines. In the National Security Council's opinion a premature independence would have been as harmful to our interests in Africa as would be a continuation of nineteenth-century colonialism. Therefore the U.S. policy towards Africa should be tailored to the capabilities and needs of each particular area. Confronting Soviet offers to African states, alternatives should be provided, but a direct competition with the Soviet offer should be avoided. In the face of the upcoming independence of African States the impression should be avoided that the United States were prepared to underwrite their eventual independence in order to avoid claims from areas that had not been independent by then. In the case of the Congo, the Belgians appeared to be "in the best position to continue the eco-

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3 Westad (2007), 103.
4 Westad (2007), 28.

nomic development of their dependent area, the Congo – a rich area in its own right."[5] To achieve their own goals the United States pursued a dual policy with anti-colonialism on the one hand and support for the colonial elites on the other. Gerhart Niemeyer of the State Department's policy planning staff noted:

> "Our policy should be based on the general premise of the right to self-determination [...]. Obviously, so long as the present world tensions prevail, our national interest is closely bound to precisely those countries which still to [a] greater or lesser degree carry the stigma of colonial imperialism. When these tensions safely subside, other considerations will become valid".[6]

The Belgians pursued their own goals in the Congo and tried to isolate it since the beginning of their trusteeship. Likewise neither the United States nor the Soviet Union should become too deeply involved in the Congo. Therefore the Belgians limited the communist representation in the Congo and just allowed a single Czechoslovakian consulate and thwarted direct U.S. contacts with the Congolese as long as their trusteeship remained. Due to American economic interests in the Congo the U.S. tried to intensify their contacts with the Congolese, and John Foster Dulles warned the Belgian foreign minister Pierre Wigny about failing in the Congo and opening it to Communism.[7]

For the Soviet Union, Africa was not interesting until the death of Stalin in 1955. This changed with Stalin's successor Nikita Krushchev, who saw the African continent as a great opportunity to spread communist ideas and to gain influence. Krushchev had an active interest in foreign affairs. In the background, Krushchev was involved in all the major Soviet foreign policy decisions and put his personal stamp, as Stalin before, on the Soviet foreign policy. The new Soviet foreign policy can be described as peaceful coexistence with a certain competition between socialism and capitalism. The neutral and non-aligned movement of newly independent African states aroused his interest. He thought that a major war between the superpowers could be avoided and there would be a worldwide transition to socialism. The Soviet Union supported this desired transition with diplomatic support for the Bandung movement of Non-Aligned states, as well as economic and military aid to newly independent states.[8] Furthermore, Moscow realised that Africa became more important

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5 24. National Security Council Report, 76-83.
6 Westad (2007), 132.
7 Namikas (2013), 25-26.
8 Roberts (1999), 42-44.

to the U.S. because, among others, Vice President Richard Nixon made a trip to Ghana to advertise independence in 1957 and the American costs for propaganda in Africa increased by US$ 500.000 to US$ 5.884.000.[9] The Soviet response to this was the plan to open Soviet departments in Africa, collect information about hostile propaganda, create Soviet propaganda for Africa, and send delegations to African states.[10] Especially for newly independent states, the Soviet propaganda was very tempting. The Russian Red October revolution inspired a lot of people who were dreaming of getting out of colonial oppression.[11]

Not only had the different political propaganda expressed the new foreign policy of the Soviet Union, but the Soviet economic interests also changed in 1959. The principle of all economic relations to third world countries should be characterised by friendly foreign policy. The Soviet Union wanted to assist the newly independent states with technical and economic support. Third world building projects should be financed with Soviet credits and accomplished by Soviet workers to show to the receiving states that the Soviet Union would help them out of humanitarian reasons and that the western aid was just used for capitalist interests.[12] The costs of this new Soviet-African economic program did outweigh benefits by far. Even Krushchev acknowledged this fact. The Soviet Union also fought imperialism and capitalism by criticizing it at the UN Trusteeship Council but was itself criticised for its aid of sending snow ploughs to Guinea. The Soviet Union knew far too little, hence Krushchev sent representatives to Africa to learn more about the continent. In Moscow an Africa Institute was created in 1959 with Ivan Potekhin as its director. Potekhin was one of the few Soviet Africanists who also met Patrice Lumumba, Kwame Nkrumah, and Ahmed Sekou Toure himself.[13] So both superpowers had generated special interests, political, economic and strategic, for the African continent which until 1960 had nearly been a blank area on the political landscape. All those interests collided in the Congo right after independence when riots broke out and the United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold tried to calm down the situation.

The Congo Crisis was not predicted by the Western powers, which is perhaps the reason why no plans to secure the mineral wealth of the Congo existed. However,

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  9 RGANI, F. 5, op. 30, d. 270, 17.
 10 RGANI, F. 5, op. 30, d. 270, 24-25.
 11 Westad (2007), 51.
 12 RGANI, F. 5, op. 30, d. 305, 116-120.
 13 Namikas (2013), 29-30.

the problems were not unpredictable at all. In January 1960 the Belgian government called for a Round Table Conference in Brussels with all Congolese parties. Patrice Lumumba, the imminent Prime Minister of the Congo, at that time was still in prison for inciting a riot, and so the Belgians believed that they could create a centralised Congolese government without Lumumba. Yet the Congolese party Mouvement National Congolais (MNC) refused to attend the conference without Lumumba. The Belgian government yielded to the political pressure and flew Lumumba to Brussels. The conference participants agreed to hold national elections in May 1960 and the independence date was set for June 30.[14]

The Belgians thought that the Congolese would accept a kind of continued guardianship and wanted to stay in control of defence, finance, and foreign affairs. All representatives of the Congolese parties declined that suggestion but for a man named Moise Tshombe. When the conference ended, the Congolese had achieved everything with one big exception – the economic questions. Although the Belgians succumbed in those official talks, they believed that they could somehow keep control of the Congo.[15] At least the Belgians could convince the Congolese representatives to guarantee that the new Belgian government would respect Belgian property in the Congo.[16] At the time of the Round Table Conference in Brussels, no conference participant could guess how the upcoming elections were going to end. Nobody could forecast the overwhelming victory of the MNC and Lumumba, and this result was the least desirable for the Belgian government, because the MNC included the strongest and most feared nationalists, especially Patrice Lumumba. On 30 June 1960 the new government took office with Patrice Lumumba as Prime Minister and Joseph Kasavubu as President. Furthermore, Lumumba appointed Joseph Mobutu to the position of Secretary of State for Defence.[17]

High representatives from around the world travelled to the independence ceremony in Leopoldville to witness the beginning of Congolese self-government. Guests to this event included former U.S. Under-Secretary of State Robert Murphy and U.S. ambassador-to-be Clare Timberlake. The Soviet delegation was headed by Mirzo R. Rakhmatov, Vice President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. The UN was represented by Under-Secretary Ralph Bunche. These guests proved the impor-

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14 Villafana (2009), 18.
15 Namikas (2013), 45-46.
16 Matthiesen (2005), 29.
17 Villafana (2009), 19.

tance which the United States and the Soviet Union attached to Congo's independence. Belgian King Baudouin held a badly prepared speech, in which he praised the Belgians as liberators from Arab slavery and warned the Congolese not to be attracted by foreign powers and to undermine the positive development of the Congo during the last eighty years as Belgium's colony. The new President Joseph Kasavubu ignored the speech of Baudouin, thanked the Belgians and promised a future partnership with Belgium. The next speaker was Patrice Lumumba although not scheduled to speak.[18] Quite contrary to Baudouin's description of the 80 years of colonial rule, Lumumba said:

> "Our lot was eighty years of colonial rule. We have known sarcasm and insults, endured blows morning, noon and night because we were niggers [...]."[19]

All guests could see that the Belgians and Congolese shared a different opinion and that the Congolese would not continue a friendly partnership with Belgium. Robert Murphy even remembered the veins on King Baudouin's forehead standing out while Lumumba was speaking. Murphy immediately sent the message: "if we are not here soon with enough aid the Communists will be", to Washington.[20]

The written records of U.S. Chief of Station in the Congo Larry Devlin show that this estimate was correct:

> "During July and August 1960, several hundred Soviet personnel entered the Congo. [...] There were also a number of twin-engine Russian Il-14 cargo/passenger planes based at Ndjili and at the airport in Stanleyville, the up-river capital of Orientale province. Each plane had two or three crews as well as mechanics, interpreters, and other personnel. The aircraft carried cargo that had come from larger Russian planes. Some of it was in boxes marked with a Red Cross symbol, but the boxes seemed remarkably similar to small arms and ammunition boxes. … Some years later, we found some of those boxes with Red Cross symbols still unopened … The boxes contained rifles, machine-guns, and ammunition."[21]

Right after independence the Soviet Union flew personnel and cargo into the Congo and the U.S. also immediately strengthened its position in the Congo by increasing the personnel of the CIA. Even the Belgians had not considered leaving the

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18 Namikas (2013), 62-63.
19 De Witte (2001), 2.
20 Namikas (2013), 63.
21 Devlin (2007), 23-24.

Congo and stayed without abandoning their colonial privileges. Therefore and be-cause the ranks and wages of the Congolese soldiers were not raised, a mutiny within the Congolese army erupted just some days after independence when General Emile Janssens wrote his infamous comment on the blackboard. They committed acts of violence against Europeans and the remaining Belgian soldiers intervened to restore order. Yet because of a far too brutal course of action, the Belgian involvement just enforced the riots and led to strikes by civilian workers. The new government could not do anything to calm the situation and because of this defencelessness Moise Tshombe, meanwhile the President of the government of the province of Katanga, seized the moment to declare Katanga's secession, which was immediately supported by the remaining Belgian citizens, Belgian companies, and even by the Belgian govern-ment. Katanga was important for the Belgians because it brought 45% of the Congo's public revenues. The Congolese government therefore sent a telegram to Washington to ask for help to restore public order. The U.S. declined and referred them to the United Nations,[22] which since its foundation, was thought of as an extension of its own power. That US-UN-policy appeared in the Korean War, where U.S. soldiers fought under a UN mandate against Chinese and Korean communist forces.[23] After the U.S. had declined, the Congolese government informed the UN that the Congo was occupied by the Belgian military. The Congolese did not only ask the UN for help, but also the Soviet Union and Ghana. In the meantime the Sudan and Liberia offered military support too. The Secretary General of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjold pressed for intervention in the UN Security Council, because in his opinion international peace was threatened.[24] Also the superpowers signalled that they would work through the United Nations or at least would not hinder UN in-volvement. Resolution 143 (1960), which was adopted by the UN Security Council on July 14, called upon the Belgian government to withdraw its troops from the territory of the Republic of the Congo and authorised the Secretary General to take all necessary steps to provide the Congolese government "with such military assis-tance as might be necessary until the national security forces are/were able to meet fully their tasks, which meant to gain control of the Congo again."[25] The UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC) was born.

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22 Leimgruber (1990), 53-54.
23 Westad (2007), 136.
24 Leimgruber (1990), 54.
25 S/RES/143.

Afterwards Larry Devlin revealed why the Soviet Union, in his opinion, was determined to intervene in the Congo. He stated that in case the Soviet Union took control of the Congo, they used the state as a base to infiltrate the nine countries around. This would have been an extraordinary power base in Africa. As a side effect they would have gained control over the raw materials and minerals of the Congo, especially cobalt, which is used in missiles and other weapon systems. Furthermore, they would have increased their influence both in the third world and within the UN. He thought that the Soviet Union's long-term objective was to outflank NATO.[26]

In summary, every actor had its own interest in the Congo at the time the UN became involved. The Soviet Union wanted to gain influence with propaganda and economic relations, the U.S. wanted to keep the Soviet Union out and save its own mineral imports, the Belgians wanted to stay close to the Congo's mineral wealth and the Congolese wanted sovereignty and independence. How those interests influenced the behaviour of all conflict parties and the role of the UN during the Congo Crisis can be seen in the following events, which took place prior to the assassination of Patrice Lumumba.

Although the U.S. approved resolution 143, they did not criticise the Belgians, who had not implemented it. The United States ambassador to the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., interpreted the resolution as not requiring the Belgians to leave the Congo, instead viewing their presence there as mandated by the UN. On the contrary, the U.S. ambassador in the Congo, Clare Hayes Timberlake, warned of a Belgian withdrawal.[27]

Also the Soviet Union approved resolution 143 but demanded, in addition to the Belgian withdrawal afterwards, the restriction of the UN mandate to African UN forces. However, the U.S. threatened to use their right of veto. When Patrice Lumumba gave an ultimatum to Ralph Bunche, deputy of Dag Hammarskjold, in which he demanded that the UN should throw the Belgians out of the Congo by force lest he would turn to the Soviet Union, he was believed to be irrational by the U.S. and the UN. At the end of July there were already 11,000 UN soldiers in the Congo, but ONUC still operated without a formal agreement with the Congolese government.

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26   Devlin (2007), 48.
27   Leimgruber (1990), 23.

In mid-July the U.S. decided to move on without Lumumba, in order to not risk the secession of Katanga, because the Congo would have been susceptible to Soviet aid.[28]

The Belgian government withdrew its troops until August 7 from every Congolese province with the exception of Katanga, which highlights the enormous significance of Katanga and its mineral wealth to Belgium. The Belgian government not only resisted the U.S. by keeping the Congo isolated until independence, but also the UN by remaining in Katanga even though the Security Council ordered a withdrawal. As a consequence of Belgian resistance, the Security Council adopted another resolution on August 9, which ordered yet again a withdrawal of Belgian troops especially from Katanga, and made clear that the UN should not act as a conflict party.[29] This was the last time the superpowers coincided in the Security Council. Moise Tshombe threatened the United Nations that any UN troops entering Katanga would be attacked. The Belgian king and the U.S. supported Moise Tshombe's behaviour and so Ralph Bunche recommended to Dag Hammarskjold to delay the intervention of UN troops in Katanga. The Secretary General pushed this resolution because Krushchev expressly demanded that the UN Security Council should approve of a military invasion of Katanga, even if by force. While the U.S. and Belgium tried to keep Katanga untouched by UN forces, the Soviet Union pressed the UN to restore the unity of the Congo. The Secretary General unwaveringly refused to invade Katanga by force and so the Security Council adopted a second request for withdrawal. Hammarskjold stated that a military invasion into Katanga would make the UN forces a political instrument. Congo's UN representative Justin Bomboko repeated Patrice Lumumba's argument in the UN that "Belgian troops systematically looted our garrisons while ONUC had forced the national Congolese army to lay down its weapons."[30]

In August 1960 the Soviet Union offered Lumumba military aid outside the UN and he accepted because he needed resources to reintegrate Katanga.[31]

The U.S. agreed to the resolution in the UN Security Council but at the same time made sure that they did not annoy Moise Tshombe too much, and they pursued a so-called mid-way policy. The explanation for this U.S. attitude can be found in the

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28 Namikas (2013), 73-79.
29 S/RES/146 (1960).
30 Namikas (2013), 84-85.
31 Namikas (2013), 7.

financial interests of the Eisenhower-administration members in the Katanga province. The U.S. government advisor Robert Murphy was director of Morgan Guaranty International, which had close relations to Belgium. William Burden, U.S. ambassador in Brussels, was the director of the American Metal Climax, which was supportive of the Katanga secession because of its interests in Congolese copper. The company of U.S. Under-Secretary of State Douglas Dillan granted a loan of 15 millions US$ to the Belgian Congo in 1958. U.S. Under-Secretary of State Livingston Merchant owned a large amount of stock shares of the Union Minière du Haut Katanga.[32] The UMHK also played a central role in the secession of Katanga because the rich Belgian company which controlled the mining in the resource-rich region supported Moise Tshombe.[33]

Not only did members of the Eisenhower administration have varied interests in the Katanga province, but also the United States itself needed the mineral wealth of Katanga. The U.S. was the main customer of Congolese uranium in 1960, and it also imported copper and covered their demands of industrial diamonds by 80%, tantalum by 50% and cobalt by 75%. The main strategic value was with uranium, but also the geographic position caused the U.S. to enforce their influence in the Congo, especially in Katanga.[34] The United States UN policy in 1960 was targeted at widening the community of the concerned and they were able to do so because the U.S. had a leading position within the UN. This can be seen even at the UN panels, especially in the so-called "Congo-Club", which consisted, among others, of three Americans, namely executive assistant Andrew Cordier, UN Under-Secretary Ralph Bunche, and Secretary of UN-Africa Committee Heinz Wieschoff. Heinz Wieschoff did not even let UN Under-Secretary for Political and Security Council Affairs, the Soviet Georgij Arkadjev, look at the UN documents concerning the Congo, even though Arkadjev was Wieschoff's boss. Those Americans were responsible for the UN Congo policy. As mentioned earlier, the U.S. policy towards the Congo was to have the Belgians in control of the Congo and since Patrice Lumumba did not stop trying to throw the Belgians out and threatened to accept Soviet support, he became an enemy to the U.S. and to the UN at the same time. Chief of Station Larry Devlin stated on August 18 that the

> "Embassy and station believe Congo experiencing classic Communist effort take-over government. Many forces at work here: Soviets, [...] communist party, etc.

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32 Leimgruber (1990), 58.
33 Westad (2007), 138.
34 Leimgruber (1990), 55.

> Although difficult determine major influencing factors to predict outcome struggle for power, decisive period not far off. Whether or not Lumumba actually Commie or just playing Commie game to assist his solidifying power, anti-west forces rapidly increasing power Congo and there may be little time left in which take action avoid another Cuba."[35]

This was apparently the time when the decision was made to get rid of Lumumba, because he was thought to be irrational and a "*Castro or worse*". Those attributes were accredited to Lumumba when he flew to Washington in August 1960 to talk with Secretary of State Herter and Under-Secretary C. Douglas Dillon personally. A later declassified record of the conversation showed that it was Lumumba's determined defence of the Congo's sovereignty that caused a problem to the U.S.[36]

Krushchev tried to use the western and UN behaviour in the Congo for the interests of the Soviet Union to gain influence. From August 25 to 30, thirteen independent African states met in Leopoldville to evaluate their support for ONUC. Krushchev sent a greeting to this conference and warned that the western imperialists would not only threaten the independence of the Congo, but that this was also an aggression against all African states. He invited all African states to form a common front against imperialism. The representatives at this conference were not impressed by the Soviet offer and tried to cajole Lumumba into cooperating with the United Nations. Even Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah, who also had close relations to the Soviet Union, made it obvious that he would not support Lumumba's struggle for independence with troops, but rather the ONUC. Although Krushchev's plan to create an anti-imperialist alliance did not work out as planned, he sent twenty-six planes and five helicopters to the Congo. Ten Ilyushin-14s flew to the Congo, the rest was shipped by boat. He also supplied Ghana with additional weapons to help in the Congo Crisis if necessary. All those actions took place outside of the United Nations, because in the UN Security Council every Soviet request was impeded by the U.S. With the support of Soviet planes Lumumba tried, after a consultation with Soviet ambassador Yakovlev, to conquer the provinces Kasai and Katanga in early September. His ambitious operation failed, however, and it was the first time that UN troops had to fire in self-defence.[37] This was a preposterous situation, having the legally elected Prime Minister and his soldiers engaged in combat with UN troops. Due to

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35 Leimgruber (1990), 60-61.
36 Westad (2007), 138-139.
37 Namikas (2013), 93-94.

the tense atmosphere in the Congo and simply too much non-UN involvement in the Congo, Dag Hammarskjold devised the plan that the UN should take control over the Congo again. He wanted to run the Congo as a trusteeship, but without calling it that. The Soviet Union and the Congolese rejected this plan. With growing Soviet influence in the Congo, the U.S. enforced their efforts to put the plan into action to get rid of Lumumba.[38] At this time the U.S. also started to plan their actions outside the UN as the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff stated that

> "in addition to United Nations actions, effective or otherwise, the United States must be prepared at any time to take appropriate military action [...] to prevent or defeat Soviet military intervention."[39]

On September 5, Kasavubu removed Lumumba from office although he denied this U.S. suggestion in August. In response Lumumba dismissed Kasavubu. Lumumba then fled to Stanleyville, to where he also wanted to relocate the democratically elected government.[40] Lumumba was still supported by the parliament that annulled both dismissals. Thus Kasavubu also dismissed the members of parliament for a month. During this struggle for power the UN supported Kasavubu and Andrew Cordier, the deputy of Dag Hammarskjold in the Congo, closed all airports so that Lumumba could not move his troops with the Soviet planes. UN forces also took over all Congolese radio stations and hindered Lumumba from talking to the Congolese citizens, while ensuring Kasavubu could explain his perspective of the on-going struggle. On September 14, the Congolese army chief Joseph Mobutu took power by a military coup and expelled the Soviets from the Congo. With the appointment of Rejeshwar Dayal as commander of the UN forces in the Congo a turnaround of UN Congo-policy was achieved. This was necessary because the UN was obliged to the legally elected government of the Congo, which de facto no longer existed. Dayal wanted to reposition the UN in the Congo to be absolutely neutral and tried to mediate between Kasavubu and Lumumba. Due to upcoming rumours of CIA assassination plans, Dayal placed Lumumba under preventive detention. Dag Hammarskjold advocated a reappointment of Patrice Lumumba in an emergency special session of the UN General Assembly from September 17 to 20, but the U.S. rejected every possible solution. A member of the Bureau of African Affairs of the U.S. State Department stated:

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38 Namikas (2013), 89-90.
39 Westad (2007), 139.
40 Strizek (2006), 56.

> "We dare not accept new elections in the Congo. [...] We dare not accept the
> convocation of the Parliament. [...] We dare not even see Lumumba included
> in a coalition government for fear that he could come to dominate the cabinet.
> For a country that subscribes to the democratic creed, this is a remarkable pre-
> dicament."[41]

Although Mobutu took power by a military coup in the Congo and Lumumba
was in UN preventive detention, the US still feared the influence Patrice Lumumba
could exert. From the viewpoint of the US, Mobutu was an important ally and a kind
of guarantee that neither Lumumba nor the Soviet Union would seize power in the
Congo. Devlin stated that Mobutu was an anti-communist, who condemned the
Soviet propaganda.[42]

As a consequence of the new UN Congo policy, the General Assembly adopted
resolution 147 (1960) in which the UN requested all states to accept and carry out
the decisions of the Security Council. Furthermore the Security Council asked the con-
flicting parties to refrain from any action which might tend to impede the restoration
of law and order and also from any action which might undermine the unity of the
Republic of the Congo, especially to refrain from the direct and indirect provision of
arms or other materials of war and military personnel.[43]

However, this new UN policy came too late for the Soviet Union. Since the U.S.
and UN actions in September, the Soviet Union held the opinion that a troika would
represent the UN better than a General Secretary. The troika should be composed of
a member of the Eastern Bloc, a member of the Western Bloc, and a member of the
Non-Aligned Movement. Certainly Krushchev thought that the Non-Aligned Move-
ment tended towards the Soviet Union rather than to the U.S. and the ex-colonial
powers.[44]

In the meantime the UN met problems in the Congo. After the coup Mobutu
wanted the UN to acknowledge his new military government and end the preventive
detention of Patrice Lumumba, but the UN commander Dayal refused. Dayal reques-
ted that the Congolese parliament be reinstated and the national Congolese army
disarmed. This caused frustration in the U.S. because they feared that Lumumba

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41 Leimgruber (1990), 63-64.
42 Devlin (2007), 85.
43 A/RES/1474(ES-IV).
44 Hilger (2011), 459.

would seize power again. At a later date Dayal would declare that Mobutu was financed by the U.S. and the attempts of Mobutu to capture Lumumba had actually been assassination attempts. Due to the problems the U.S. had with the new UN commander they suggested a dismissal of Dayal, but Hammarskjold declined and criticised the latest actions of the U.S. in the Congo himself. In this chaos Lumumba fled from preventive detention. This chance was immediately grabbed by the U.S. and the Belgians, who blocked every possible escape route and captured him.[45] When Lumumba was imprisoned, his deputy Prime Minister Antoine Gizenga announced that from that moment on he was the head of the only legal Congolese government. Gizenga and his troops gained control of the Orientale province and many Congolese soldiers joined the army of Gizenga. On December 1960 they conquered the Kivu province and moved south along the shores of Lake Tanganyika gathering more soldiers. This army was even able to occupy the city of Manono in northern Katanga. Another battalion stationed in the Orientale province attacked the Equateur province and took over control of the northern parts. This military campaign became a high risk for Mobutu's military government and the U.S. but, as Larry Devlin stated, Krushchev missed the chance to seize the opportunity to obtain a foothold in Africa. Krushchev did not exploit this extraordinary opportunity and waited to see what action the other African nations would take, but they were divided over a common plan on this issue.[46] On January 17 Lumumba was taken to Katanga.[47] At that point his fate was sealed. Even Larry Devlin admitted that he received the order to kill him.[48] On one of the following days, Lumumba was killed, but it was never revealed who had been responsible for his death.

When Krushchev was informed about the assassination, the Soviet Union broke off diplomatic relations with the UN Secretary General. From that moment on the Soviet Union considered the position of the UN Secretary General simply as nonexistent and enforced their demands for a UN troika.[49] The death of Lumumba was followed by demonstrations and propaganda campaigns everywhere in the Soviet bloc aimed at criticising the U.S., the NATO and the UN.[50] Within the UN Krushchev tried to exploit the death of Lumumba to increase Soviet influence. He accused Ham-

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45 Leimgruber (1990), 66.
46 Devlin (2007), 117-118.
47 Leimgruber (1990), 66.
48 Devlin (2007), 94-95.
49 Hilger (2011), 461.
50 Devlin (2007), 138.

marskjöld of being an accomplice in the murder and demanded once more a troika instead of the position of a General Secretary.[51]

Conclusion

The United Nations served western interests in the beginning of the Congo Crisis. In 1960 the UN was seen as an extension of U.S. power as U.S. troops fought in Korea against Chinese and Korean Communist forces. With the Congo Crisis the UN developed into a different organisation. It could also be shown that the Soviet Union had absolutely no influence in UN decisions, despite its right of veto in the Security Council, and that the UN hampered every Soviet action in the Congo. The change within the UN was also the reason why western powers acted through the UN in the beginning of the crisis and began to take more and more actions outside the UN when Dayal gaining control over the UN forces in the Congo. The reason why the western powers had their own interests in the Congo was mostly because of the strategic value of the geographic position and the mineral wealth of the Congo in the Cold War. It was essential for Belgium and the U.S. to maintain control of the Congo's mineral wealth and to keep the Soviet Union out. As soon as Krushchev realised that Soviet actions were hampered by the "US-controlled" UN, he demanded to install a troika instead of the position of the UN Secretary General. This was also an attempt to gain influence within the UN shifting the balance of powers in the UN. About the role of the United Nations during the Congo Crisis, Krushchev summed up later at the Vienna Summit 1961 that the United Nations were very well able to act against the will of individual states.[52] Although the role of the United Nations changed after Dayal had been in charge of the UN forces, it was still not in favour of the Soviet Union. The UN tried not to act as a conflict party, neither on the U.S. nor the Soviet side, but as an objective observer who intervenes to obtain peace if necessary. Not only the UN had an impact on the chaotic run of events during the crisis. Larry Devlin stated later:

> "In retrospect, I think that Lumumba's actions and statements may well have resulted from his limited education and his total lack of experience in dealing with sophisticated leaders and governments. While I never believed that Lumumba

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51 Namikas (2013), 8.
52 Hilger (2011), 453.

was a communist, I did believe he was politically naive and inherently unstable. Our view in the embassy was that he did not have the leadership qualities to hold this vast, disintegrating country together and, sooner or later, the Russian bear would seize its chance and pounce. This may seem far-fetched years after those hectic days at the height of the Cold War, but the Soviets had long before demonstrated their ability to work from within to control trade unions, peace groups, political parties, and other groups in Europa and Asia. There was no doubt in our minds that the Congo was a strategic linchpin in that epic struggle."[53]

Although Devlin ascribed characteristics such as naivety and inexperience to Lumumba, in 1960 he was conceived such a threat to the U.S. that they wanted to get rid of him at any price, and the UN was unable to frustrate the U.S. and Belgian efforts. It can be said that at the beginning of the Crisis the UN was an instrument of the U.S. and western interests, but developed during the crisis to the point where it no longer was an instrument of western nations.

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53   Devlin (2007), 54.

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African "Limited Access Orders" and Post-colonial Conflicts

Andreas Exenberger

Introduction

Conventional wisdom tells that the African continent is conflict-prone and particularly well known for an extraordinary persistence of violence. This wisdom is connected to a large number of coupe d'états, of "corrupt" leaders, and of bloody wars in the post-colonial period, as well as of increasingly "failing" states (increasingly in number as well as in intensity.[1] Some ascribe these patterns essentially to the colonial "defor-mations" of society and hence the processes of societal reorganisation during colonial times,[2] while others see the root causes for these kinds of problems essentially in the failed "modernisation" of African societies.[3]

In this broader context, this contribution is more of a rather explorative sketch of a research project than actually already providing sophisticated results. We depart from earlier work on conflict systems,[4] the concept of social orders with limited and open access in connection with violence[5] and its application to conflicts,[6] to develop this into an institutional perspective addressing the multiple roots of conflicts: some of them are located within the countries concerned, some in their regional context, some at the global level. Specifically, we want to start a discussion about the inter-play between international and national institutionalisation in the post-colonial period

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1 See Zartman (1995), Reno (1998), and Rothberg (2004) for informed assessments of this development.
2 As prominently done by Amin (1971) and Frank (1978).
3 This view follows stages-of-growth like logics as pioneered in Rostow (1962).
4 See Exenberger/Gebrewold (2009).
5 See North et al. (2009, 2013). North et al. (2013) is a case study collection also containing two interesting African cases: Kaiser/Wolters (2013) on the still largely dysfunctional order in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Levy (2013) on the more promising example of Mozambique.
6 See Exenberger (2014).

and hence to address the global dimension of conflict causation and conflict management in the case of the African continent. While also the local institutional environments will be considered, which are very likely to be different types of orders with (usually strictly) limited access in the African case, steps of institutionalisation at the global level are of particular concern. Hence, the concept of a limited access order will be explicitly applied at the global level to better understand these overarching configurations.

On the following pages, a brief introduction into the logic of limited access orders will be given, applied for post-colonial conflicts in Sub-Sahara Africa and finally linked to the global level of institutionalisation influencing African conflict systems.

The logic of limited access orders

About ten years ago, Douglass C. North, John J. Wallis, Barry K. Weingast and Steven B. Webb set sail on a brave endeavour: they developed and introduced a new institutional approach to "interpret recorded human history"[7]. The approach departs from the insight that

> "all societies must deal with the problem of violence. In most developing countries, individuals and organisations actively use or threaten to use violence to gather wealth and resources, and violence has to be restrained for development to occur."[8]

The approach finds the answer to this problem in credible institutionalisation of arrangements between people and groups with violence potential, leading to a typology of social orders from limited to open access, categorizing the various more or less successful historical and contemporary solutions to this problem. At the basis lies the distribution of economic rents and an analytical partition of all societies into elites, functionally understood as "dominant coalitions",[9] and a hardly differentiated rest. These "economic rents" are a result of any economic process and partly reflect the monetary value created by it. Hence, rents in this sense can originate from the crude extraction of primary resources as well as any transaction on markets as well

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7   So reads the subtitle of North et al. (2009) and an earlier working paper.
8   North et al. (2013), 1.
9   North et al. (2009), 18.

as any kind of innovation, and they will be distributed somehow. Consequently, the crucial question is who decides in favour of or against the formal and informal rules of distribution and particularly how these decisions are made. In this respect, limited and open access orders differ fundamentally: while in open access orders the central organising principle is rule-based competition, in limited access orders it is coalition-based exclusion. While in open access orders all people are free (in principle) to participate in political and economic processes as they wish, in limited access orders meaningful participation in political and economic processes is limited to members of the dominant coalition or close associates. While in open access orders conflicts of all kinds are usually solved by well-defined procedures without the use of any direct violence, in limited access orders the use of force is a constant threat to overthrow any agreement although the actual probability is largley dependent on how developed and stable the order already is.

The logic of the order has strong consequences for the economic activities in a society. The more open an order is, the more people will participate in the economy, and hence the more goods and services will be provided more efficiently. But at the same time also the economic rents from these activities will have to be distributed more equally among more people. The more limited and fragile an order is, the less goods and services will be provided less efficiently, but fewer people will be profiting from it and hence their relative share will be bigger. Hence, institutions are more and more "inclusive", the more open the respective order is, and more and more "extractive", the more fragile.[10] The resulting trade-off between the absolute value of total wealth produced in society and the relative value per capita in the dominant coalition after redistribution is also the explanation why extractive orders can be sustained. While better institutionalised and hence less risky orders always provide more in absolute terms for all, they possibly provide less in absolute terms (and certainly in relative) for elites. The best rational choice for a warlord may thus be to stay at war, certainly as long as this is the basis of his power and thus his share of resources, while, with respect to the provision of public goods and hence from a societal perspective, this is certainly the least favourable option.[11] In the end, a bigger piece from a smaller cake may be preferable to a smaller piece from a bigger cake –

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10 This terminology is borrowed from Acemoglu/Robinson (2012).

11 Panther (2014) summarises it by the truism that "violent conflict in a society will break out when groups commanding some resources of organised violence have reasons to believe that this will be to their advantage. This is the more likely if the costs of doing so are low and the expected gains high." (Panther 2014, 30)

with the people with violence potential as factual deciders what kind of cake is produced and certainly as first to choose their pieces.[12]

Limited access orders are further distinguished into "fragile", "basic" and "mature" according to their degree of sophistication, which can be measured along three dimensions: is there some kind of societal control over the means of violence? Is there some kind of rule-of-law at least between elites? And are there perpetually lived organisations in the political or economic sphere without close ties to the dominant coalition? These three dimensions also represent – as "doorstep conditions" – necessary prerequisites for a transition towards open access and of course the existence of formal rules is far less relevant than the existence of credible actual practises (be it based on formal rules or informal beliefs). While the relevance of the first condition is quite self-evident (containing violence as uncontested public "monopoly of violence" in an open access order) and directly related to the problem of violence, the other two need a bit more elaboration. The second condition is crucial because it not only opens the way to extend rule-of-law in a society to the general public, but also because it is the only way to establish credibility of the order. As long as there is no rule-based impartial conflict-management in a society, all actors with violence potential will regularly use violence in case of conflict. Only if there are predictable violence-free procedures to regulate conflicts while recognizing the interests of the conflict parties, can we expect that people will abstain from using violence to enforce their interests. Finally, the third condition does not only refer to the necessary separation between politics and the economy in an open access order, but also to the question of control and – again – of credibility. A perpetually lived organisation is an organisation which exists independently from any persons associated to it or identified with it. It survives the death of its founder or leader and is thus able to commit to agreements independently of any personal charisma or credibility. In fragile stages this opens the door for sustainable (political) agreements and in more stable stages this paves the path to anonymous (economic) exchange. Further, only political organisations independent of the ruling elite are able to provide meaningful control for it, i.e. monitoring whether the dominant coalition is actually keeping its agreements. Without such control, the dominant coalition cannot credibly commit itself and hence will not really be trusted by the people. But the more developed a limited access order is (and the more so in case of an open access order), the more

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12   This paragraph is taken from Exenberger (2014).

is at risk even for elites. Hence the question of credibility becomes more and more important, while regressions into less stable types are still possible, especially in the case of conflict and the more so if induced by an external shock like the discovery of valuable resources.

Overall, open access orders are characterised by the rule of law (formalised and strictly non-discriminatory), perpetuated political and economic organisations with low entry barriers (resulting in democracy and free markets) and a public monopoly of violence (state-controlled army and police). It is obvious that the three doorstep conditions are not met neither in the international order (which is sometimes even referred to as "anarchy"[13]) nor in any country on the African mainland. So let us discuss these issues and the consequences from it in more detail.

Post-colonial conflicts and regimes transformation in Africa

Actually, all Sub-Sahara African states are to some degree limited access orders and at the same time many have a history of conflict. While this is nothing unique to Africa, it points to the connections between poverty and governance on the one hand and conflict on the other, and it raises the question about the interplay of these national limited access orders with the international order.

In an attempt to operationalise the limited access order (LAO) framework, Sophia Gollwitzer-Franke and Marc Quintyn calculated a "doorstep index" in 2012. This was the first and is – at least to the knowledge of the author – also a unique quantitative assessment of the degree of openness of the respective social order of countries. To produce the index, the authors gathered data about 31 indicators grouped in three categories for 108 countries over the 1990s and 2000s. They constructed three sub-indices representative of the three doorstep conditions, each as the arithmetic mean of the standardised values (ranging from 0 to 1) of the respective indicators, rescaled for the sample average (so that a value of 1 in any sub-index represents the sample average, while higher values point to above-average and lower to below-average performance). While the authors aggregate the three sub-indices by simply taking their unweighted arithmetic mean, in table 1 aggregation is done by multiplication of the three sub-indices, which does give higher value to a balanced

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13 Following Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*. See Waltz (1979).

performance and hence does less allow compensating for deficits in one category by advances in another.[14]

Table 1: Doorstep index, selected countries[15]

Rank	Country	D1	D2	D3	Index
	TOP 5 WORLDWIDE				
1	Denmark	1.58	1.40	1.31	2.898
2	Finland	1.57	1.39	1.31	2.859
3	Australia	1.55	1.36	1.31	2.761
4	Netherlands	1.57	1.33	1.31	2.735
5	Sweden	1.59	1.30	1.30	2.687
	SELECTED NON-AFRICAN				
9	Austria	1.57	1.27	1.27	2.532
16	USA	1.32	1.32	1.18	2.056
33	Brazil	1.20	1.03	1.16	1.434
50	India	0.91	0.99	1.06	0.955
53	Mexico	0.97	1.05	0.89	0.906
73	Russia	0.75	0.81	1.11	0.674
90	China	0.70	0.89	0.80	0.498
	TOP 5 AFRICAN				
32	Mauritius	1.25	1.13	1.03	1.455
37	Botswana	1.05	1.13	1.12	1.329
39	South Africa	1.15	1.11	1.01	1.289
43	Ghana	1.05	1.13	1.04	1.234
47	Namibia	0.94	1.00	1.05	0.987
	BOTTOM 5 AFRICAN				
104	Cote d'Ivoire	0.35	0.78	0.72	0.197
105	Chad	0.68	0.64	0.43	0.187
106	Zimbabwe	0.40	0.72	0.56	0.161
107	Central African Republic	0.61	0.81	0.25	0.124
108	Mauritania	0.48	0.68	0.36	0.118

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14 Overall, this composite index has a larger band-with than the original one, while values around 1 representing around average performance anyway. Theoretically, the minimum level of this composite index is 0 (in case one or more sub-indices are equal to 0), while the maximum level is dependent on the sample averages of the sub-indices (taking the maximum values in the categories in the actual sample, is could be as high as 2.92).

15 Based on the data of Gollwitzer-Franke/Quintyn (2012), 54-56, but with modified index calculation (see text). The three sub-indices refer to variables about the rule of law for elites (D1), perpetuated political and economic organisations (D2) and the public monopoly of violence (D3). Actual index values for these categories are varying between 0.35 and 1.59 (D1), 0.64 and 1.4 (D2) and 0.25 and 1.31 (D3) with three African countries exhibiting the respective minimum values.

A window of transition between limited and open access may be located in the band between 1.5 and 1.7 of the index value. Not surprisingly, most of the 33 African countries in the sample are far from this threshold and hardly any does perform particularly well. Only Mauritius, Botswana, South Africa and Ghana have values above 1, while 15 African countries are to be found among the bottom 18 countries with values of below 0.4.

While there is no historical assessment of this doorstep data so far, it is rather clear that not many African countries have the chance of an open access historical record. Post-colonial rearrangements usually produced paternalistic single-party states engaged in various combinations of nation-building and clientilism. As a consequence, most African countries were typologised as "authoritarian" by the polity-IV-project over most of their post-colonial history. The respective database[16] contains data of all African countries from independence on, but not before. In their methodology, authoritarianism is associated with closed and selective recruitment of officials, unlimited authority of the chief executive and restricted and repressed political participation (or in other words: limited access to the political arena). On the other hand, democracy is associated with electoral systems, control of chief executives and political competition (or in other words: open access to the political arena). In both categories, a country can earn up to 10 points, with the "polity-score" as difference between the democracy and the authoritarianism score and hence between −10 and +10.[17]

Most common are authoritarianism scores of about 7, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. Between 1960 and 1989 usually more than 70% of all African countries with principally stable regimes had authoritarianism scores above 5, while at the same time only around 10% had democracy scores above 5. Hence, in this Cold War period of post-colonial politics, most African countries were quite stable autocracies and hence could very probably be associated with basic limited access orders, at least in its political dimension.

But as figure 2 shows something considerably changed in around 1990, when the Soviet bloc collapsed and hence a new political dynamic was unleashed. Regime

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16 Center for Systemic Peace (2016a).

17 However, extreme values are rare exceptions in Africa: there is only one country (Swaziland from 1973 to 1992) which had an authoritarianism score of 10 and thus the minimum polity-score of −10, but also only two (Mauritius since 1982 and Cape Verde since 2001) which have a democracy score of 10 and hence the maximum polity-score of +10.

transition, which was an exception before with only 31 post-colonial instances increased to 39 instances between 1991 and 1995 alone in about 50 African states. Correspondingly, the average regime duration decreased from 21.7 years in 1989 to less than 10 in the 1990s (and has reached only 13.9 years again in 2010). As a rule, authoritarian regimes collapsed in these years and gave way to gradual democratisation. However, this was not necessarily good for all countries concerned, because a seeming improvement of "scores" can easily hide that many regimes were simply destabilised by the loss of external strategic rents. While this usually results in less organised repression, it could also lead to collapse and warlordism, which could result in a general deterioration of living conditions. Hence an improvement in overall scores could lead to either progress towards a more mature order (like Ghana or Kenya, for example) as well as regression into a more fragile one (like in the extreme cases of Somalia or the DRC, for example), at least in the political dimension.

Figure 2: A quantitative bird's view on post-colonial African political regimes[18]
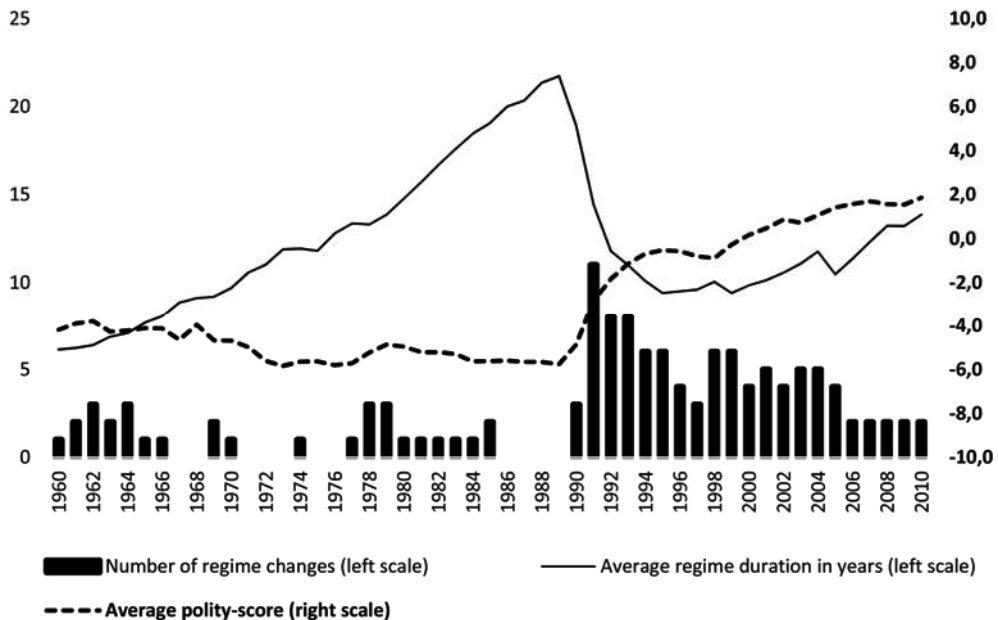
Figure 3: A quantitative overview on (post-)colonial conflicts in Africa[19]
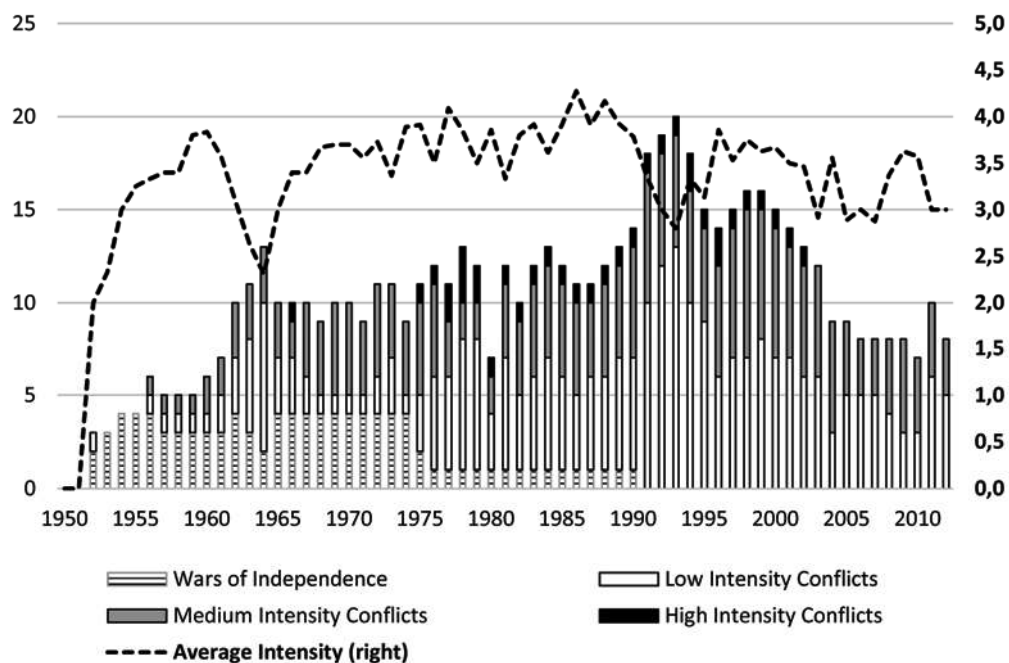
A quantitative assessment of what they call "major episodes of political violence" is provided by the International Network of Societal Conflict Research (INSCR) in their corresponding database,[20] which mainly covers the post-colonial period for African states. In their methodology, they define conflicts of various kinds (international, civil, ethnic) and various intensities (from 1, sporadic and expressive political violence, to 10, extermination and annihilation). Figure 3 shows two kinds of information: the number of African countries affected by some kind of conflict and additional information on their intensities. Here we see a rise in the number of countries affected to up to 20 (out of 51) in 1993 as well, but on the other hand also that the average intensity of the actual conflicts (which is shown by the dotted line referring to the right hand scale), which also existed before, did not considerably change over the

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19 Center for Systemic Peace (2016b).
20 Center for Systemic Peace (2016b).

1970s, 1980s and 1990s, but fluctuating between 3 and 4. While the original score varies between 0 and 10, data in figure 3 is categorised in four types: low intensity conflicts (from sporadic to limited and serious political violence), medium intensity conflicts (from serious to substantial-prolonged and extensive warfare), high intensity conflicts (from pervasive to technological and total warfare to extermination and annihilation) and wars of independence (which usually were of "medium" violence).

High-intensity conflicts did only take place very rarely in Africa, not the least because of the limited potentials of the conflict parties. The only cases are the Rwandan genocide of 1994, the Biafra War in 1966, the Congo War in 1996 (only), the Angolan War from 1975 to 2002, as well as Ethiopia 1977-79 and Uganda in 1978. However, it must not be overlooked that also medium intensity conflicts can result in very serious casualties: according to INSCR data,[21] the various Congo Wars are associated with 2.5 million deaths, the various conflicts in Sudan add up to at least 1.7 million, warfare in Ethiopia and between Ethiopia and Eritrea to more than 1 million, the Mozambique War to 500,000, and Burundi alone has two violent episodes with more than 100,000 deaths each, not to mention further mass killings in Somalia, Uganda and Algeria.

Hence, one may see vicious circles at work in many African countries. There is a group of countries with a history of recurring conflict with nine having more than 20 conflict years since independence and ten more have at least more than 10. The good news is that there is also a group of countries where conflicts are virtually absent: 13 had none at all and another 13 not more than five conflicts years since independence. Regime transition did not always help (like it did in the case of Mozambique), but sometimes made the situation even worse (like in Somalia). But still there is a correlation between the political and economic openness of countries and average conflict intensity with a (provisional but significant) correlation coefficient of –0.42.[22] However, the connection is far from complete: the most prominent exceptions to the general rule are South Africa and Mozambique as rather open orders with a distinct history of violence, as well as Togo, Cameroon and Congo-Brazzaville as rather closed countries without a corresponding history of conflict.

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21 Center for Systemic Peace (2016c). Larger estimates exist, especially for the Congo Wars, but this is also a much contested field of research; see Spagat et al. (2009) for a general discussion of the estimation of war deaths.

22 This number refers to the correlation coefficient between the multiplicative doorstep index (as presented in table 1) and the cumulative conflict intensity divided by the number of country-years in the dataset (Center for Systemic Peace 2016b) for the 31 countries, for which data on both is available.

In sum, internal conflict remains a constant threat for many Africa countries, particularly those with rather fragile orders. In many cases, external actors and interests (not the least economic) interfere with local affairs and mess it up even more. However, one of the problems of conflict resolution in Africa may also be that no matter how limited the access to power may be on the country-level, the access to power on the international level is still much more limited, especially for African states. So let us take a look at this.

International institutionalisation: limited access on a global scale

There has hardly been any attempt so far to apply the framework of limited and open access orders to the global arena. In a 2014 working paper, Stephan Panther traced the "contours of a research program" for analysing world system's institutions,[23] which includes an explorative discussion of limited access on a global scale. Indirectly, it points to the central methodological challenge associated to that task, which is the question of who the actual actors are. While it may be plausible (and certainly much easier to handle analytically) to understand the hierarchical relationship between elites and masses on a global scale as a power relationship between countries, it would be strongly preferable to apply the concept to people and their networks (or the lack of it). In a globalised world, especially the role of transnational corporations is increasingly crucial and the role of international organisations has become relevant and hence deserves consideration in the analysis. To quote Panther at length:

> "It would be interesting to look at similar mechanisms around a new highly educated, mobile and connected class of executives relatively high up in the decision-making hierarchy of this government-transnational complex. NGOs could be seen as a global counter elite, torn between being a true challenge to the established powers and being co-opted. To analyse all this, network and Bourdieu-type of analyses of economic and cultural capital of these elites may be very interesting, particularly to assess the degree to which these institutions have become more like perpetually lived organisations than purely personal connections. Around this narrow core elite we then have those who have been 'bribed' into the elite, who have something to lose from a change in the dominant coalition or indeed the global hierarchy as such. Skilled workers in the

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23   World system's research originated in the works of Immanuel Wallerstein, see for a summary Wallerstein (2004).

Global North are a case in point. So are the current state elites in the Global South."[24]

While I do disapprove of the role of NGOs as portrayed by Panther, I especially share his view how trans-national networks work in this context. But the challenge to extend the application to a truly trans-national (and hence more realistic) approach is left here for further research. Thus, primarily for the matter of convenience, the following actual discussion will be limited to countries (and their representatives). Already at that level, relevant insights can be gained from applying the doorstep conditions on the international system, which reveals the crucial difference between rules and their enforcement. However, before we proceed, we should consider the following questions: what are the rents in the international system, who are the relevant groups with violence potential and who is the dominant coalition on global scale.

A provisional clarification of terms

The delimitation of rents on a global scale is a crucial but tricky question. It depends on the underlying assumption about the relevance of the international system for national and local economic activities. At one end of the spectrum (with the assumption of very limited to absent relevance) rents do only consist of the value created in international economic exchange and not necessarily all of them. At the other end of the spectrum (with the assumption of strong relevance), rents do also include all economic rents created in national arenas, because at least in principle it is the international order allowing and occasionally even enforcing the rent-creating activities also at that level. For the moment, I will broadly follow the second understanding, because it allows more space for trans-national interactions. However, this is another central point for future research.

Further, what are the relevant groups with violence potential on a global scale? In principal, all official state armies and all international organisations with access to armed groups, but also all politically relevant regional or local armed groups have to be considered as possible groups with violence potential (in an extended framework maybe also the private armies of some corporations or criminal organisations). But when it comes to influence on global affairs, many of these actors (no

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24 Panther (2014), 33.

matter if public or private) become negligible. As a rule of thumb, only those armed groups which can be expected to be able to challenge a weaker competitor without fear of relevant retaliation or punishment by others or which are able to credibly deter others from actions should be considered, which limits the number to those rather few states with well-equipped armies and the interesting question how to consider international organisations in this context, which usually have military means only if provided by member states.

And what is the dominant coalition? While some of these states may also go on their own, most of them maintain hierarchical patron-client-networks on the level of countries by the use of multilateral treaties or bilateral agreements and possibly also by the use of force. At least in the case of the most powerful international actor, the United States, this network even includes other powerful actors. In this context, only those powerful states are not part of the dominant coalition which are either fundamentally challenging the rules of the existing international order or which are actively excluded from meaningful participation. While it is difficult to judge exactly who is part of the coalition with only the five permanent members of the UN Security Council being safe bets at the moment, it is clear that most countries in the world supportive of the international system are this as clients of much more powerful political and economic partners.

First doorstep condition: Is there some kind of societal control over the means of violence?

The condensed answer is: hardly. There are international rules, particularly the law of nations, under which conditions the use of violence is legitimate, but in the end the inequality of violence potential between the groups possessing it is so high that sanctioning violations of these rules is not regularly possible. Further, there is the comparably strong principle of non-intervention into what is considered as the "internal" affairs of states, while only the most powerful actors usually able to ignore this principle. This holds for the Cold War period when the United States and the Soviet Union defined their spheres of influence, and also for the consecutive period when "coalitions of the willing" acted usually less than more in accordance with inter-national rules (but sometimes eager to get some formal backing by them). Further, also international military forces are very small compared to national ones. This even holds for international military alliances like the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), but certainly for the United Nations peace-keeping forces, which are some-

times substantial compared to local groups, but usually negligible in numbers as well as equipment compared to the official armies of stable states.

Second doorstep condition: Is there some kind of rule-of-law at least between elites?

Here the condensed answer is: yes, but rather limited. Today, there are a lot of international agreements and contracts and there are rule-based international organisations, and the developments in this sphere in the last decades are truly astonishing compared to earlier centuries, but the actual relevance of these rules is often still subject to power relationships. However, between strong states conflict management has developed into forms practically free from direct violence (despite everyday hostilities in undeclared propaganda wars, the most severe instances usually come in form of economic sanctions). Further, there are rule-based international organisations with partially strong influence on international (and sometimes even national) affairs although their influence is often contested in cases of conflicts and sometimes they are also misused for power politics of strong states.

Third doorstep condition: Are there perpetually lived organisations in the political or economic sphere existing without close ties to the dominant coalition?

Also the answer to this question is: Yes – but here the problem of perspective is most crucial. While there is a rather low degree of connection between actual economic and political power in case of corporations based in open access societies (contrary to those based in limited access societies), there is usually a stronger connection to the states than to the international system in all these cases. However, at the same time there is also a misbalance of power on a global scale: large international economic organisations (like trans-national corporations) have developed into more relevant actors – at least economically – than international political organisations. At the same time, international organisations are perpetually lived ones, at least to a large degree. Their life is usually not limited by the existence of certain persons or certain states, but by the common will of those who are participating. Their functioning and dissolution is usually following certain predefined rules, although these rules are fluid in the sense that they are normally adapted in a discretionary way in case of problems regarded as sufficiently relevant by a sufficient number of willing actors. Hence, there is still a lot of vagueness in here as in most other parts of this largely undiscovered country.

Preliminary assessment

Besides the serious limitations of these discussions, overall, the international system does certainly not qualify as an open access order, neither at the country-level nor at the individual. But it is also far from pure anarchy and hence should be seen as some kind of limited access order. On the level of countries, relations are relatively rule-based and basically free of violence within the elite. Organisations are in principle perpetually lived although the rules they follow are constantly subject to challenge. Additionally, the distinction between economic and political interests and hence also activities is not clear on the level of countries, and the distinction between public and private does hardly make any sense because – while several states are strong entities – there is only in a very rudimentary sense a comparable global public. Taken together with the characterisation in North et al. (2013, 14) it is reasonable to characterise the international system as a basic limited access order: violence potential is not totally controlled but significantly contained by the dominant actors and it is hardly possible to act internationally (in the economic as well as the political sphere) against the interests of the dominant coalition.

Referring to Panther (2014), some more factors should be considered in a more ambitious analysis. The access to external finance (which is limited for poor countries) and unequal exchange in world trade (which is aggravated by considerable differences in spill-over effects from specialisation) are relevant factors, as is the access to citizenship (providing strong restrictions of participation) and the access to education (with higher education being a practical prerequisite of membership in the global elite). While the two former factors work on the country level, the latter two work on the individual level. In the form of foreign direct investment and banking systems, however, both levels are even connected. At the end of this analysis, we may finally hope for a better understanding of the global network and its functions, as well as of some of the means how the limitation of access to it is done.

Final outlook

Conclusions can only be preliminary. Basically, they are limited to pointing at the relevance of further research on the interplay between national and international limited access orders, which deserves more in-depth analysis and especially so in the case of conflict-prone and economically disadvantaged regions in Africa and elsewhere.

Hence, let us take a final look at how the national limited access orders of Africa interact with the global. They do this in multiple ways. The most obvious is that external actors are themselves part of the political or economic constellation in a country and act as rent-seeking groups with violence potential themselves. Foreign armies may protect the strategic interest of their home countries also on foreign soil and transnational corporations may employ armed forces to protect their property or promote their profit abroad. But also international organisations deploy armed forces, especially in Africa: UN Peace Keeping Missions were carried out in several of the mentioned transition conflicts, many of them among the best equipped missions in history (at least with respect to manpower). More than 10,000 personnel each were deployed in the Congo (MONUSCO from 1999), in Liberia (UNMIL from 2003), in Ivory Coast (UNOCI from 2004), in Sudan (UNAMID from 2007), in South Sudan (UNMISS from 2011) and in Mali (MINUSMA from 2013), with additional, slightly smaller missions in the Sudan border region (UNISFA from 2011) and the Central African Republic (MINUSCA from 2014). However, international interventions of this and other kinds often play a rather ambiguous role. They provide protection not only for the civil population (at least to some degree) but also for the strategic interest of some external powers and maybe even for economic interest of certain actors. The recent rise of UN Missions in Africa has therefore to be interpreted with great caution. While their containment efforts should not be underestimated, more case studies are certainly needed on the actual impacts of these missions on the ground. A connected direction of research, more directly related to international organisations, is also an analysis of the effects of Security Council membership of certain states.

Further, institutional analysis points at two different roles of the global system, more specifically, of organisations based in open access orders. One is the progressive influence that these organisations may act as safe-guards for national commitments, i.e. that they lend credibility to local actors by guaranteeing contract enforcement. People with violence potential may not easily trust each other, but they may trust (or at least may be willing to trust) some external power, even if only because it possesses superior violence potential. The other role is the conservative influence that as long as open access institutions exist somewhere in the system, it is only necessary to secure elite access to them, but not to implement these institutions at home. Neither transnational corporations nor national elites have incentives to im-prove the rule of law or the organisational quality in a certain country or establish security there as long as they have access to high-quality rule-of-law-based organi-

sations or violence-free environments abroad or simply to the military means to protect their interests. Hence, while incorporation into the global order may stabilise existing national orders at least to some degree, it also provides disincentives to develop workable institutions and organisations at home, which is certainly a serious obstacle to development in the long run. And while external third-party-enforcement may be rather powerful to provide credibility to otherwise not trustworthy local actors, this has similar moral-hazard-like effects on their behaviour, but even more: if these institutions replace indigenous institutions of third-party-enforcement (real or proposed), there may even provide more poison than medicine, again at least in the long run.

The logic of limited access orders also limits the developmental prospects of societies, in the case of African countries as anywhere else in the world. Endemic violence and conflicts further aggravate the problem. Especially in this context, the international arena is an often undervalued layer of conflict regulation. International actors may provide an external anchor of credibility to internal actors, but they may also inject additional conflict-promoting interests and resources and act as conflict parties themselves. Hence, an application of the concept of limited access orders on a global scale and its interplay with local orders is certainly promising. Methodological challenges still to be tackled in the future include the necessary shift from a country-based analysis to an actors-based analysis, which shifts the focus to trans-national networks instead of a system of states, and a conceptualisation of what rents are on a global scale. Further, a more detailed characterisation of the global system (understood as inter-personal and inter-organisational network) as basic limited access order is needed. Then, finally, we can analyse the interplay of the global level with national orders and regional conflict systems and operationalise the resulting complex to allow for an empirical application to actual historical and recent conflict dynamics in Africa, but also elsewhere. The challenges are great, so have to be the efforts.

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Outlook

Thomas Spielbüchler

Starting an outlook with a glance at the past is not so untypical for a historian – from a professional point of view the past feels more familiar than the future. But the announced journey back in time will not stretch very far. First brief stopover: late 2012 when the idea arose to found a network in Austria interlinking researchers who are focusing on Africa.

At first glance Africa seems like a strange field of interest in a country that apparently has no historic links to the huge continent south of the Mediterranean. Even though the Habsburg-Monarchy had no colonial bonds with Africa there is a number of Austrians that achieved some prominence in their specific fields. Amongst these are the geographer Oscar Baumann and the officer Rudolf Freiherr von Slatin.

Within the Austrian university scene Africa became an institutionalised field of interest in 1903 when the chair for *Ägyptische Altertumskunde* (Egyptian Archaeological Research) was founded at the University of Vienna. Twenty years later the *Institut für Ägyptologie und Afrikanistik* (Institute of Egyptology and African Studies) was founded which eventually became today's *Institut für Afrikawissenschaften* (Department of African Studies). Although academic research on Africa seemed to be harboured at the University of Vienna, Africa used to be a field of interest at other universities and non-university institutions, too. But there were very limited ties within the Austrian research landscape. Of course, there have been some successful attempts to establish interdisciplinary networks e. g. the *Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution* in Stadtschlaining or the *Innsbrucker Forum für Entwicklungsforschung* (Innsbruck Forum on Development Studies) to name just two of them. Both establishments do not exclusively focus on Africa. This seemed to remain a privilege of the Department of African Studies. So research on Africa remained a field with poor intra-Austrian structures outside Vienna.

Against this background the idea was born to create an Africa-Network inter-linking the Austrian research community. The initial meeting took place in January 2013 in Salzburg. Around a dozen colleagues from Innsbruck, Linz, Salzburg and Vienna agreed on a loose common platform that should be open for everyone in Austria who is focusing on Africa. Primary aims of the idea were bringing people together, learning about each other's field of interest, and providing a structure of co-operation. It was agreed to host a First Network-Conference, organised at the Department of African Studies.

This conference took place in January 2014 and when colleagues from Graz, Innsbruck, Linz, Salzburg and Vienna gathered for two inspiring days at the University of Vienna, two things became visible: Africa-research is broad-based in Austria. The panels covered Language & Cultural Contact, Economy & Development, Decolonisation & Literature, Governance & Security, and Dimensions of Social and Spatial Mobility. But on the other hand this broad thematic base made visible a very narrow coverage of academic disciplines. The network was restricted to the Humanities and Social Sciences. Nonetheless it was a great success bringing together a large part of the research-community focusing on Africa.

To make sure the conference in Vienna had not been a single incident a plan was forged to meet again in Innsbruck. This Second Network-Conference was scheduled for March 2015. In accordance with the fields of interest in Innsbruck the topics of the presentations differed slightly from those in Vienna. Panels on Literature and Media, History and Politics, and Education and Development formed the range of topics, partly represented in this conference volume. But the network could not expand itself beyond the Humanities and Social Sciences.

The participants in Innsbruck widely agreed on the benefit of being introduced to other academic fields, but this otherness only covered a specific part of academia as a whole. Thinking in traditional faculties the network remained in philosophical spheres without real contact to Natural or Legal Sciences, Theology, Engineering, Art, or Medical Science.

In November 2016 the Third Network-Conference takes place in Linz providing a new chance for the idea to grow. But is there a need to spread within the Humanities and Social Sciences or even expand to other faculties? When the network was launched in 2013 the idea was to create an open platform to interlink research on Africa in Austria. What has been achieved so far is a great success. For the first time there is a loose, informal structure bringing together people with similar interests.

And there are concrete projects developing like the idea of conflict-monitoring bringing together economists, experts on international law, historians, political scientists, and experts on security studies. This project will be introduced in Linz, too.

Despite such developments there is plenty of room to enhance the network. Artists working on African paintings or geographers focusing on municipal development would enrich the platform. Architects, e.g. involved in refugee-projects, could be part of the network, as well as engineers, legal scholars, theologians, or software-developers. There is no need to argue on the obvious in depth: everybody within a network can profit from the knowledge, experiences, contacts or ideas represented in the linkage. The challenge is to convince people to become part of the network.

At the very beginning in Salzburg the concept of the Africa-Network outlined a very loose platform for possible contacts or co-operations. No formal structures should be set up since nobody wanted to be trapped in administrative work for a vague idea of co-operation without any guarantee of essential realisation. Of course there is never a guarantee for success but in the meantime the substance for an Africa-Network in Austria has been confirmed. Maybe we should think about some formal structures again to make the idea attractable to more faculties and disciplines. Then the Fourth Network-Conference will probably be hosted by a faculty that is not represented in the platform so far.

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Africa research in Austria is multifaceted, multidisciplinary and multilocal. Besides the continuous output of many scholars, this is also shown by the activities of the research group "African Studies at Austrian Universities", established in 2013. The book *Africa Research in Austria*: *Approaches and Perspectives* is a product of this fruitful engagement. The collection assembles contributions to the second workshop of the research group, which was held in Innsbruck, 19-20 March 2015. The topics covered span from pan-Africanism and popular culture, the use of research films in African studies, and reflections on the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie to students' exchange between Tanzania and the two German states, the role of the UN in the Congo Crisis, and post-colonial conflicts and limited access orders in Africa. It contains contributions by Eric Burton (Vienna), Birgit Englert (Vienna), Andreas Exenberger (Innsbruck), Maximilian Feldner (Graz), Thomas Lechner (Graz), Silvia Lercher (Innsbruck), Ulrich Pallua (Innsbruck), Arno Sonderegger (Vienna) and Thomas Spielbüchler (Linz).