The Face of Africa

Essays in Honour of Ton Dietz

Wouter van Beek, Jos Damen, Dick Foeken (eds.)

Universiteit Leiden

African Studies Centre Leiden

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Table of Contents

PART II
Maps, stamps and the environment

PART III
African arenas

Introduction

Wouter van Beek, Jos Damen & Dick Foeken

Ton Dietz and the African Studies Centre

By no means can this book do homage to all aspects of the academic life of Ton Dietz—far from it. In order to do so, we would have had to include the many PhD students he supervised, the host of his geographical colleagues in Amsterdam and all of the Netherlands, and especially the multitude of his international contacts, from the United States to China, and from Japan to Scandinavia—plus, of course, colleagues, pupils, and friends from all over Africa, indeed throughout the African continent. This volume is just the voice of the African Studies Centre (ASC), with contributions from those who happen to be 'here' at this juncture in time: this is Leiden speaking. So this is a homage by colleagues who have witnessed Ton as their co-researcher, as their stimulus, and especially as their director. The fact that we mention these three functions—collegiality, inspiration, and leadership—is highly relevant, as Ton's tenure at the ASC has shown how one can indeed combine these seemingly contradictory functions of what is so easily called academic leadership. We are bidding a fond farewell to an academic leader, our academic leader.

Ton Dietz came to the ASC in 2010, following in the footsteps of his friend Leo de Haan, who had moved to become rector of the ISS in the Hague. Until 2012 Ton combined this with a part-time professorship in Amsterdam, the chair he had been occupying since 1995 at the UvA, and from 2017 his directorship of the ASC was integrated with the Leiden Chair of 'African Development'. In the past decade, he led the ASC through a tumultuous time and over raging waters, navigating the rapids of consecutive budget cuts while scouting for a more secure channel inside Leiden University. The voyage is far from over, but his successor inherits a solid vessel on a clear course. There are no anchors in science, no safe havens, just a continuous trimming of the sails, watching the changing winds, and setting new courses toward uncharted horizons.

Internally, Ton restructured the ASC in order to stimulate cross fertilization of the various fields and topics; now called collaborative groups, these working groups aim at just one thing: to get researchers to speak to each other. Social sciences being quite individual, each researcher tends to focus on his or her own topic, digging ever deeper into their specialization, so a

continuous tug-of-war between specialization and externalization is part and parcel of the scientific project. Ton, for one, always has been an expert on the externalization part, on finding inspiration and stimulus from research work elsewhere, be it in one's own discipline or far afield, and easily leads his colleagues and PhD students into academic networking all over the world. Few academic leaders can boast the extent of the networks that he has, and we have all benefited from them.

That does not mean that he has no proper discipline, no field to call his own, for above all he is a human geographer. Trained in Nijmegen, he moved to the University of Amsterdam, where in 1987 he defended his PhD thesis, *Pastoralists in dire straits: Survival strategies and external interventions in a semi-arid region at the Kenya/Uganda border: Western Pokot, 1900-1986*, under the tutelage of Willem Heinemeyer and Herman van der Wusten. And however far Ton was to roam later in his life, the main themes of his thesis were to remain with him; though 'survival' as a concept would morph into 'coping', and the intervention-relationship with the exterior would be translated as 'development', the themes as such are still relevant. For a considerable part they have informed the articles written in his honour. Of course, as a geographer, '*das Raum*', the spatial component of human life on earth, is for Ton the first and foremost angle, but geography for Ton means much more than direction, dimension, and distance. Several times we have heard him explain that when a geographer has to show what kind of cake his discipline bakes, he will cut a slice from a series of cakes of adjoining disciplines, put these together and present this layered amalgam as the cake of geography. For him his discipline hovers between the multi-disciplinary and the applied, since before anything else he is a human geographer: man is central—in his case, the African: struggling, wrestling, inventing, adapting, migrating, and trying to find out who he or she is. Africa has a face.

Figures are important for geographers and Ton likes statistics, but for him figures in themselves do not tell the whole story; statistics have to acquire a human countenance. For instance, demographics have to relate to babies born to individual women, to people dying, and to all the bittersweet life in between. One contribution in this volume starts out with his gentle reminder to a fully quantitative scholar: do not let figures hide faces. The same holds for other analytical abstractions in science. For instance, with the term 'resources', we run the same risk: we speak about 'resource conflicts', 'resource scarcity' or 'monopolization', and these abstractions tend to obscure the people on the ground. Evidently, the Pokot pastoralists struggling with pasture and water-holes have taught Ton once and forever that resources are about access, about people finding a pathway for living in a harsh environment. Markets, development indexes, urbanization—all the many constructs

scholars dream up to reduce a bewilderingly complex reality to manageable proportions need the constant reminder that Ton always extends: that they should retain their human face. That is the Dietzian approach, a human geographer indeed.

Probably the clearest example of this human approach is climate change. Few dynamics are of a larger scale than the shift in our global climatic system—the one candidate would be the expansion of the universe, but we would expect that Ton would succeed in giving that a human face as well; just wait! The gist of climate research is indeed global and at this juncture in time is intensely preoccupied with the polar zones, which in fact means with our own European situation: sea level rise and the large ocean currents, that is what threatens us. It was Ton who as the director of CERES had the idea to break into that meteorological stronghold with a project on Africa and climate change: not just the prerogatives of the rich countries were under threat, but climate change eroded the sheer survival of the poor. One contribution in this volume is a direct result of this disciplinary breaking-and-entering and shows why Ton was right. Climate models show considerable variation; but in very few of these models, the plight of the hot and dry zones in Africa is not under threat, and with that, indeed, human beings. Climate change is about fellow Africans.

Development is another buzz word, the core of his present Leiden chair: African Development. Ton is not one to bend over backwards to formulate the ultimate definition, and development is one of those terms which is surprisingly hard to define—that means, if one does not stick to a simple increase in GNP, or any other crude economic measure. One issue is that nobody can be opposed to development; it is a value in itself, and this ethical high ground reduces its purely academic usefulness: it is a political buzz word more than an analytical term. Yet, the Dietzian approach on the one hand fully acknowledges the problems and pitfalls of development—like in the notion 'victims of development'—but on the other hand is definitely upbeat: development is not only sorely needed but also just over the horizon. Ton is an incurable optimist: Africa has a silver lining—at least still when he took the Leiden chair in 2010—and development is a thing to be wished for that Africa can indeed attain.

This has not been an easy position in African studies for the last decade, but it does have the advantage that it keeps doors open and keeps people interested in Africa who otherwise would not have bothered with the continent; as such, Ton's optimism checked the all-too-easy Afro-pessimism that tended to engulf much of African studies. It was and is a healthy antidote, one that will be much needed in the foreseeable future as well. Such a positive outlook on Africa's future will remain crucial, especially when studying

African leaders themselves, whose political performances all too often, let us say, have 'room for improvement'. One article argues that their tendency to blame the old colonial powers for all of their ills, and fend off any criticism as racism, in the end is a lose-lose option.

Of course, the old colonial situation is never far away in Africa, especially not in those countries with a white minority, such as Kenya and most of Southern Africa. History in Africa is just around the corner, a constant reminder that we are our own lived past. In the Dietzian approach that means that Africa not only received its political shape in the colonial presence, but that the continent has been, is, and will be in constant interaction with the larger world. Africans are, for Ton, not the 'ultimate other', and Africa not 'the continent over the horizon'; their present history is in continuous interplay with the rest of the world. Africa is our next-door neighbour; Africa has a face like ours. One major thrust of his ASC administration was to Africanize the Centre, to have a constant presence of Africans in Leiden, a stream of African researchers going through the fellowships, and a roster of African scholars in various types of relationship with the Centre. African studies has to be 'about Africa, in Africa and definitely with Africa'. African studies has to mean that Africans study themselves, together with Northerners.

Never was that clearer than when he, still as director of CERES, engaged in the SANPAD (South Africa Netherlands Programme for Alternative Developments) project, an endeavour in which one of the present editors has cooperated with him closely. If Africans have to shape their own destiny more than they have been able to do in the past, is the reasoning, they have to move up in research and academic culture as well. That too is development. For field research, the relationship with CODESRIA (Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa) and OSSREA (Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa) has been crucial, and a lot of time was invested in the link between African studies 'there' and 'here'. But it was SANPAD that embodied his tutorial dreams. This major educational project envisaged joint research by Dutch and South African researchers in order to boost the academic prowess of South Africa. Ton was especially important in the Research Capacity Initiative—yes, we are here in development-speak, but this was real education, for this was the training that PhD candidates needed for their research. Since the academic culture of South Africa was still shot through with the problematic divisions of the past, Ton designed a course for supervisors, which for many of these experienced academics proved to be an absolute eye-opener. With his South African colleagues he wrote a manual for PhD supervision, a booklet that later was used in follow-up projects on PhD supervision in South Africa.

When Ton became director of the ASC he brought in the very same notion that research and education have to stimulate each other. For a staff not used to teaching, this was a major change; but to leave such a concentration of knowledge on Africa underused for teaching was a waste of intellectual capital on the one hand, while on the other hand it deprived researchers of a student feedback that many of us feel is highly stimulating. So the RESMAA, the Research Masters Africa, was further developed, a legacy from his predecessor Leo de Haan. Now the course is accredited and institutionalized, and it forms a major feature in the educational landscape of Leiden University. Whatever his many obligations and commitments, Ton always took ample time to teach these Masters' students. Also PhD students entered the hallowed halls of the ASC, from various sources and with diverse financial arrangements, and now they are an integrated feature of ASC functioning and especially publishing.

This shift toward research-*cum*-teaching in the ASC is now boosted by the further integration with Leiden University, the focus of the last years of Ton's administration. For various reasons a closer collaboration with and integration in Leiden University became necessary, not in the least because of the dwindling finances from development aid, which in turn were based on major shifts in the political landscape of recent years. Development aid has no longer the political or public appeal it had in the last decades of the 20th century; that wind has changed quite dramatically. Consequently, the splendid isolation of the ASC as an independent research institute with a spectacular library, financed for a large part by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, did not look so splendid any longer—a problem not confined to the ASC, as it is shared with many institutions geared toward international education. So Ton moved the ASC in the direction of Leiden University. Inevitably, this courageous move evoked discussion and disagreement and still poses a challenge for the staff, but the academic integration as such has become a crucial feature for the future of the ASC.

One item was professorial chairs. Though in the past ASC researchers had moved into such teaching positions—Bonno Thoden van Velzen, the 'promoter' of one of the present editors is an early example—this leap into academia was the exception rather than the rule. Often it concerned part-time chairs, like those of Jan Abbink (VU), Jan Hoorweg (Wageningen), and Wim van Binsbergen (VU). But with the new academic approach, having chairs occupied by ASC researchers in other university departments became policy, either as part-time appointments between the ASC and the other institution—the chair of the late Stephen Ellis at the VU is an example—or as ASC-endowed chairs, such as the chair 'Religion and Sexuality in Africa' at the UvA, occupied by Rijk van Dijk. With the integration of the ASC into

Leiden University, joint appointments at ASCL—that is what 'we' are called now—and the participating faculties became standard: Mirjam de Bruijn and Jan-Bart Gewald are examples.

Maybe the most personal contribution of Ton to the ASCL is the least expected: stamps. Ton is an avid stamp collector, African stamps in particular. Now philately is a typical collector's craze, at least in the eyes of the 'normal' outsider: hunting for the rare stamp, the 'two-penny black' that everyone craves for, the average collector is seen as the 'odd and nicely deranged' kind of passionate hobbyist—in Dutch, '*prettig gestoord*'. Having a complete collection is the ultimate aim, and in this strange realm collectors of small pieces of paper create their own virtual world, with their own journals and conferences, their own myths and legends, totally shut off from everyday reality. In the hands of Ton, however, though the collection as such is important, these stamps suddenly acquired an additional dimension, not as collectors' items but as messengers and cultural witnesses: they told something to the discerning outsider. Ton showed and shows how nations portray themselves in their stamps, define their core interest, how they construct their history in and through their stamps. In short, stamps are a means to constructing a national identity. Stamps not only often bear faces; they are the face of a nation. In his hands, stamp collections became cultural geography, and his many examples are highly convincing. Thus cultural studies arrived in Africa, as one follows the historical dynamics within one country through the substance and style of its changing stamps. One article in this volume takes this as its starting point.

Nineteen contributions in a Dietzian vein

The essays in this volume address three broad themes, which the editors have suggested to the contributors: coping, the relation between people and environment, and development. The fourth theme we suggested was Kenya, and that came out anyway. So the articles are grouped into these three parts.

Coping first. The first contribution, by *Dick Foeken*—a fellow human geographer and lifelong friend of Ton—and *Samuel Owuor*—a Kenyan PhD student of Ton and Dick—addresses the crucial issue of access to resources, water in this case, and focuses on the new majority of Africans, the urban population. Water is one commodity governments should routinely provide, but that provision often is quite patchy. On the other hand, water is not *any* commodity; water is life in Africa. The essay gives a human face to water access, sketching what unreliability in water delivery and consequently consumption means in the lives of people of Homa Bay, Kenya. In doing so, it also discusses the perennial problem of measuring in Africa, the relation between the measurement at one place and time, and the diachronic processes

that really inform life. Seasonality is the operative word here, in access and consumption, and thus in the experience of poverty.

Wijnand Klaver follows the rise of nutrition studies at the ASC, with its long and respectable track record and its close collaboration with Wageningen University. Jan Hoorweg, whom we will meet in another essay, started it; Dick Foeken and Wijnand Klaver pursued it. The topic of urban agriculture emerged from this research tradition, and in the treatment of Klaver this also gets a human face, actually an animal one, as the main picture in the article is of two cows! But it clearly shows that urbanization, as an academic concept, hides the human face of Africa.

If any people have to cope right now, the Zimbabweans do, and *Marleen Dekker* gives us their story. The former grain basket of Africa is now among the poorest countries, with a record hyperinflation of their currency. The article describes how a former monetized economy has to fall back on earlier forms of transactions: how do people cope with the absence of cash? An earlier form could be barter, but interestingly enough, the even more fundamental human transaction of gift-giving seems to win out: here the economy is redefined as relations between humans, so both hyperinflation and dollarization regain their human face.

André Leliveld encountered a younger Ton Dietz when presenting him with the PhD thesis he (André) was engaged in producing. Leliveld was focusing on informal social security in Africa from economic and judicial angles, and when he discussed this, Ton made it very clear that a more human, Africa-oriented, and especially more empathic approach would be more relevant for the African conditions—meaning simply the way Africans lived. André did not cave in and went his economic way. But in this contribution he describes how the general approach in development economics slowly but surely has reoriented itself to what one could call a Dietzian perspective. Especially the notion of frugal innovation, a combination of adaptive technology with on-the-spot innovation, in Leliveld's eyes offers ample space for a productive blending with the concept of survival strategies, which Ton has been advocating for so long. Frugal innovation is the happy result of the creative adoptions, designs, and redesigns by the people in question, and as such renders full homage to the inventive acumen of Africans: technology with an African face.

Akinyinka Akinyoade & *Rantimi Jays Julius-Adeoye* focus in on the very relation between figures and faces, between numbers and names. Tracking Ton's involvement in development studies in the last decade, the piece moves into a gentle debate with Ton's silver lineament around the African picture in his 2011 inaugural address. Though the present statistics go into different directions, both optimistic and pessimistic, the article ends with a ma-

jor concern of Ton: demographics, in this case African youth. The notion of 'waithood'—an intermediate state between youth and adulthood—which the article cites, is as insightful as it is disturbing.

Leo de Haan, fellow human geographer, delves into the history of the geography of development at the various Dutch universities, focusing on the programme *Livelihood and Environment*. In his interesting short history of the discipline, the geography of development is presented as a field-in-search-of-a-theory. From the original 'Utrecht School', the geography of development put down its roots in Amsterdam, at both the VU and the UvA, and in Nijmegen, and in doing so developed the notion of livelihood(s) and environment. De Haan traces the contributions Ton Dietz made to this quest for academic analysis and planning, especially his responses to the continuous challenge of the under-theorized nature of the field. His conclusion is something of a surprise.

The next chapter takes the geographical scale up a notch, from regional geography to sub-continental ecology, as it addresses climate change in the West African Sahel. *Han van Dijk*, Ton's successor at CERES, recounts the history of the Africanist incursion into Dutch climate change programmes we mentioned above. The leading notion was the way people adapted to climate change, and one of the outcomes of the project was that this projected one-way adaptation is too simple. So van Dijk traces an important switch in approach to climate, toward the notion of climate variability. The models of climatic change diverge in many specifics, but converge on the notion of increase in variability: if anything, our climate will become more capricious, fickle, and unpredictable, and prone to extremes. For the African Sahel, one of the major zones where people live 'on the edge', this means above all an increase in mobility, an age-old strategy anyway. The present political instability and unbalanced development again tend to heighten that mobility, which is a challenge for governance, especially for the weak states of the Sahel.

The second theme is the way people address their physical environment and give shape to their own identity through their surroundings. The trio *Rijk van Dijk*, *Marja Spierenburg* & *Harry Wels*, each with their own particular connection to the ASCL, focus in on man-made divisions inside a continuous landscape. The spotlight is on fences, the physical lines we draw between 'us' and 'them', our way of making the world tiny enough to fit our needs. Rijk van Dijk starts small scale, with an invisible but oh-so-real fence: the spiritual border between those inside and outside a healing church community in Botswana. Moving south-east, Marja Spierenburg, one of Ton's successors at the CERES directorate, sketches the impact of the physical fence of private game farming areas; they keep wild animals in and non-paying

guests out, but do much more, since they exclude the former farm personnel and safeguard class privileges for the 'happy few'; the latter tend to be white. The third fence aims to protect what is arguably the most famous inhabitant of Africa, the lion. And here not just any lion, but a white lion at that. Harry Wels takes us on tour alongside this fence, showing how our conception of this 'icon of the wild' is out of touch with reality: the wily beast responds quite differently to a fence than conservators would have it do. So, the authors ask in the end, what does this mean for fences? How would a Dietzian openness to alternative interpretation inform our vision on fence dynamics? The article ends with some fascinating observations about fences.

The Dogon, *Wouter van Beek*'s topic, live in a spectacular environment, also familiar to Ton Dietz, one that is characterized by a huge and long sandstone cliff, the escarpment of Bandiagara. As all people do, they live with the rising and setting sun, so with East and West, and consequently with the other two points of the directional axis, which we call North and South. Trying to map Dogon rituals on the compass points, van Beek found something odd: the Dogon cardinal directions do not follow the standard East-West direction but are skewed: their axis has turned 45%, pointing NE-SW and SE-NW. Why? And do all Dogon languages do so? So the article focuses in on the vernacular terms for the cardinal directions in all Dogon languages—there are 22—and shows that it is the direction of the Bandiagara cliff, not the sun, that is the main determinant. People define themselves in relation to what is relevant in their environment. However, not all Dogon live at the escarpment, so these skewed cardinals give an interesting view of the settlement history of the Dogon: geography always is history as well. The face of Africa is lined by its past.

Perhaps the most Dietzian article is the one by *Mirjam de Bruijn* & *Walter Nkwi* on stamps, mobile phones, and the nation of Cameroon. A nation-state like Cameroon has amply used the opportunities that stamps offered to monopolize national symbolism, and the stamps of the period, the heyday of the postal office, show us how. But nationalism tends to suppress regional variation and especially minorities, in this case Anglophone West Cameroon, a province definitely left out of national symbolism. The core question of the article is whether the technology that replaced the stamp can serve similar functions, like state symbolism and control. It seems that the dwindling post office has not been replaced by a similar state monopoly, since the dynamics of the mobile telephone work in both ways, against and for state domination. In any case, the direct, rather straightforward state symbolism of the stamp-*cum*-post office has evaporated. New symbols link the citizen more with the international scene than with the national one, and attempts at nation building have to find new modes.

A perennial discussion within development circles, but above all a heated debate between fieldworkers in Africa and those that regard Africa from the academic heights, is the contribution of local solutions to large-scale ecological and developmental problems. Ton's inaugural lecture addressed this issue, and it is *Jan Abbink* who pursues it in this volume. Africa does face huge challenges—demography, climate change, rising expectations of wealth—and the knee-jerk reaction of planners to these problems is to devise large-scale projects, centrally planned mega-schemes and one-size-fits-all solutions. Abbink discusses this quandary for Ethiopia, where if anywhere in Africa cultural and ecological diversity reigns supreme, so the standoff between the local and the national is highly germane to any kind of development initiative in this country. The article provides convincing examples of the embedded sustainability of local systems and especially of local initiatives for ecological improvement, which are set against the hybrid development strategies of the Ethiopian government. On the whole, Ton's silver lining of Africa appears to resonate even in the African Horn, which is not the most conducive environment for optimism.

The last piece of this part focuses in on the ecology of 'the other Africa': animals. As we saw already in the chapter on fences, for tourists and conservationists Africa is a continent of animals, and local people are considered intrusions between wildlife and the ever-present camera. *Michiel van den Bergh* takes us bird-watching in Burkina Faso, a surprising journey as the first association with Africa neither focuses on wings nor on Burkina. But, as his research shows, it is productive to include the local population and local ecological initiatives into our European view on wildlife. Birds are about the only wildlife without fences, and more than any other wildlife they connect the continents, which brings this part full circle. 'Our' birds migrate to or hibernate in Africa, and in Burkina Faso, so this piece on birds, illustrated with a range of magnificent photographs, gives us pause about the way our species claims to 'own' the planet.

Part Three discusses specific arenas in Africa, debates and discussions over what 'is' Africa and what 'are' African cultures, questions that are highly informed by the spotted history of Europe with humanity's continent of origin. So the following contributions are on history, perception, and the relations of Africa with the global world.

Daniela Merolla calls into question the northern border of African studies, since in the traditional definition Africa starts south of the Sahara. Sub-Saharan Africa has long been the unchallenged definition of 'the continent', with the 'North' of Africa either belonging to the Mediterranean world or to the world of Islam. That divide into 'two Africas' has become increas-

ingly untenable, if only because it has emerged that the Sahara never was a dividing wall, but was more of a cultural highway. Without going into flights of pan-African fancy, 'black Africa' has been thoroughly criticized as a colonial construct, just as the 'Orient' has been shown to be. Merolla takes studies in Berber literature as her main case, illustrating how this tendency to divide along colour lines operates in various European scholarly traditions, from the French 'myth of the Tuareg' to the Italian forms of Orientalism. So the socio-historical processes to essentialize African identities in terms of colour constitute a way of 'othering' by the North, which urges us to rethink how we constructed Africa's face.

Africa and its cultures always have presented a challenge for Europeans, and our changing views of Africa are nowhere clearer than in the history of ethnographic museums and the ways we have looked at the strange, weird, and wonderful objects called African art. *Harrie Leyten* provides a historical overview of the changing views during 150 years of those who were directly confronted with African art, such as missionaries, museum curators, and anthropologists. The three disciplines had their own distinct views on the very same African objects, views that are shown to be quite diverging, without overly informing each other. Thus, the history of the ethnographic museums, and especially their approach to the African collections, offers us some glimpses of how Africa depicted its own face, while our gazing at Africa tells us in fact more about ourselves.

Not only personal views on Africa have changed; so has Africa itself. As we said, the colony is never far away, and colonialism has thoroughly changed the face of the continent. From a continent without wheels, the colonizer transformed Africa into one where wheel transportation is crucial, be it rail or road. *Jan-Bart Gewald* analyses the social and historical circumstances informing that transformation in Zambia, then Northern Rhodesia. The start of the 20th century saw a frenzy of road building, for diverse reasons, and the most curious and explicit one was war, World War I. Far from the trenches of France and Belgium, the European powers fought 'their' war on African turf, and for that they needed transportation. War logistics thus dictated many of the road-building projects of East and Southern Africa, calling for thousands of workers and multitudes of porters. These roads met a variegated use or disuse after the war, but on the whole were seen as a major achievement. However, they were mainly hailed as an effort of the colonizer, disregarding the indispensable labour of the Africans themselves.

With *Jan Hoorweg* we are still in colonial times, as he reminisces about his early days in the field as a researcher and his encounters in Malindi, Kenya, with that other breed of expatriates, the ex-colonial officers. At a time when Africanists themselves are starting to write their memoirs, the musings of

former colonial officers have become something of a cottage industry and have indeed led to quite a few great insights into that crucial period for Africa. Hoorweg selects three memoirs of those retired symbols of authority in consecutive periods, before 1920, and before and after World War II. The article illustrates that there is still a lot to be learned on this vital historical period, despite the bad press the colonizing project has been receiving since independence. Hoorweg ends with an invitation for present researchers not to leave their memoirs to those after them, but to write them with their own hands.

In the same vein, the history of the ASC has been touched upon already in Max de Bok's *Leer mij Afrika Kennen: Vijftig jaar Afrika-Studiecentrum* (2000), but especially in the present decennia this history may well prove to be a fascinating reflection on how the Netherlands approach, study, and deal with Africa. For the Centre, two dynamics seem to have been important. On the one hand, the relations of Dutch politics and Dutch development with Africa to a large extent have coloured the set-up and institutionalization of the present ASCL and its library. On the other hand, the Centre is an academic institution and, as such, part of academic culture in general; so the shifts in paradigms inside the disciplines and the relations between them did not leave the Centre untouched. We saw already some of the debates within regional geography in the first part of this book, but other disciplines were involved as well. *Jos Damen*, our librarian, presents a portrait of the first director of the ASC, Hans Holleman. From 1963 until 1969 he led the Centre, leaving a heated debate on the merits of his administrative reign in his wake. As a South African white academic, Holleman epitomized the quandary for Africa research, between political correctness and academic excellence, and between a top-down approach and a liberal free-for-all. Time may well have come to reassess those years; and in our present days of tightening funds and central planning in science, this debate on how to lead professionals is as relevant as it is timely.

We continue with a contribution by one of 'our Africans', the Centre's very own *Chibuike Uche*. His topic is the one we started out with, our general theme of the face of Africa, and in particular how Africans themselves feed that perception and use it for their own benefit. Starting out with the general 19th century depreciation of 'the African', which found its roots in a widespread and even pseudo-scientific racism, Uche shows how that negative attitude was at the basis of the 1984/5 Berlin Conference on the colonial division of the continent. World War II saw a turning point to re-appreciation of Africa's inhabitants, which made sure that each of the new nations had its own fresh start—more or less fresh, one should say—in the years of independence, the 1960s. What has happened since in African politics has

not really done much to repeal the negative image of Africa in the world, given the spate of dictators, presidents for life, revolutions, and civil wars we are witnessing now. Uche argues that the African leaders have succeeded in keeping the international community somehow captive through a discourse of political correctness. Whoever criticizes African leaders is almost routinely accused of 'racism', evoking a 'guilt-by-association' in the North, and this amounts to a kind of 'white blackmail' that is difficult to counter. His argument is that in the end Africans are ill-served by invoking this discourse on racism, as it tends to exonerate all the faults and failures of African politicians, stifles internal debate, and leads to acceptance of excesses that are harmful for the nations themselves. In the end, Africans who invoke 'racism' hold themselves captive.

We end this part and the whole book with a contribution by *Mayke Kaag* in which we flow gently back to the present, in Senegal, and to the field of education. As we have argued above, education is a major commitment of Ton Dietz. Changing the face of Africa, internally as well as in the world, will require major investments in and restructuring of education in the various countries in the continent. The colonizer had his own agenda with education, but after decolonization the education scene remained a favourite arena for powers from abroad. During the Cold War, the major powers fought out their educational battles in Africa, and nowadays other players in the field want to wield influence on the continent through the schools. Kaag focuses on Turkish schools in Senegal linked to the Gülen movement, private secular schools inspired by Islam. The Senegalese are well used to schools coming from overseas, and of course to Islam, but the Turkish schools present some uncomfortable challenges. Whatever the outcome of this incipient research, schools in Africa will be one pivot for further development, while remaining an arena for ideology and political hegemony.

Ton Dietz is saying farewell to the ASC, but not to Africa. How could he ever? Many of us researchers at the '*troisième vie*' of our academic existence turn back to our point of origin as an academic, and in Ton's case as an Africanist. That starting point would be the Pokot of Kenya, the region and culture that inducted him into his African life. Our first research tends to mark us for life, since it is in fact an initiation, a coming of age as a researcher, and thus remains a solid definition of who we are: research is identity. The face of Africa has become Ton's face, and as Africanists we are all well aware that the continent is much more than just a field of research: it is an addiction. Ton himself is starting to formulate ways to pursue his work and, indeed, to return to Kenya, back to the Pokot: not as the same young PhD candidate he once was—that person does not exist any longer—but as a seasoned scholar

that will be able to look at these people from various standpoints at the same time. Undoubtedly he will find ways to link the Pokot to the wider world, the one of development and politics, but also to the world of research and scholarship, and just as undoubtedly he will give them their own voice, let them depict their own face, the face of this part of Africa. Meanwhile, he leaves an institution in good health, a vessel fully ship-shape—to take up our initial metaphor—and in good hands, a new captain at the helm. Where African studies and its Centre will go from here nobody knows, but we have seen our captain of the last decade steer a resolute course, setting an example of both open and inspiring academic leadership. The coming times will not be easy, neither for Africa nor for African studies nor for the Centre, but with such a past we are well prepared for the future.

Wouter van Beek
Jos Damen
Dick Foeken

PART I
Coping with Africa

1

Seasonality of water consumption by the urban poor: The case of Homa Bay, Kenya[1]

Dick Foeken & Samuel O. Owuor[2]

Introduction

Among the pioneers in studying 'seasonality' was the human geographer Robert Chambers, who, referring to the rural areas in developing countries, observed that there is 'a widespread tendency for adverse factors to operate concurrently during the wet seasons [and] these factors tend to hit the poor people harder' (Chambers et al. 1981: 3). It was during the 1980s that seasonality was being studied as a more complex issue than the existence of a hungry season alone, playing an important part in rural poverty. One such research project, entitled 'Seasonality in the Coastal Lowlands of Kenya', was carried out by the African Studies Centre.[3] It focused on the impact of climatic seasonality on household food consumption and on the nutritional status of women and children. As such, this study was also the reason to organize a study day at Wageningen University on 'Seasons, Food Supply and Nutrition in Africa'.[4] Although the day's main focus was on climatic seasonality and on food and nutrition, there was one speaker (yes, that was you, Ton) who added

1 This paper is derived from the earlier published ASC Working Paper 107 (Owuor & Foeken 2012).

2 African Studies Centre, Leiden, The Netherlands and Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi, Kenya, respectively.

3 It was one of the studies in the context of the *Food and Nutrition Studies Programme* (FNSP), a joint effort between the Kenyan Government and the African Studies Centre to analyse current developments concerning food and nutrition in Kenya by means of a number of research projects. It resulted in four FNSP Research Reports and a monograph (Hoorweg et al. 1995).

4 These one-day study days were organized annually by the Department of Human Nutrition of Wageningen University and the African Studies Centre. In total, ten of these days were organized, each time focusing on a different theme.

a completely new perspective on the concept of seasonality: 'the rhythm of external interference' (Dietz 1990). Like seasonality, external interventions—such as the fluctuations in government spending and the school calendar—have their own rhythms, rhythms that may coincide or collide with the seasonal patterns. Ton, looking back now, it was one of those typical examples of your often innovative and creative way of doing research.

Seasonal aspects (like gender) became a 'not-to-miss' part of the study of rural poverty and rural development. But seasonality in an *urban* context is a largely overlooked subject, with the exception perhaps of the widespread phenomenon of urban farming. This paper deals with the seasonality of water consumption by the urban poor. The data presented below are derived from a survey that was carried out in 2010 in two low-income settlements—Sofia and Shauri Yako—in the town of Homa Bay in Kenya (see Map 1). A total of 231 households were interviewed using a standardized questionnaire, 97 in Sofia and 134 in Shauri Yako.

Homa Bay

Homa Bay is located in the western part of Kenya on the shores of Lake Victoria, some 100 km south of Kisumu and about 400 km west of Nairobi. The municipality covers an area of 23 sq km, of which 3 sq km consists of the central business district (CBD). With a population of about 60,000 people in 2009, Homa Bay is primarily an administrative centre with small-scale trading as the dominant economic activity. The three low-income settlements in the municipality are Makongeni on the northern side of the town and Shauri Yako and Sofia on the southern side. Water and sanitation services in the municipality are provided by the South Nyanza Water and Sanitation Company (SNWASCO). However, as in other towns of Kenya, water supply in Homa Bay is still characterized by low coverage, unreliable service, poor financial management, and neglected operation and maintenance. This has translated into generally inadequate services, which are particularly lacking for the urban poor.

In 2006, UN-Habitat carried out a general survey in Homa Bay on access to, among other things, water sources.[5] The results of this survey revealed that one-quarter of the households had water piped into their habitations (i.e. either to the house or the yard), but this percentage was much higher for the non-slum households (47%) than for the slum inhabitants (21%). Hence, the majority of the Homa Bay households relied on water sources outside their

5 The data presented in this section is based on Excel summaries of the survey results, sourced from UN-Habitat (Nairobi Office). For a more elaborate overview, see Owuor & Foeken (2012).

compounds, especially public standpipes (40%) and surface water (15%). The latter was primarily water directly from the lake, which was drawn only by slum inhabitants. For the majority of the slum households (58%), it took at least half an hour to fetch water, and for one-third of them even at least one hour. Disruptions in the supply of water were common: almost 60% of the households reported a disruption during the two weeks preceding the interview.

Besides SNWASCO's interventions through Kenya's water sector reforms, Homa Bay is one of the towns that was selected by UN-Habitat in the most far-reaching intervention project in urban Kenya, called LVWATSAN,[6] to address the water and sanitation needs of the people—particularly the poor—in a number of secondary towns around Lake Victoria (see Owuor & Foeken 2009). During the years 2006-10, the programme involved a mix of investments in the rehabilitation and/or expansion of existing infrastructure as well as capacity building at local level and was designed to assist the people in the Lake Victoria towns to meet the water- and sanitation-related MDGs (see e.g. UN-Habitat 2008). The major interventions of LVWATSAN in Homa Bay included, among others, the rehabilitation of the existing water intake points (from Lake Victoria) and the installation of new water pumps to increase the volume of water supply in the municipality, extension of the piped water distribution network into lower-income areas, and the construction of 12 water kiosks, most of them in low-income areas. However, by May 2012, the water production was still only one-sixth of what was required. Furthermore, only three water kiosks—two in Shauri Yako and one in Makongeni—were connected and operational, the others remaining unconnected or not (fully) operational, including those in Sofia (see Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2).[7]

6 *Lake Victoria Region Water and Sanitation Initiative* (see e.g. UN-Habitat 2008).

7 For the problems around the construction of the pipelines and the water kiosks, including the role of 'politics', see Owuor & Foeken (2012: 12-19).

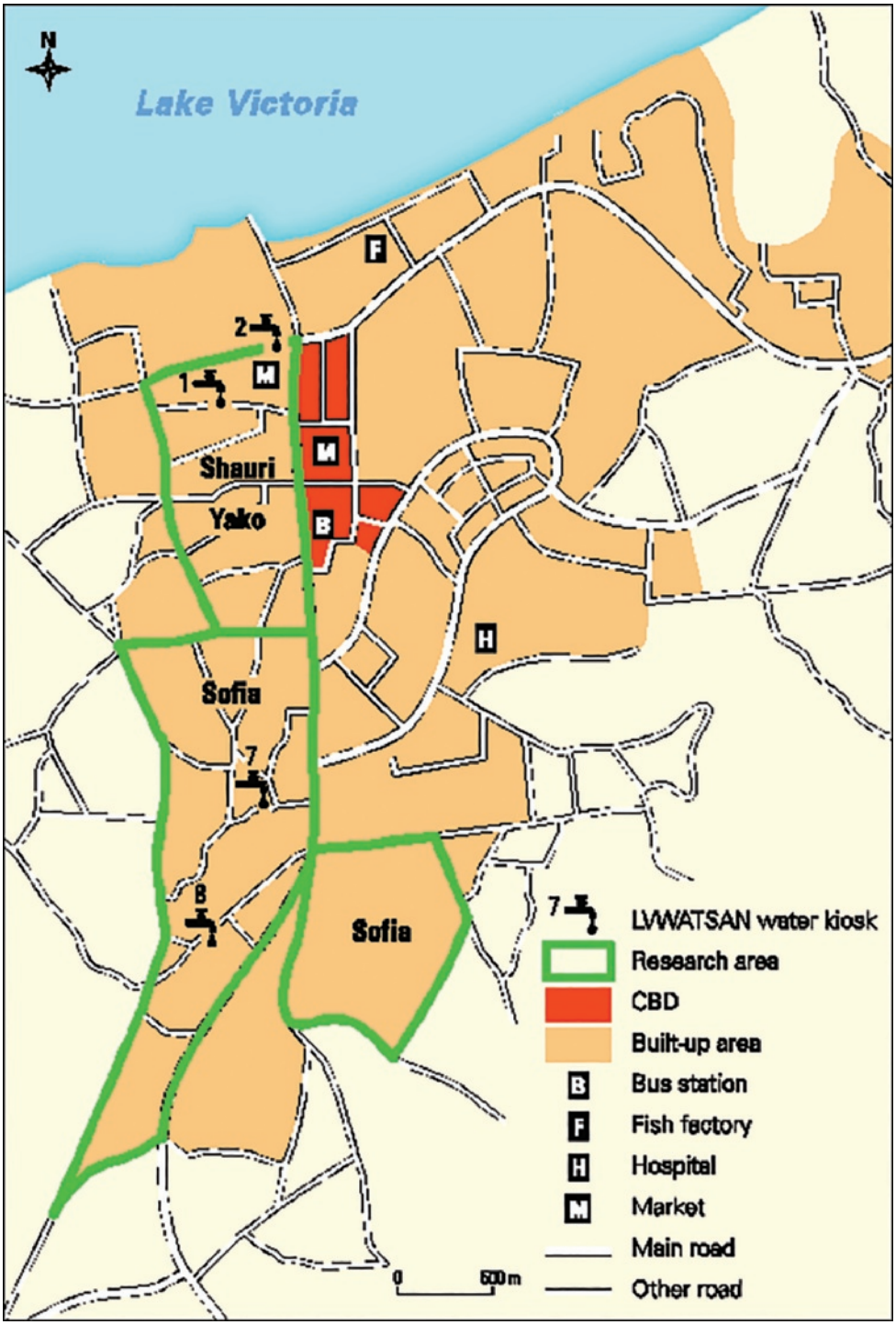

Figure 1.1
Homa Bay and the location of the study areas

Figure 1.2
Water vendor with water from a private kiosk further away passes near a non-operational LVWATSAN water kiosk in Sofia (Dick Foeken, 2011)

Seasonality of water consumption

Most parts of Homa Bay town—except for the CBD, hospital, and prisons—suffer from water rationing based on a schedule determined by SNWASCO. Sometimes, water rationing, coupled with low pressure, is so acute that taps in Sofia and Shauri Yako run for only two or three days a week and not even during the whole day. Water rationing is a problem not only for the water kiosks, but certainly also for the households whose main water source is any type of piped water. As such, other water sources, such as roof catchment

and the lake, are at least as important for the water supply as the piped water source.

However, because of the irregularity of the SNWASCO water provision and the lack of water connections in the two low-income areas, water consumption in Homa Bay has strong seasonal components. During the rainy season, most households are able to easily and cheaply cope with the irregularity in the piped water system by means of roof catchment. Outside the rainy season, there is a serious shortage of easily accessible (and relatively clean) water. This has consequences for, among others, the time required to fetch water, the cost of water, and the amounts of water used in the household. Table 1.1 provides an overview of these factors.[8]

Fetching of water is primarily a female task (Figure 1.3). In the large majority of the households, it was the female head or the female spouse or a female child who was normally responsible for fetching water. The respondents were asked how much time was spent on fetching water from their *main* water source[9] in the wet and in the dry season. On average, slightly more than one-quarter of an hour per day was spent fetching water in the *wet* season; a figure that was about

Figure 1.3
Women fetching water from a private kiosk in Shauri Yako (Dick Foeken, 2011)

8 Details are presented in Owuor & Foeken (2012: Annex 1, Tables A.4, A.5 and A.7).
9 Hence, the households with their main water source 'on-plot' are excluded here. 'Time to fetch water' includes walking to and fro as well as waiting/queuing at the source ('full cycle').

the same in the two areas. This is not a lot of time, which can be explained by the fact that for most households who had no on-plot water source, their main water source was the on-plot water source of a neighbour. Things are different, however, in the *dry* season, when people have no rainwater to harvest and have to rely on alternative sources instead, often located further away. This can be seen in the more than doubling of the time needed to fetch water. This was most striking in Sofia, where 70% of the households spent at least half an hour per day fetching water. Due to the distance from the lake, it requires no explanation that the households in Sofia using water from Lake Victoria (20%) spent (much) more than an hour doing so.

Table 1.1
Characteristics of water consumption by area and by season[1]

	TOTAL (N=231)	**Sofia** (N=97)	**Shauri Yako** (N=134)
Wet season			
Time taken to fetch water (average, minutes/day)[2]	16.9	17.1	16.8
Cost of water (average, Ksh/day)	23.7	30.8	17.9
Water used (average, litres/day):			
▪ for drinking	6.2	6.6	5.9
▪ for cooking	14.4	14.3	14.5
▪ for washing/cleaning	67.7	60.7	72.7
Total	102.4	94.8	107.9
Idem, per household member[3]	22.3	20.0	24.0
Dry season			
Time taken to fetch water (average, minutes/day)[2]	37.0	40.2	34.5
Cost of water (average, Ksh/day)	49.9	66.1	37.2
Water used (average, litres/day):			
▪ for drinking	7.9	8.5	7.4
▪ for cooking	14.2	13.8	14.5
▪ for washing/cleaning	57.7	51.2	62.4
Total	92.4	83.2	99.1
Idem, per household member[3]	20.1	17.3	22.0

[1] Averages are calculated using class middles.
[2] Concerns the *main* water source, hence households with 'main water source on-plot' are excluded; Ns are 166, 73, and 93, respectively.
[3] Total divided by average household size (4.6, 4.8, and 4.5, respectively).
Source: Owuor & Foeken (2012: Annex 1, Tables A.4, A.5, and A.7).

As for the *cost of water*, it is the same story as for fetching water: on the whole, costs were more than twice as high during the dry season in comparison with the wet season. Again, this is (much) more striking in Sofia. During the wet season, people already paid more than 70% more on water than in Shauri Yako, a difference that was even higher in the dry season. The cost difference between the dry and the wet season can be explained by at least two factors. First, people with their own on-plot water source who sell water to neighbours not only sell more water in the dry season, they also charge more.[10] Second, private water vendors do more business in the dry season and can (and do) make more profit from the scarcity of water. In general, people who bought water from private vendors paid three times as much as people who bought from neighbours or from public standpipes and kiosks.[11] The *use of water* is divided into water for drinking, water for cooking, and water for washing and cleaning. The figures in Table 1.1 show some interesting patterns. First, on the whole, total water consumption in the dry season was about 10% lower than in the wet season (92.4 and 102.4 litres per day per household, respectively). Second, while overall water consumption was lower in the dry season, this did not apply to water for cooking, while water consumption for drinking was actually higher in the dry season (for obvious reasons). Third, the reduction in water consumption was greater in Sofia (-12%) than in Shauri Yako (-8%). Fourth, in the *wet* season, total water consumption per household per day in Sofia was about 12% (or 13 litres) lower than in Shauri Yako. Per household member, it was 17% less. In the *dry* season, these differences were even larger (16% and 21%, respectively). These differences were solely due to substantially saving on the use of water for washing/cleaning in Sofia.

According to UNDP (2006: 3), 'all citizens should have access to resources sufficient to meet their basic needs and live a dignified life. Clean water is part of the social minimum, with 20 litres per person each day as the minimum threshold requirement.' Hence, on average, water consumption per person in the two areas and seasons was 'just' enough to meet their daily basic requirements for drinking, cooking, and cleaning—except for Sofia in the dry season. However, since these figures are averages and since this min-

10 Based on 14 cases of people selling water to neighbours, we could estimate that they sold about twice as much water to their neighbours in the dry season compared with the wet season (on average 164 and 80 jerry cans per day, respectively) and charged them about 40% more (on average 4.1 and 2.9 shilling per jerry can, respectively).

11 According to the respondents, these prices were Ksh 13.1 (N=79), Ksh 4.4 (N=81), and Ksh 4.0 (N=60), respectively.

imum may vary depending on a number of factors,[12] it is not surprising that for only about half of the households the total daily water consumption was *always* enough for their daily needs during the *wet* season and that this applied to only 1 out of 10 households during the *dry* season. Furthermore, the daily consumption of *drinking* water was much less than the recommended 2-4 litres per person: 1.3 litres and 1.7 litres during the wet and dry season, respectively (ibid.).

Respondents were asked whether they faced any *problems with water* during the wet season and during the dry season. Eight types of problems were distinguished: unreliable, interrupted, insufficient, poor quality, source too far, price (too) high, irregular billing, and corruption. In general, the percentage of households facing problems was much higher in the dry season than in the wet season. Nevertheless, even in the *wet season*, when water is supposed to be relatively abundant, quite a number of respondents with access to piped water[13] complained about unreliability, interruptions, and therefore insufficient supply and poor quality of the water. The same complaints, though to a slightly lesser extent, were heard regarding rain water collected by means of roof catchment. Compared with the wet season, the percentages of households facing problems in the *dry* season multiplied in all respects.

In the questionnaire, a distinction was made between *problems* and *serious problems*. Table 1.2 presents the percentages of households facing *serious problems* with the various types of water sources.[14] It is immediately clear that in the *wet* season, most of the respondents felt that although problems existed, they were mostly not classified as 'serious'. The situation regarding the *dry* season was completely different, however: not only were the percentages of households facing problems with their water situation much higher than in the wet season, these problems were also perceived as 'serious' by most respondents. The only exception in this regard was the problem of 'source too far', which was not seen as a *serious* problem by about half of those mentioning this factor. Table 1.2 also shows that the seriousness of problems with the households' water situation was more strongly felt in Sofia than in Shauri Yako, and this applied to all eight categories of problems.[15]

12 The UN suggests that each person needs 20-50 litres of water a day to ensure their basic daily requirements for drinking, cooking, and cleaning and that daily drinking water requirement per person is 2-4 litres (see www.unwater.org/statistics_san.html).

13 This percentage includes many households getting water from private water vendors because the latter usually obtain their water from water kiosks.

14 Both 'problems' and 'serious problems' are shown in Owuor & Foeken (2012: Annex 1, Table A.9).

15 The very high percentage of respondents (69%) in Sofia for whom 'corruption' was a *serious* problem in the dry season is conspicuous, but may be caused by the small number of cases (13).

Table 1.2
'Serious problems' with household water situation by area and by season (% yes)

	TOTAL (N=625[1])		Sofia (N=287[1])		Shauri Yako (N=338[1])	
	wet season	dry season	wet season	dry season	wet season	dry season
unreliable	4.8	55.5	7.0	65.2	3.0	47.3
interrupted	4.0	43.0	6.6	48.8	1.8	38.2
insufficient	2.7	53.3	4.5	60.6	1.2	47.0
poor quality	11.4	44.6	9.1	47.7	13.3	42.0
source too far[2]	7.2	19.1	7.7	24.2	6.7	15.1
price (too) high[3]	7.0	57.9	9.1	68.3	4.8	47.6
irregular billing[4]	18.6	48.8	30.8	53.8	13.3	46.7
corruption[4]	11.6	37.2	15.4	69.2	10.0	23.3

[1] Ns concern water sources.
[2] Excluding households with on-plot water source and private water vendors (N=446/194/252).
[3] Excluding roof catchment and surface (lake, river) water (N=330/164/166).
[4] Only households with individual (on-plot) connection (N=43/13/30).
Source: Owuor & Foeken (2012: Annex 1, Table A.9).

Conclusion

The data show that water consumption in the two low-income areas in Homa Bay has strong seasonal components. While the situation is relatively better during the *wet* season due to reliance on rain water, there is a serious shortage of easily accessible and clean water during the *dry* season: the piped water is more unreliable, insufficient, and interrupted; households spend more time and longer distances looking for water; they rely more on unsafe water; they are forced to survive with the little water available; and they pay more for purchasing and treating water. Furthermore, as women and girl-children shoulder the burden of fetching water, inadequate access to water has a major gender dimension in Homa Bay.

Although the LVWATSAN programme interventions in Homa Bay are indeed very timely, the implementation history of the programme showed that the obstacles to realizing the programme's objectives are immense. Hence, as long as the capacity of the Homa Bay water supply network does not meet the municipality's water demand and all the LVWATSAN water kiosks in the low-income settlements are not (yet) fully functional and do not have a regular supply of water, the programme's main objective—to provide all residents

in Homa Bay with clean and affordable water—will not be realized. This also means that the seasonal problems people in the low-income areas face regarding their water consumption will not be solved.

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2

Food and nutrition studies at the African Studies Centre

Wijnand Klaver[16]

A history of 45 years' involvement in food and nutrition research in Africa[17]

A whole generation of social scientific nutrition studies by the African Studies Centre (ASC) in Leiden had its origins in the meeting of young social psychologist Jan Hoorweg with the English paediatrician J. Paget Stanfield, then at the Child Nutrition Unit, Medical Research Council in Kampala, Uganda. Against the background of the strong interest in the relationship between malnutrition and mental development in the 1960s, Hoorweg undertook a retrospective study of this relationship in adolescents who had been severely malnourished as toddlers, and a comparable control group (Hoorweg 1976). Thereafter, the ASC group (in varying composition) focused on monitoring and evaluating interventions from a social science perspective. This began in 1971-72 with the evaluation of various nutrition programmes in Uganda (Hoorweg & McDowell 1979). In 1976-79 the Nutrition Intervention Research Project (NIRP) was conducted in Kenya in cooperation with the University of Nairobi. In different ecological zones in Kenya's Central Province the effect of three interventions was examined, viz. the rehabilitation of malnourished children, supplementary feeding linked to growth monitoring, and nutrition education (Hoorweg & Niemeijer 1989).

The NIRP was followed by a comprehensive research programme for policy support in Kenya, the Food and Nutrition Studies Programme (FNSP), in collaboration with the Kenyan Ministry of Planning and National Development. In the first phase of the FNSP (1983-89), research was carried out on (a) the effect of specific rural development programmes on nutrition, (b) food policy, and (c) factors related to household food security. At that time

16 African Studies Centre (ASC), Leiden.

17 Based on the ASC's own contributions to the review article of Kusin & Luyken (1999).

the first theme was high on the agenda in international circles, including with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), which called attention to the possible negative effects on nutrition of agricultural development and, in particular, of the growing emphasis on the cultivation of cash crops (Hoorweg et al. 1996). The second theme of food policy was in line with the initiatives of others elsewhere, such as the design of national food strategies in a number of African countries by the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam. The FNSP research on food security at the household level focused on the interaction between the economic and geographical aspects (agro-ecology and seasonality) of food consumption and nutritional status.

Of policy relevance was the observation that in a poor area in economic transition, thanks to the availability of cheap staple food in the shops and on the market (food policy—see below), households could largely meet their increased nutritional needs during the period of hard work on the land prior to harvest (Hoorweg, Foeken & Klaver 1995; Klaver & Mwadime 2000). However, child malnutrition was widespread. Seasonal fluctuations were observed in the growth of young children (peak weight gain in the rainy season after a peak in length growth in the preceding dry season before the long rains) and in the incidence of diseases such as malaria and diarrhoea (Niemeijer & Klaver 1990).

In the second phase of the FNSP programme (1992-96), research was conducted in Trans Nzoia District on the living conditions of labourers on large farms (Foeken & Tellegen 1994). A pilot project was launched in Kilifi District for intersectoral nutrition planning, in conjunction with a nutritional surveillance system at district level (Owuor & Okello 1995). The strength and nature of the relationships in the popular UNICEF conceptual framework for nutrition planning was tested empirically (Mwadime 1996). In this phase, there was intensive cooperation with local universities, including the Applied Nutrition Programme (ANP) of the University of Nairobi.

The Nakuru Urban Agriculture Project

In the late 1990s the ASC took up a new hot topic, namely urban agriculture, and continued to combine it with its interest in food and nutrition security. This research programme, coordinated by Dick Foeken, selected the middle-sized town of Nakuru in Kenya as the site for its research: the Nakuru Urban Agriculture Project (NUAP). The ANP and the Department of Human Nutrition in Wageningen continued to be involved in this research. Later in the new decade the urban agriculture theme was applied to school farming and school feeding (Foeken et al. 2010).

Africa Seminars in Wageningen

In the meantime, in the mid-1980s (the time of the first phase of the FNSP) the ASC had established a cooperative partnership with the Department of Human Nutrition of Wageningen University. This collaboration focused on the socio-economic scientific aspects of food and nutrition security. One result of this collaboration was the organization, annually in mid-December, of an 'African Studies Seminar' for social scientists, nutritionists, health experts, policy makers, students, and others who were involved in food and nutrition issues. During the 11 years that this series of seminars was held, the late Adel den Hartog (1937-2012), social geographer at the Department of Human Nutrition, was the motor, organizer, secretary, and often moderator. One of the highlights was the African Studies Seminar of 1988 on seasonality in food and nutrition security (see below). An overview of the 11 themes (see Table 2.1) offers a good cross-section of the area of interest of food and nutrition security in the tropics, starting and ending with social sciences and nutrition improvement programmes, and then focussing on a number of *capita selecta*: the role of women, seasonality, town and countryside (in their reciprocal relation), livestock, labour, ecology, training, policy, emergency, and small-scale food processing. Those who think in terms of the nexus of food and energy may miss the subject of fuel scarcity—a forgotten energy crisis—but this is only an apparent omission: the topic was covered in the seminar on ecology.

Table 2.1
Themes of the African Studies Seminars in Wageningen (1986-1996)

1986	Social sciences and nutrition programmes in Africa
1987	Women in food production and nutrition in Africa
1988	Seasonality, food supply and nutrition in Africa
1989	Food and nutrition problems in town and countryside in Africa
1990	Livestock production, food and nutrition in Africa
1991	Labour and nutrition in Africa
1992	Food and nutrition in ecologically fragile areas
1993	Food and nutrition training in tropical Africa
1994	Food and nutrition policy in Africa: Research between theory and practice
1995	Nutrition in emergencies in Africa: Between disaster and rehabilitation
1996	Nutrition in relation to small-scale food processing in Africa

In 1988 Ton Dietz participated as one of the speakers in the African Studies Seminar on Seasonality (Dietz 1990). The hot topic in those days was seasonality, and the discussion generally concentrated on rainfall-related forms of seasonality in rural areas (Figure 2.1). Ton widened the discussions by arguing that the study of other—so-called 'non-local'—rhythms, and especially the rhythm of labour migration and government calendars, should be added to arrive at a better understanding of seasonal aspects of life in tropical and sub-tropical rural areas. From 1989 until 1994, Ton served as a member of the Board of the ASC. From that time on, he has been following the development of the ASC's research programmes on food and nutrition.

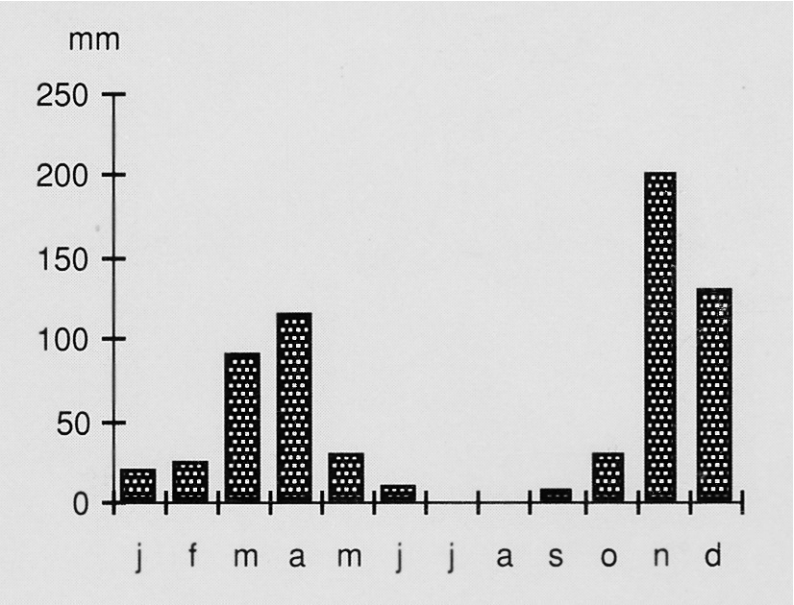

Figure 2.1
Example of rainfall distribution within a year

NUAP and the Wageningen seminars integrated[18]

As a humble offering at the farewell of Ton, this chapter presents an integrating description that echoes the themes of Table 2.1. It is based on empirical data derived from field work by the ASC as part of the NUAP around the Millennium (Foeken & Owuor 2000; Foeken 2006). Nakuru is a medium-sized town in the Rift Valley with, at that time, a quarter of a million people. Most

18 With thanks to Dick Foeken and Samuel Owuor for providing the case material.

of the research on urban agriculture in Africa reported in the literature had been conducted in the metropoles of the continent, but not in medium-sized towns such as Nakuru. For a social geographer, this is an exquisite topic to chart, not only figuratively but also literally. The investigators had access to readily available detailed maps of Nakuru. In 1999 Dick Foeken and Samuel Owuor made a general survey among 594 households. In October 2000, additional interviews were held with 30 farming households selected from the study population; an ad-hoc selection follows below.

Women

In Africa south of the Sahara, women are generally responsible for food production. This is no different in Nakuru.

> Pauline is 37 years old and arrived with her husband in Nakuru when she was 17. From that moment she has grown food crops near the house. She also has a few cows, and some sheep, ducks and chickens. The animals are partly intended for their own consumption (milk, eggs) and partly as a source of additional income by selling them (sheep, ducks). Pauline is solely responsible for the household's urban agricultural activities. During the weeding and harvesting season (April–July), it takes her a good eight hours of work per day.

Seasonality

With an annual average rainfall of 950 mm (this is higher than the 750-odd mm in the Netherlands, but it is less equally distributed) Nakuru has a dry sub-humid equatorial climate. There are two rainy seasons: the long rains in March–April–May and the short rains in October–November–December.

> Charles and his wife Mary grow food crops on a small piece of land of a quarter of an acre (0.1 ha, about 25 m by 40 m) along the railway, at a 30-45 minutes' walk from their house. Just as most other urban farmers in Nakuru do, they seed and plant only once a year because the short rains are unreliable. This means that the harvested produce lasts no more than a few months (at least in good years!). Charles and Mary also have ducks, partly for their own consumption (eggs) and partly for some extra income (a preventive measure against seasonal fluctuations).

Town and countryside

More than six in ten households in Nakuru grow food and/or keep animals in the countryside.

In addition to their piece of land in Nakuru, Charles and Mary also have a piece of land of 0.75 acres (0.3 ha) in Nyandarua district, a plot that Charles inherited from his father. There they grow maize and millet for their own use. They also keep chickens for consumption (eggs) and for sale. During nine months a year, Mary lives there to take care of the crops and the animals. The plot outside the town not only has a value for them as a source of food and income, but also they regard it as a place where, if necessary, they can resort to and go back to by the time that Charles will retire. Moreover, for them it has a 'sentimental value': 'it runs in the family.'

Livestock keeping

One fifth of the households in Nakuru keep livestock in town. It is estimated that within the built-up (urban) area of the town there are approximately 12,000 cows; 7,000 sheep; 7,000 goats; 350,000 chickens; 14,000 ducks; 3,000 rabbits; 1,400 pigeons; and 600 turkeys.

Clement and Rose have two cows for milk production (Figure 2.2) and a heifer for breeding. The animals are kept in the yard inside a fence. Rose is responsible for keeping the animals. The feed is purchased. The two cows produce 10-14 litres of milk per day, most of which is sold to neighbours. They use the proceeds to buy food for the family.

Figure 2.2
The cows of Clement and Rose

Labour

In general, agriculture in Nakuru town depends on family labour. The pieces of land on which crops are grown are usually too small to pay for extra labour. Hiring labour to herd cattle and/or to collect feed for the permanently stabled animals occurs somewhat more often.

> Abraham and Ellen hire a labourer for seven days a week to take care of their cattle. This man collects grass, milks the cows and cleans the stable. He lives on the property and earns the amount of 50 Kenyan shillings [Dfl. 1.75 = €0.80 in 2002], payable per day.

Ecology

Urban agriculture is often considered harmful to the environment. For instance, crops can be contaminated by exhaust fumes, polluted soils, or the use of untreated sewage water. Chemical pesticides can affect soil and groundwater. Animals can cause nuisance in the form of manure and bad smell. In Nakuru the problems seem to be modest. For example, to the extent that manure is dumped on the streets, in general it is not derived from large livestock.

> Joseph keeps the manure in a pit in the yard and takes it at regular times to his 'farm' in the countryside. Like many others, Geoffrey uses the manure to fertilize his plot in Nakuru. There is also an inverse relationship when it comes to animals roaming freely about: on the one hand, they ensure efficient recycling of part of the garbage that lies everywhere in the streets; but on the other hand, this also takes its toll in the form of mortality among the cattle as a result of swallowing the plastic bags that are scattered everywhere and that give the streets of Nakuru their characteristic white-gray colour. In that respect, there is still a long way to go before Nakuru will be granted the (proposed) label of 'Green City'.

Training

> The farmers in Nakuru hardly get any technical assistance; and if they get it, it is usually at their own request. Only 6% of the crop producers had received some form of assistance; for those who kept animals, this was 30% (mainly for large livestock). They rarely see any 'Extension Officers' of the Ministry of Agriculture, although there are exceptions. Esther told the interviewer that she was regularly visited by such an officer, while Jedidah on the other hand reported never to have had such a visit.

Policies

According to local regulations, which date back to the colonial era, agriculture in town is an illegal activity. But for the keen observer, it is omnipresent. With support from Western donors, the local government is working to create a planning unit (Localising Agenda 21). Decision makers realize that urban agriculture should be an integral part of urban planning, but they lack any systematic knowledge about this. Such knowledge is provided by the NUAP research project.

Disaster

The year 2000 was very dry in Nakuru. As a result, there was no harvest, and it was difficult and/or expensive to get feed for the animals. Some households could partly cope with these problems by receiving food from their home plot in the rural area outside the town. But not everyone could rely on such resources.

Esther saw her crops wither and the milk production decline, which reduced her income, while buying feed for the animals cost a lot more money than usual. Reuben and Bett had fewer problems: the dried maize plants were fed to the cows, and by selling food grown in the countryside they could finance the purchase of food in town.

Small-scale food processing/marketing

Margaret is a good example of someone who combines urban agriculture with doing business. In late 1999 she owned four cows and 60 chickens. The cows are permanently in the stable behind the house and the hens 'live' on top of it. The cows produce 50-60 litres of milk a day and the chickens produce about 60 eggs a day, all for sale. After deducting the cost of fodder (which they buy) and labour (for milking, among other tasks), she earns a nice profit from it. Since there is sufficient demand for fresh milk and eggs, she sells them unprocessed.

The importance of urban agriculture for food and nutrition

While the above case descriptions focus on food availability, a follow-up study conducted in October 2000, one year after the first survey, provided insight into food procurement and food consumption. From the larger sample of 594 households, two groups were sub-sampled: 74 engaged in urban farming (UF) and 61 not so (NF). A dietary recall interview was held covering

the 48 hours immediately preceding the start of the interview, thus capturing two days' worth of consumption. The main purpose of the October 2000 survey was to assess to what extent urban farmers were better off in terms of food consumption and nutritional status, compared with non-urban farmers. Within each of the two study groups (UF and NF), the contribution of any food item to the mean consumption of the group is the resultant of the number of households that consume that food item and the amounts consumed. Food can come from different sources: buying and household's own production (either in the urban area and/or in a surrounding or remote rural area). Bartering of food was virtually negligible, and no food was reported to be received or borrowed.

Annex 1 shows for all food items—arranged by food groups—the percentage of households that consumed that food during the two-day period preceding the interview. Among UF households, 30% consumed vegetables from their own urban production, 23% products of animal origin (milk, eggs, and poultry), 5% cereal products (i.e. fresh and dry maize), 3% dry beans, 3% fruits (papaya and avocado), 3% sugar, and 1.5% potatoes (Annex 1). Although the data represent a snap-shot for each individual household, at group level they can be considered to represent their usual intake, at least in that period of the year. It has to be noted that the percentages mentioned do not represent the percentage of households that produced that food, but just the consumption that was 'captured'within the two-day study period. Less than 2% of the households consume some vegetables, products of animal origin, and/or grain legumes from their own rural production. A mere 3% of NF households consumed vegetables (i.c. *sukuma wiki*) derived from urban home production; this may seem a contradiction but can be explained by the criteria used to distinguish the two study groups: households farming on plots of less than 1 sq m were included in the NF group.[19]

More than 90% of the households in both groups consumed purchased vegetables, cereal products, products of animal origin, oils/fats/margarine, and miscellaneous products. For the latter two food categories, buying is almost the only option, as most of these are processed foods that people do not produce themselves. For roots/tubers/starchy foods, the percentage was lower (around 70%), and for grain legumes around 40%. Less than 10% of the households consumed fruits, and still fewer consumed seeds and nuts. As expected, food buying was the predominant source of procurement for these urban households—and the more so because rainfall in 2000 was even lower

19 One sq m may seem very small, but studies have shown that it is enough to realize a produce that 'matters'.

than in 1999[20]—so there was very little harvest from urban crop cultivation. This applied not only to those who relied on rain-fed farming but to some extent also to those who normally practised irrigation because during droughts there is an overall water shortage in Nakuru town.

Against this backdrop, food procurement from UF played a modest—yet not insignificant—role. Its exact contribution will become clear once the quantities consumed are considered. As different types of food differ in nutrient content per unit weight—notably due to differences in water, fat, and fibre content—a first analysis preferably uses dietary energy (kilocalories) as the common denominator representing the quantitative aspect of food consumption (see Annex 2). Next, in order to do justice to the quality aspect of the diet, household food consumption is also expressed in terms of the different macro- and micronutrients (see the graphs in Annex 3). Both energy and nutrients are expressed per consumer unit per day. To arrive at these figures, the consumption during the recall period was divided by the number of household members partaking in household food consumption (expressed in terms of adult equivalents: 'consumer units') and by the equivalent of valid food consumption period reported (i.e. 2.0 days in most cases).

Annex 2 shows that UF households consumed on average 77 kcal/CU more than NF households. This is the result of the former sourcing 102 kcal/CU/day more from their own production (96 from UF and 6 from rural farming) and 26 kcal/CU/day fewer from buying. UF households obtained on average 99 kcal/CU/day from urban farming. NF households obtained a mere 3 kcal/CU/day from urban vegetable farming (*sukuma wiki*); this seeming contradiction was explained above. Rural farming contributes only a very small amount of energy (around 10 kcal/CU/day): less than 2% of the households consume some vegetables, products of animal origin, and/or grain legumes from their own rural production.

For further analysis, the focus is on the main sources of food: personal urban production and buying. Looking at the breakdown of the overall result by food groups, the following appears. Cereal products and vegetables are food groups where UF more or less replaces part of the buying; thus it serves as 'fungal income': on average 23 kcal out of 1,588 (1.5%) in the case of cereals, and 23 kcal out of 120 (20%) in the case of vegetables. As vegetables have a high water content, their energy content is low; so 23 kcal from vegetables represents more food weight than 23 kcal from cereals. Their contribution in terms of nutrients is more considerable (see below). UF households consume home-produced products of animal origin (39 kcal/CU/day, of which 33 kcal

20 Total rainfall was 601 mm (compared with a long-term average of 940 mm), and the 'long rains' failed completely.

from milk), but they also buy more of those food groups compared with urban NF households (279 vs 263 kcal/CU/day). Home production represents 14% of total energy consumed. UF households consume home-produced grain legumes and fruits (8 and 2 kcal/CU/day, respectively) but buy even more of those food groups compared with urban NF households (140 vs 108 and 7 vs 1 kcal/CU/day, respectively). Home production represents 23% and 6%, respectively, of total daily energy consumed. Like vegetables, fruits have a high water content and modest energy content per weight of food. Urban households do not produce seeds and nuts, but almost 3% of the urban farmers buy them for consumption (on average 5 kcal/CU/day). Home production of the food groups roots/tubers/starchy staples, oils/fats, and miscellaneous is negligible (only 3 kcal/CU/day). What is more striking is that UF households buy less of these food groups compared with urban NF households: (125 vs 138, 267 vs 293 and 190 vs 198, respectively).

Thus, the 77 kcal/CU/day more consumed by UF households is the result of 9 kcal/CU/day more from vegetables and cereals (substituting for purchases), 111 kcal more from products of animal origin, fruits, grain legumes, seeds, and nuts (more than substituting for purchases), and 44 kcal fewer bought from roots/tubers/starchy staples, oils/fats, and miscellaneous. Their lower consumption of the latter food groups is more than compensated for by their higher consumption of the former food groups.

Focussing on the individual cereal products (providing some fungal income to urban farmers), the following are bought only: 1,004 kcal/CU/day from maize flour, millet, and wheat flour; rice; spaghetti; bread; biscuits; cakes; Cornflakes; Weetabix; and doughnut/*mandazi*. The UF households consume 7 kcal/CU/day more energy from cereal products than urban NF households. They compensate their 94 kcal/CU/day less buying of maize flour largely by home producing 19 kcal dry maize and 5 g fresh maize; by buying more of the following: 52 kcal rice, 19 kcal wheat flour, 10 kcal dry maize, 7 kcal fresh maize, 4 kcal bread; and by buying less of the following: 12 kcal *mandazi* and 4 kcal other cereal-based convenience foods (spaghetti, biscuits, cakes, Cornflakes, Weetabix). Thus, the urban farmers have a more diversified cereal products' base that partly replaces maize flour and convenience foods.

The UF households consume 2 kcal/CU/day more energy from vegetables than urban NF households. This is roughly the result of buying 4 kcal more spider flower (*saget*) and 2 kcal more cabbage, offset by buying 4 kcal/CU/day less fresh shelled peas (all bought). Both groups consume 70 kcal/CU/day of kale (*sukuma wiki*), but the urban farmers derive 30% of it from urban production (vs 4% in the case of urban non-farmers). The UF households consume 59 kcal/CU/day more energy from products of animal origin than the

urban NF households. This is roughly the result of 56 kcal more from meat (beef, chicken, goat, duck), 8 kcal more from sausage, 11 kcal more from eggs, 7 kcal more from milk and milk products, offset by 19 kcal less from fish and 4 kcal less from cow's liver. Among UF households, 25% of the milk and 11% of the eggs are home produced, while another 11% of the eggs originate from their own rural production. The UF households consume 8 kcal/CU/day more energy from fruits than urban NF households. While 3% of the latter consume fruits (bananas and lemon), 11% of the former consume fruits (also purchased pineapple, partly purchased and partly home-produced papaya, and rural home-produced avocado).

The predominance of buying as a source of food procurement is quite graphic, as Annex 3 shows. The exceptional consumption of home grown *sukuma wiki* among some urban NF households disappears in the group average and is not visible in the graphs. Among the UF households, the contribution of their own home production to food consumption is visible and mostly so among the vegetables, fruits, and products of animal origin. The first two have—expectedly—a peak contribution to total vitamin C intake, and the latter to total calcium intake (due to the large part of milk in the animal foods group). The cereal products contribute most of the carbohydrates, protein, and much iron and B vitamins. This is due to the large amounts consumed and their nutritional composition (as found in food composition tables). Compared with their energy contribution, the grain legumes are richer in protein, iron, and B vitamins than the cereals. The products of animal origin (milk excepted) are low in carbohydrates and very rich in most nutrients. In fact, comparison of the different stacked graphs in Annex 3 shows in an indirect way the difference in nutritional value of foods in the different food groups. On the whole, the contribution of UF to household consumption in Nakuru in 2002 shines most in graphs showing the foods particularly rich in nutrients: animal products, fruits and—last but not least—vegetables (see Grubben et al. 2014).

Conclusion

Human nutrition can be seen as the outcome of the marriage of agriculture and health. Historically, the discovery of malnutrition and nutritional deficiencies owes much to pioneers in the health sector. Then started a process of 'digging deeper' for the causes of these problems. This is where research of a socio-economic nature came in. Food security is embedded in livelihood security, and peoples' own production is an important source of food. This has always been the focal point of the ASC's involvement in food and nutri-

tion research. Thus it started from a health concern in mainly rural areas and eventually ramified into the role of urban agriculture.

After Ton Dietz joined the ASC in 2012 in his new capacity of director, he found a fertile ground to apply his fondness for statistics in combination with his interest in food matters in the Food Balance Sheets of the FAO. Food production comes about by combining area (hectares cultivated) with yield (tonnes per hectare) in a multiplicative relationship. The fruits of this endeavour (Akinyoade et al. 2014) are too many to include in this chapter, but *inter alia* we found a way to estimate a reference trend line for crop area and yield to keep up with population increase in a balanced fashion (Akinyoade et al. 2013; Dietz et al. 2013; Leliveld et al. 2013a, 2013b).

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Annex 1

Percentage of households consuming a food group or food item, by urban farming group and by source of procurement

	Total sample	Urban farming households (UF)				Non-UF households (NF)			
Source(s):	*all*	*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*		*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*	
				urban	rural			urban	rural
(N=)	135	74	74	74	74	61	61	61	61
Cereal products	99.3%	100.0%	100.0%	5.4%	–	98.4%	98.4%	–	–
Bread	72.6%	73.0%	73.0%	–	–	72.1%	72.1%	–	–
Maize flour (not specified)	71.1%	77.0%	77.0%	–	–	63.9%	63.9%	–	–
Maize flour (*posho*)	22.2%	20.3%	20.3%	–	–	24.6%	24.6%	–	–
Maize flour (factory)	5.9%	5.4%	5.4%	–	–	6.6%	6.6%	–	–
Mixed flour (millet/maize)	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Millet flour (*wimbi*)	17.0%	18.9%	18.9%	–	–	14.8%	14.8%	–	–
Maize: fresh	23.0%	25.7%	23.0%	4.1%	–	19.7%	19.7%	–	–
Maize: dry	9.6%	10.8%	9.5%	1.4%	–	8.2%	8.2%	–	–
Rice	55.6%	56.8%	56.8%	–	–	54.1%	54.1%	–	–
Wheat flour	17.8%	23.0%	23.0%	–	–	11.5%	11.5%	–	–
Mandazi	12.6%	8.1%	8.1%	–	–	18.0%	18.0%	–	–
Spaghetti	1.5%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Biscuits	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Doughnuts/*mandazi*	0.7%	–	–	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Cornflakes	0.7%	–	–	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Weetabix	0.7%	–	–	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–

Grain legumes	43.7%	47.3%	44.6%	2.7%	1.4%	39.3%	37.7%	–	1.6%
Beans, dry	37.0%	36.5%	32.4%	2.7%	1.4%	37.7%	36.1%	–	1.6%
Green grams (*ndengu*)	7.4%	10.8%	10.8%	–	–	3.3%	3.3%	–	–
Peas, dry	6.7%	9.5%	9.5%	–	–	3.3%	3.3%	–	–
Cowpeas	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	-	-	–	–
Roots, tubers & starchy foods	71.1%	67.6%	66.2%	1.4%	–	75.4%	75.4%	–	–
Potatoes	70.4%	67.6%	66.2%	1.4%	–	73.8%	73.8%	–	–
Cooking bananas (*plantains*)	4.4%	4.1%	4.1%	–	–	4.9%	4.9%	–	–
Sweet potatoes	0.7%	–	–	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Vegetables	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	29.7%	2.7%	100.0%	100.0%	3.3%	–
Kale (*sukuma wiki*)	81.5%	81.1%	54.1%	27.0%	1.4%	82.0%	80.3%	3.3%	–
Peas, fresh (shelled)	14.8%	13.5%	13.5%	–	–	16.4%	16.4%	–	–
Cabbage	25.9%	27.0%	25.7%	–	1.4%	24.6%	24.6%	–	–
Spider flower (*saget*)	5.2%	8.1%	5.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Tomatoes	97.0%	95.9%	94.6%	4.1%	–	98.4%	98.4%	–	–
Onions	97.0%	98.6%	95.9%	2.7%	1.4%	95.1%	95.1%	–	–
Onions, spring (leafy)	10.4%	5.4%	4.1%	1.4%	–	16.4%	16.4%	–	–
Spinach	10.4%	9.5%	4.1%	4.1%	1.4%	11.5%	11.5%	–	–
Nightshade leaves (*managu*)	10.4%	10.8%	10.8%	–	–	9.8%	9.8%	–	–
Carrots	16.3%	16.2%	16.2%	–	–	16.4%	16.4%	–	–
Beans, fresh	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Cowpea leaves	1.5%	–	–	–	–	3.3%	3.3%	–	–
Pepper, sweet (*paprika*)	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–

	Total sample	Urban farming households (UF)				Non-UF households (NF)			
Source(s):	*all*	*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*		*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*	
				urban	rural			urban	rural
Fruits	7.4%	10.8%	9.5%	2.7%	–	3.3%	3.3%	–	–
Papaya	1.5%	2.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–
Avocado	0.7%	1.4%	–	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–
Bananas	4.4%	6.8%	6.8%	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Lemon	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Pineapple (juice)	1.5%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Products of animal origin	96.3%	94.6%	90.5%	23.0%	2.7%	98.4%	98.4%	–	–
Milk (*maziwa*)	93.3%	90.5%	81.1%	20.3%	1.4%	96.7%	96.7%	–	–
Milk, fermented (*lala*)	4.4%	5.4%	5.4%	–	–	3.3%	3.3%	–	–
Yoghurt	0.7%	–	–	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Meat (beef)	38.5%	40.5%	40.5%	–	–	36.1%	36.1%	–	–
Meat (goat)	1.5%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sausage	2.2%	4.1%	4.1%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Duck	0.7%	1.4%	–	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–
Chicken	4.4%	8.1%	6.8%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–
Eggs	25.2%	32.4%	27.0%	4.1%	1.4%	16.4%	16.4%	–	–
Fish, dried	1.5%	–	–	–	–	3.3%	3.3%	–	–
Fish, fried	4.4%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	6.6%	6.6%	–	–
Fish (*omena*)	8.1%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	14.8%	14.8%	–	–
Fish, fresh	8.9%	5.4%	5.4%	–	–	13.1%	13.1%	–	–

Liver(beef)	0.7%	–	–	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Offal (*matumbo*)	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Seeds & nuts	2.2%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Groundnuts	2.2%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Soya beans	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Oils, fats, margarine	98.5%	98.6%	98.6%	–	–	98.4%	98.4%	–	–
Cooking fat	98.5%	98.6%	98.6%	–	–	98.4%	98.4%	–	–
Margarine	12.6%	14.9%	14.9%	–	–	9.8%	9.8%	–	–
Cooking oil	3.7%	5.4%	5.4%	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Miscellaneous	94.8%	97.3%	97.3%	2.7%	–	91.8%	91.8%	–	–
Sugar	94.8%	97.3%	97.3%	2.7%	–	91.8%	91.8%	–	–
Soda	1.5%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Jam	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	1.6%	–	–	–
Cocoa	2.2%	2.7%	2.7%	–	–	1.6%	1.6%	–	–
Coriander (*dhania*)	6.7%	6.8%	6.8%	–	–	6.6%	6.6%	–	–
Royco	7.4%	8.1%	8.1%	–	–	6.6%	6.6%	–	–
Curry powder (*haria*)	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–
Baking powder	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	–	–	–	–	–	–

Note: A household may consume a food item or food group from different sources, so the percentages for individual sources (bought, home-produced-urban, home-produced-rural) do not add up.

Annex 2

Mean energy intake per household (kcal/CU/day), by urban farming group and by source of procurement

	Total sample	Urban farming households (UF)				Non-UF households (NF)			
Source(s):	*all*	*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*		*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*	
				urban	rural			urban	rural
(N=)	135	74	74	74	74	61	61	61	61
Total diet	2797.3	2831.9	2720.7	98.7	12.5	2755.4	2746.2	2.5	6.6
Cereal products	1607.5	1610.9	1587.6	23.3	–	1603.5	1603.5	–	–
Bread	218.4	220.1	220.1	–	–	216.4	216.4	–	–
Maize flour (not specified)	756.7	771.9	771.9	–	–	738.4	738.4	–	–
Maize flour (*posho*)	206.0	158.8	158.8	–	–	263.2	263.2	–	–
Maize flour (factory)	41.4	29.5	29.5	–	–	55.8	55.8	–	–
Mixed flour (millet/maize)	1.7	3.1	3.1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Millet flour (*wimbi*)	26.7	27.3	27.3	–	–	26.0	26.0	–	–
Maize: fresh	19.4	24.6	20.2	4.5	–	13.0	13.0	–	–
Maize: dry	43.4	56.6	37.8	18.8	–	27.4	27.4	–	–
Rice	178.7	202.3	202.3	–	–	150.0	150.0	–	–
Wheat flour	79.4	88.1	88.1	–	–	68.9	68.9	–	–
Mandazi	30.9	25.5	25.5	–	–	37.5	37.5	–	–
Spaghetti	1.5	2.7	2.7	–	–	–	–	–	–
Biscuits	0.2	0.3	0.3	–	–	–	–	–	–
Doughnuts/*mandazi*	1.1	–	–	–	–	2.5	2.5	–	–

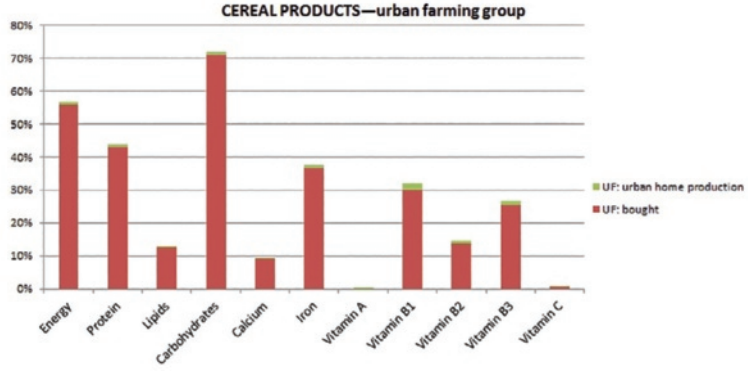
Cornflakes	1.1	–	–	–	–	2.5	2.5	–	–
Weetabix	0.9	–	–	–	–	2.0	2.0	–	–
Grain legumes	135.9	153.7	139.5	8.3	5.9	114.4	107.8	–	6.6
Beans, dry	106.8	108.8	94.6	8.3	5.9	104.4	97.8	–	6.6
Green grams (*ndengu*)	13.5	22.0	22.0	–	–	3.2	3.2	–	–
Peas, dry	14.8	21.5	21.5	–	–	6.7	6.7	–	–
Cowpeas	0.7	1.3	1.3	–	–	-	-	–	–
Roots, tubers & starchy foods	131.5	125.8	124.7	1.1	–	138.3	138.3	–	–
Potatoes	125.7	123.0	121.9	1.1	–	129.0	129.0	–	–
Cooking bananas (*plantains*)	4.9	2.9	2.9	–	–	7.3	7.3	–	–
Sweet potatoes	0.9	–	–	–	–	1.9	1.9	-	–
Vegetables	145.1	145.9	119.5	23.3	3.1	144.2	141.6	2.5	–
Kale (*sukuma wiki*)	70.3	69.9	48.7	20.6	0.6	70.9	68.4	2.5	–
Peas, fresh (shelled)	29.3	27.3	27.3	–	–	31.7	31.7	-	-
Cabbage	9.0	10.1	9.6	–	0.5	7.8	7.8	–	–
Spider flower (*saget*)	3.4	5.8	4.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.4	–	–
Tomatoes	14.8	14.5	14.1	0.5	–	15.2	15.2	–	–
Onions	9.2	9.4	9.1	0.1	0.2	8.9	8.8	–	–
Onions, spring (leafy)	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	–	0.4	0.4	–	–
Spinach	2.9	2.9	0.3	1.4	1.2	2.8	2.8	–	–
Nightshade leaves (*managu*)	3.5	3.4	3.4	–	–	3.6	3.6	–	–
Carrots	2.0	1.8	1.8	–	–	2.3	2.3	–	–
Beans, fresh	0.3	0.6	0.6	–	–	–	–	–	–

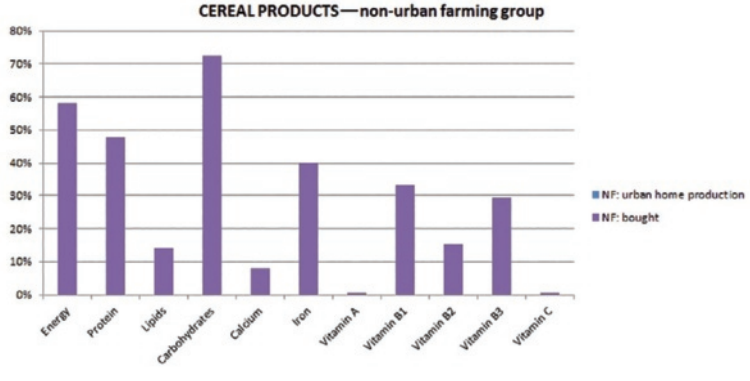
	Total sample	Urban farming households (UF)				Non-UF households (NF)			
Source(s):	*all*	*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*		*all*	*bought*	*home-produced*	
				urban	rural			urban	rural
Cowpea leaves	0.1	–	–	–	–	0.3	0.3	–	–
Pepper, sweet (*paprika*)	0.03	0.05	0.05	–	–	–	–	–	–
Fruits	5.5	9.0	7.3	1.7	–	1.1	1.1	–	–
Papaya	0.5	0.9	0.4	0.5	–	–	–	–	–
Avocado	0.6	1.2	–	1.2	–	–	–	–	–
Bananas	2.6	4.0	4.0	–	–	1.0	1.0	–	–
Lemon	0.1	0.01	0.01	–	–	0.1	0.1	–	–
Pineapple (juice)	1.6	2.9	2.9	–	–	–	–	–	–
Products of animal origin	295.3	321.9	279.1	39.4	3.4	263.1	263.1	–	–
Milk (*maziwa*)	129.6	132.2	98.7	32.6	1.0	126.5	126.5	–	–
Milk, fermented (*lala*)	3.5	4.2	4.2	–	–	2.6	2.6	–	–
Yoghurt	0.4	–	–	–	–	1.0	1.0	–	–
Meat (beef)	99.2	113.7	113.7	–	–	81.7	81.7	–	–
Meat (goat)	1.9	3.4	3.4	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sausage	4.3	7.8	7.8	–	–	–	–	–	–
Duck	1.2	2.2	–	2.2	–	–	–	–	–
Chicken	10.0	18.2	16.1	2.2	–	–	–	–	–
Eggs	17.5	22.2	17.3	2.5	2.4	11.7	11.7	–	–
Fish, dried	3.8	–	–	–	–	8.4	8.4	–	–
Fish, fried	14.4	13.2	13.2	–	–	15.9	15.9	–	–

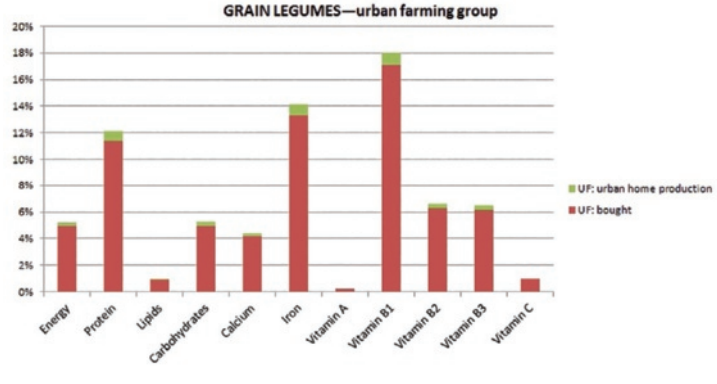
Fish (*omena*)	3.2	1.1	1.1	–	–	5.8	5.8	–	–
Fish, fresh	4.4	3.0	3.0	–	–	6.1	6.1	–	–
Liver(beef)	1.6	–	–	–	–	3.5	3.5	–	–
Offal (*matumbo*)	0.4	0.7	0.7	–	–	–	–	–	–
Seeds & nuts	2.9	5.1	5.1	–	–	0.2	0.2	–	–
Groundnuts	1.8	3.2	3.2	–	–	0.2	0.2	–	–
Soya beans	1.0	1.9	1.9	–	–	–	–	–	–
Oils, fats, margarine	278.8	267.4	267.4	–	–	292.7	292.7	–	–
Cooking fat	257.2	243.8	243.8	–	–	273.5	273.5	–	–
Margarine	17.9	17.1	17.1	–	–	18.8	18.8	–	–
Cooking oil	3.7	6.5	6.5	–	–	0.3	0.3	–	–
Miscellaneous	194.7	192.1	190.5	1.6	–	197.9	197.9	–	–
Sugar	188.5	185.2	183.6	1.6	–	192.5	192.5	–	–
Soda	2.1	3.7	3.7	–	–	–	–	–	–
Jam	1.1	0.6	0.6	–	–	1.6	1.6	–	–
Cocoa	1.3	0.4	0.4	–	–	2.4	2.4	–	–
Coriander (*dhania*)	1.1	1.2	1.2	–	–	0.9	0.9	–	–
Royco	0.7	0.9	0.9	–	–	0.5	0.5	–	–
Curry powder (*haria*)	0.05	0.1	0.1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Baking powder	0.01	0.01	0.01	–	–	–	–	–	–

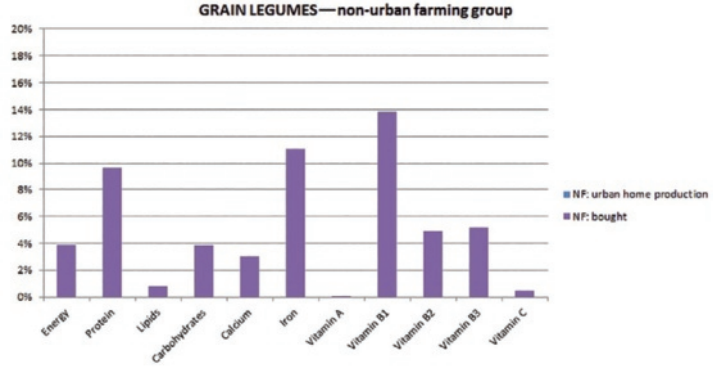
Annex 3

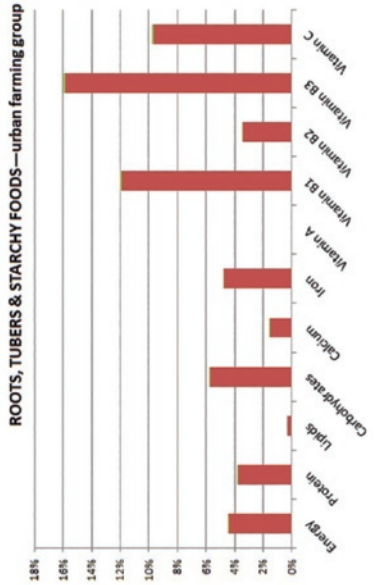
Stacked graphs of percentage contribution to total daily intake of energy and selected nutrients of food procured from the two main sources: buying and personal urban production

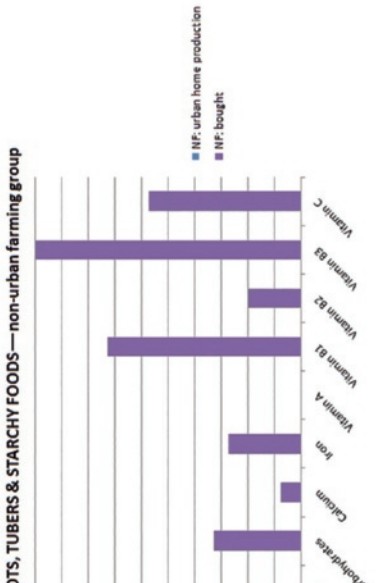


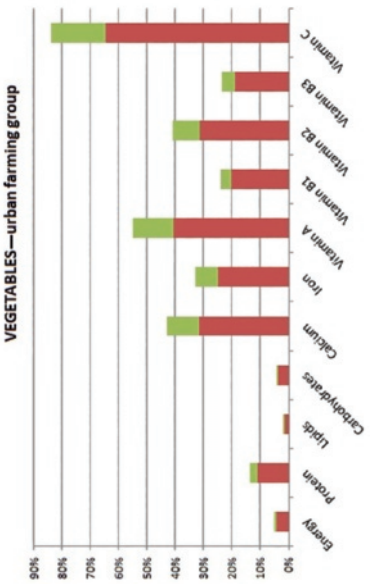


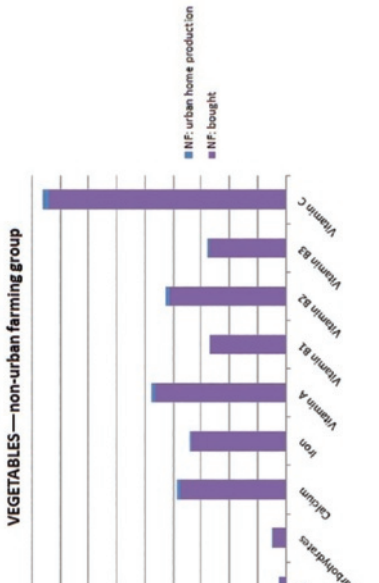


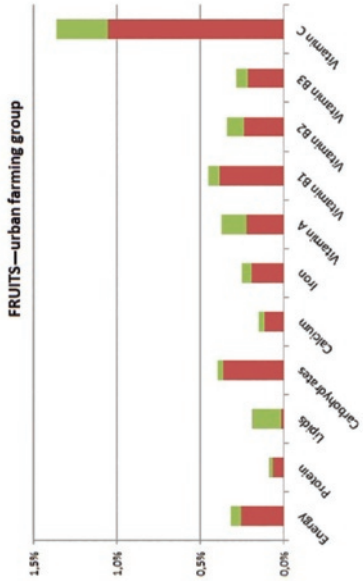


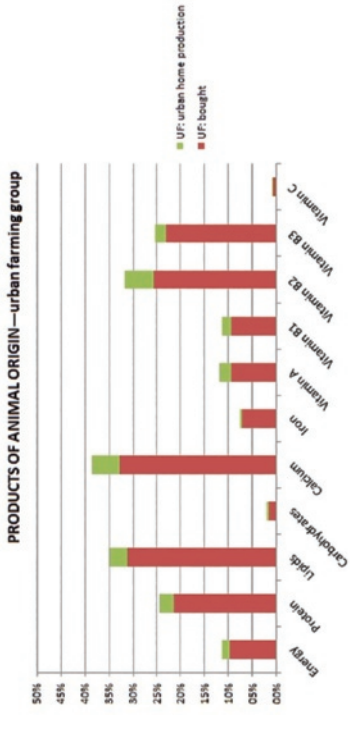

ROOTS, TUBERS & STARCHY FOODS—urban farming group
UF: urban home production
UF: bought
18%
16%
14%
12%
10%
8%
6%
4%
2%
0%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C

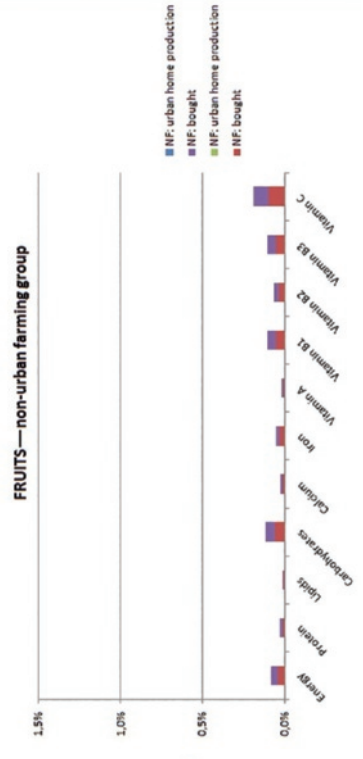

ROOTS, TUBERS & STARCHY FOODS—non-urban farming group
NF: urban home production
NF: bought
20%
18%
16%
14%
12%
10%
8%
6%
4%
2%
0%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C

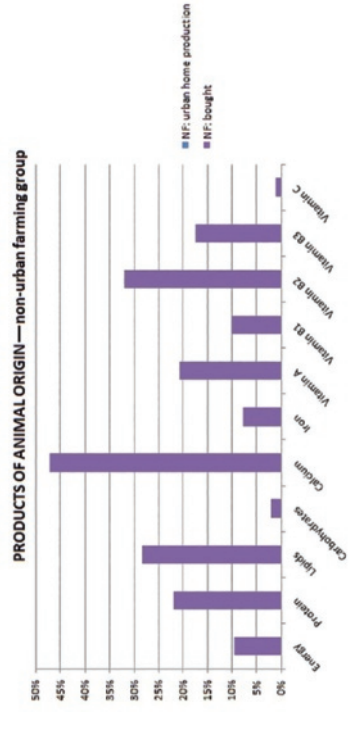

VEGETABLES—urban farming group
UF: urban home production
UF: bought
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C


VEGETABLES—non-urban farming group
NF: urban home production
NF: bought
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C


FRUITS—urban farming group
UF: urban home production
UF: bought
1,5%
1,0%
0,5%
0,0%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C


PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN—urban farming group
UF: urban home production
UF: bought
50%
45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
05%
00%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C


FRUITS—non-urban farming group
NF: urban home production
NF: bought
NF: urban home production
NF: bought
1,5%
1,0%
0,5%
0,0%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C


PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN—non-urban farming group
NF: urban home production
NF: bought
50%
45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
Energy
Protein
Lipids
Carbohydrates
Calcium
Iron
Vitamin A
Vitamin B1
Vitamin B2
Vitamin B3
Vitamin C

3

From macro to micro
How smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe are coping with dollarization

Marleen Dekker

As Africanists, geographers, and development specialists, we are often puzzled by connections and disconnections between different levels of scale. At times, there is, for example, a disconnect between macro-economic growth performance indicators and micro-level poverty figures—that is, the puzzle of jobless growth. In other situations, we simply do not know what a macro-level figure actually means for people on the ground and how it affects their lives and livelihoods. Oftentimes the way people are affected by these macro-economic circumstances also depends on where they live and what opportunities their geographical context provides. In short: geography matters! In this contribution, Ton, I would like to take you back to Zimbabwe, the country that connected you and me as a teacher and student, through your involvement with Carla van Wiechen's research on livelihoods in Mberengwa district in 1992. Although there is much to say about that study and the circumstances (the worst drought in living memory) in Zimbabwe at that time and how it formed me as an academic, I will take you to the resettlement communities in which I worked for my PhD project. To a time in the mid-2000s during which Zimbabwe was in dire straits. Simply because it is important to document how ordinary farmers were affected by and coped with the hyperinflation and subsequent dollarization in 2009; how macro-economic crises play out at micro-scale. Not only to 'document history' but also to emphasize the relevance of this work for today. Regular contacts with my research assistants confirm that despite reports of economic dynamism in some parts of the country (e.g. as documented by Scoones 2016), other parts of the country still witness a scarcity of cash in 2016/17. Money, and especially cash money, is scarce at a national level (Moyo & Onisho 2016). The government is often unable to pay salaries to civil servants and has now introduced a new currency, 'bond notes', to meet the liquidity con-

straints (Marawanyika 2017). In rural farming areas, the availability of cash is much determined by the intensity of agricultural production and marketing and related local economic structures (see Scoones 2016). The contribution is based on fieldwork performed by Michael Shambare and Nyaradzo Nzobo and analyses by Merel Langeveld and myself.

Introduction

Once the grain basket of Southern Africa, Zimbabwe has scored poorly on economic development indicators since the early 2000s. The country has the doubtful honour of having had the second-highest inflation ever recorded globally, and its national currency, the Zimbabwe dollar, has jokingly been used in Western television shows to signal bad luck. Behind this façade, and the fortunes made by those who have successfully taken advantage of the opportunities provided by the parallel currency markets (Pilossof 2009), lies a day-to-day reality that has not been extensively documented but that has affected many in Zimbabwe.

To curb hyperinflation, in 2009 the Government of Zimbabwe replaced the Zimbabwean dollar with the US dollar. The dollarization of the economy brought some stability: macro-economic indicators improved, and prospects for economic recovery were heralded. Little is known, however, about the effects of this dollarization on livelihoods and economic life in the rural areas. Combining a snapshot of 20 farmers in two rural areas in December 2010 with insights from longitudinal studies in the same areas, this paper sheds some light on the micro-implications of the crisis, hyperinflation, and the subsequent 'dollarization' in Zimbabwe.

Most existing work on risk-coping strategies documents strategies in 'normal' economic contexts, where cash is readily available and it is viable for savings or assets to be sold to generate a cash income (Dercon 2002).[21] Hyperinflation and the subsequent dollarization in Zimbabwe made savings worthless and resulted in a shortage of cash, especially in rural communities. This provided a challenging situation for small-scale farmers who were fully integrated in the cash economy before the economic downturn began in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Jones (2010) describes how hyperinflation led to the rise of the *Kukiya-kiya* economy, in which people do whatever they can to put a deal together, in line with the informalization documented by, for example, Hammar et al. (2010). Jones's research, however, was carried out in an urban context where seasonality and cash constraints are less prevalent, and it deals with the period of hyperinflation before dollarization occurred. This

21 With the possible exception of remote areas where cash is always scarce.

paper considers how farmers obtain cash in a period when 'normal' solutions are not possible, selling possessions is difficult because nobody has cash to buy assets, and relatives in town or abroad—who normally might have been expected to send remittances—are themselves also strapped for cash. Standard economic thinking suggests that people revert to barter when cash is scarce/unavailable, but such practices have not been well documented.[22]

The data presented in this paper show that many households indeed did not have any cash at their disposal. In addition, remittances from family members in the city or overseas were not as important a source of income as had been expected. In cases where the availability of money is limited, it is often assumed that barter would be the most important financial tool to sustain livelihoods. Surprisingly, 'on-the-spot' barter was insignificant here. Instead, a pre-existing gift-giving economy, based on the principle of delayed reciprocity, intensified.

The context: Zimbabwe

The agrarian structure in Zimbabwe changed significantly in the early 2000s (Hammar et al. 2010; Cliffe et al. 2011). The dualistic landscape in which large-scale commercial farms co-existed with smallholder farmers changed when the Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) led to the breaking up of many large-scale farms. This change in landscape also affected the agro-input industries that supplied the large-scale farms, as well as affecting the agro-processing industries that purchased and processed their products. As a result, there was a steep, albeit uneven, decline in output, exports, and the inflow of foreign currency. Agricultural productivity and food production declined (Moyo 2011: 952). In addition, more than 400,000 people who used to work on commercial farms lost their jobs when they were broken up. Contraction, however, has not been even across the country, and some groups of smallholders have proven to be remarkably resilient; in addition, redistribution of land to smallholders has created pockets of economic dynamism in various localities (Scoones et al. 2010; Scoones, 2016).

The transition from large-scale farms to a multitude of smallholder farms has not been easy and has been extensively discussed in the literature (Scoones et al. 2010; Cliffe et al. 2011; Moyo 2011; Hanlon et al. 2012; Matondi 2012). Several interrelated developments resulted in severe constraints for small-scale farmers. First, farmers experienced resource constraints that prevented them from financing inputs and tools, which was exacerbated by the fact that many private institutions involved in input supply withdrew af-

22 For an exception, see the report by Solidarity Peace Trust (2009).

ter the FTLRP. Even though the state still provided some financing schemes, which were limited to newly resettled farmers, most farmers had no choice other than to finance production through their own savings (Moyo et al. 2009). Second, even when farmers were able to afford inputs, there was a shortage of inputs due to the slowdown of the agricultural markets (Moyo, 2011). As a result, farmers reduced the acreage they had under maize and started planting other crops that required fewer or no inputs. Farmers also started to barter seed with their neighbours instead of buying it at the market. The number of farmers using modern inputs (hybrid seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides) has decreased over the last decade (Dekker & Kinsey 2011a). Third, farmers who had crops to sell derived almost no income from them owing to hyperinflation combined with delayed payments and a shortage of cash money (Dekker & Kinsey 2011b: 8). When money did become available, the required goods were in short supply, which affected the farmers' ability to provide for other household needs.

In search of greener pastures and in an attempt to protect themselves from various forms of violence, an estimated 1-3 million Zimbabweans (more than 20% of the population) left the country after the start of the crisis in the early 2000s. This has created transnational family networks (Hammar et al. 2010).

Hyperinflation and dollarization

During this tumultuous decade, the Zimbabwean dollar experienced continuous inflation. From a 56.09% inflation rate in 1999, inflation rose to 585.84% in 2005 and then to a staggering 231,150,888.87% in July 2008. It took until mid-November 2008, when inflation had reached approximately 89,700,000 ,000,000,000,000,000%, before the government permitted the use of foreign currency and the hyperinflation was halted. Noko (2011) reports that non-cash transactions became the predominant form of transaction in the Zimbabwean economy during this period.

To curb inflation and restore stability, Zimbabwe adopted a multi-currency financial system in April 2009, using the US dollar (US$), the South African rand, and the Botswana pula. The Zimbabwe dollar (Z$), which had been pegged to the US$ since 1999, was abandoned (ibid.). Various sources reported on the consequences of the dollarization and the macro-economic changes that resulted from this. First, cash was in short supply,[23] especially small-denomination US$ banknotes and coins (Kramarenko et al. 2010; Munanga 2013). In rural communities, the situation was even more acute due to a lack of formal employment, the absence of financial institutions, and the seasonality of cash incomes from agriculture (Solidarity Peace Trust 2009).

23 A situation that exists even today.

Farmers reported going 'for several months without setting … sight on a mere coin' (IRIN 2013). Instead, the return of a 'cashless society' and the practice of using barter to meet household needs were frequently reported in the popular press (ibid.), and retailers started using small items such as sweets, biscuits, and matches or credit slips to provide 'change' for customers (Noko 2011). Secondly, with the collapse of agricultural markets, cash constraints, vanishing savings, and the non-availability of inputs, farming activities came under pressure and earnings became marginal. Given that incomes from crops and livestock normally constitute about 80% of farmers' total incomes in the study sites (Deininger & Hoogeveen 2004: 1,702), it was expected that they would be forced to develop different economic activities to sustain their livelihoods. However, Dekker and Kinsey (2011b) documented how farmers were undertaking fewer non-agricultural activities in 2009/2010 compared with a decade before.

It has been argued that the cautious improvement in the economy from 2010 onwards may have resulted in an increase in remittances (IRIN 2013) and that more job opportunities in the city or abroad have allowed migrants to save money to send to family in the rural areas. These remittances have been of critical importance for many rural households and have been made easier by the emergence of telephonic cash transfer initiatives. Econet Wireless, for example, has been described as 'a bless' and 'a lifeline', particularly for rural people (ibid.).

As Hammar et al. (2010) and Nhodo et al. (2013) demonstrated, the cash scarcity has required the agency and resilience of people. A great deal of time, energy, discussion, flexibility, and sometimes despair went into answering the daily questions about what people could get where and for how much,[24] as is illustrated by the account of one farmer in the study area who received a good income for his 2008 crop.

> After I got paid for my harvest, I went to the shops in Bindura. Goods were now scarce in the shops. All I could do was buy exercise books with the money. I bought them and brought the exercise books home. People came to exchange almost anything—chickens, mealie meal, etc.—for exercise books.

With this 2008 experience and a wider availability of goods after dollarization, this farmer sold his tobacco and bought six head of cattle and groceries to last

24 Despair could result, for example, from sudden changes in terms of trade, such as when a bed of tobacco seedlings was exchanged for two bags of fertilizer rather than just one bag. Solidarity Peace Trust (2009) reports how these terms of trade became exploitative in Matabeleland, especially in more isolated rural communities and when bartering with people from outside who had arrived with truckloads of goods from town.

his family for a year after the 2009 harvest. He gave the groceries to a shop owner at Madziva Mine, and his wives withdrew them as they needed them.

Transactions

The data presented in this paper derive from transaction diaries compiled by 20 farmers over a period of three weeks in 2010. Transaction diaries were kept as part of an ongoing project on social networks and risk-coping strategies in rural Zimbabwe. Data were collected in two different resettlement areas in Zimbabwe that had been established in the early 1980s: Mupfurudzi in Mashonaland Central and Sengezi in Mashonaland East, both part of the Zimbabwe Rural Household Dynamics Survey (ZRHDS) managed by B.H. Kinsey. These are 'old resettlement schemes', as opposed to the more recent schemes that were set up under the FTLRP in the early 2000s. In both these areas, ten men and ten women were asked to keep a transaction diary for 21 days in November and December 2010.

Figure 3.1
A Shop in Sengezi Resettlement Area

The data collected cover almost 800 transactions (for a review of the methodology and descriptive analysis of the transactions, see Van 't Wout & Dekker 2014) and are summarized along two important dimensions in Table 3.1. The first horizontal panel shows the *type of transaction*, distinguishing gifts, mar-

ket transactions, and other; the second panel describes the *time setting* of the transactions; and the third panel documents the *type of goods* transacted (food and non-food). These data provide three important insights into the local economies in the two areas at the time just after dollarization. First, the data shows that transactions were primarily exchanges of gifts or market transactions, with exchanges of gifts more frequently reported compared with purchasing and selling products and services. These latter 'market' transactions are more often higher in value; almost 7 US$ value per transaction compared with 2.83 US$ value for gifts. There is a smaller 'other' category of loans, paid labour, etc.

Second, transactions involving a direct exchange of money or products (purchases, 'on-the-spot' sales, barter, and paid labour) account for 41% of the total number of transactions, while transactions based on an expected future reciprocation (the exchange of gifts in kind, money, labour, and social assistance) constitute more than half (55%) of the total number of transactions. Despite the lower frequency of 'on-the-spot' transactions, they have a higher monetary value, again almost 7 US$.

Thirdly, more than half of all the transactions involved food and groceries, mainly as part of gift-giving relationships and often small in size. The value of most of the transactions here (89.2%) did not exceed US$ 5.

Combining these general observations with a more detailed look at the data highlights three main points concerning household exchanges in a cash-constrained economy, which will be discussed in more detail below: the (in)flow of cash in the villages is limited; the frequency of remittances and barter is low; and gift-giving has intensified.

Table 3.1
Descriptive statistics on selected characteristics of the transactions

Type of transaction	Frequency	Value US$ per transaction
Gifts	41%	2.83
Market	37%	6.91
Other	22%	
On-the-spot	41%	6.99
Future reciprocity	55%	3.83
Other	4%	
Food	54%	
Non-food	46%	

N=798
Source: Van 't Wout and Dekker (2014)

Limited amount of cash circulating in local economies

Given the severe cash constraints after the dollarization of the economy, it is noteworthy that about half of all transactions still involve cash. Yet, on the other hand, this also means that half of the respondents were not able to have access to cash over three weeks. Of the incoming cash transactions, the majority (67%) took place in the village or in nearby villages (21%), which suggests that instead of a steady inflow of cash from abroad or the cities, transactions are being made with cash that is circulating around the villages and in the immediate surroundings. Cash availability in the local economy is thus strongly determined by local agricultural and economic opportunities.

Remittances are not frequent

As a result of the decline in production, inadequate farm incomes, and rising food shortages in rural areas, it was assumed that an increasing number of rural households would be relying on remittances and emergency aid (Rural Poverty Portal Zimbabwe n.d.). For other rural areas in Zimbabwe, it has been argued that remittances are 'mostly crucial for the sustenance of the households involved, even before the onset of the economic crisis of the 2000s' (Harts-Broekhuis & Huisman 2001: 290). Reporting on urban households, Bracking & Sachikonye (2006) claim that 'it is difficult to see how some of these households could even survive without these informal remittance transfers'. A similar argument is made by Nhodo et al. (2013) concerning the importance of remittances for pensioners in Masvingo.

With regards to incoming transfers of money, the transaction diaries showed that two participants received money from different sources on multiple occasions in the month under review, while two participants received money twice, and five participants received money once. The majority of the sums were relatively small and came from family members, neighbours, and friends in the same village, and they therefore do not qualify as a remittance. In only one instance was an amount of rand 500 (approx. US$ 70) received by one of the households from a family member living in South Africa, and 14 transactions (gifts) were received from a local or regional town, Harare, a new farm, or abroad. Although low in frequency, given the scarcity of cash in the areas as well as the small size of the transactions generally reported, the observed remittances can make a substantial contribution to local circulation of cash.

The low level of remittances raises the question whether households have family members elsewhere on whom they can rely. Historically, labour migration to cities and abroad was a common household strategy, and many of the diary households had migrants in their networks. These migrant networks have become ever more dispersed as a result of the FTLRP, which attracted the younger generation particularly in the old resettlement areas to

seek greener pastures (Dekker & Kinsey 2011b). Previous research based on the ZRHDS indicated that in the early 2000s before the economic downturn, farmers in old resettlement areas derived 3.7% of their income from remittances, and the figure was 18.5% among farmers in communal areas (Deininger & Hoogeveen 2004: 1,702).

An alternative explanation for the low level of remittances might be that remittances are sent irregularly and were therefore not picked up during this study, or that family members are not able or willing to send money home. The latter would be in line with the observations made by the Solidarity Peace Trust—namely, that remittances from relatives living abroad are never guaranteed. Worby (2010) also illustrates how migrants may (deliberately) disconnect from their relatives back home, especially at times of material distress and ongoing uncertainty.

The role of barter and the intensification of gift-giving

The third finding is that 'instantaneous' barter is rare. Fafchamps (2004) distinguished three kinds of trust-based exchange mechanisms as alternatives to cash transactions: first, 'instantaneous barter', where no contractual obligations of exchange are carried forward in time; second, 'delayed barter', when one part of the exchange is conducted instantaneously and the other is delayed; and thirdly, gift exchange, where there is no explicit link to a corresponding payment. In his view, 'instantaneous' barter and gift-giving are two points on a continuum, differing only in the degree of the counter obligation (Thomas & Worrall 2002). In other words, gift-giving can be regarded as a gesture in which a future reciprocal counter gift is expected (Mauss 1967). However, this exchange can be carried forward in time, and no specific agreement is made as to the content and value of the counter gift.

The transaction data show that the first category of barter, 'instantaneous' barter like that reported in the exercise book example above, is rare.[25] The assumption that if there is no cash available, either from crop sales or from remittances, people revert to 'instantaneous barter' to sustain their livelihoods is thus not supported. In the households under review, fewer than 1% of transactions can be categorized as 'instantaneous barter' trade. Two of these were food transactions—in one, a plough share was exchanged, and in the other, a cow was exchanged for six bags of maize and nine bags of fertilizer—while the remaining two transactions involved agricultural seeds.[26]

25 The exploitative barter trade reported by the Solidarity Peace Trust (2009), where external agents go to rural areas with food and barter this food for productive assets, was not reported in this study area.

26 From the transaction diaries, it was unclear what kinds of products were being bartered in exchange.

In contrast with the relative absence of 'instantaneous barter', gift-giving was a prominent feature in the data. Small gifts were exchanged between family members, neighbours, and other close relations. Examples of such gifts were a plate of mealie meal, a cup of sugar, four tomatoes, or three cups of beans. In the food and groceries category, 60% of the transactions were exchanges of gifts in kind, suggesting that exchanging small gifts is an important way of meeting daily food needs. This was much more important than barter trade, which accounted for less than 1% of the food and grocery transactions.

This raises the question whether gift-giving as a form of transaction has intensified in comparison with the period prior to hyperinflation and dollarization. To shed light on this, ZRHDS data from 2000 was reviewed, in which households were asked to list assistance in cash and kind that they had received and given over the previous year. This resulted in a dataset with 783 transactions, including medical expenses, education costs, farming expenses, food and grocery expenditures, farm and agricultural investments, non-farm business investments, and other assistance. The data suggest that 40% of these transactions were in cash and 60% were in kind. When these figures are compared with transactions in kind and money in the current dataset, it is clear that gifts in kind have become much more important. Gifts in kind and labour constitute 92.4% of the total gifts, while gifts in money constitute 7.6% of the total. This suggests that there has been an intensification of gift-giving in kind in response to the shortage of cash.

From macro to micro

Using a micro-lens to understand the implications of macro-economic figures yielded three important observations. First, in these 'traditional' farming areas (i.e. not the dynamic new communities featured in Scoones et al. (2010)), the inflow of cash from surrounding areas, cities, Harare, and abroad was severely limited. Half of the households did not report having received any cash transfers in the weeks under review. Since transactions in cash (purchases and sales) constituted 37.3% of the total number of transactions, the data suggest that a limited amount of cash was circulating in the villages and was being exchanged in small transactions. The availability of cash in such 'island economies' is determined by the local economic structure and dynamism: geography matters!

The second finding was that there was no indication that remittances were a steady component of the incomes of farmers, which contradicts the view that a substantial number of rural households in Zimbabwe rely on remittances to sustain their livelihoods.

Thirdly, and in contrast with conventional wisdom about transactions in cash-scarce societies, 'instantaneous' barter was rare. Fewer than 1% of the transactions can be categorized as 'on-the-spot' barter. This can be considered positive, as it means that participants were not being forced to deplete their assets to meet their daily household needs through unfavourable barter transactions (e.g. exchanging an animal for food at unfavourable terms of trade). Instead, the shortage of cash resulted in an intensification of gift-giving in kind; and small gifts, mostly of food and groceries, were being exchanged between family members, neighbours, and other close relations.

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4

Waithood in Africa's Silverlining

Akinyinka Akinyoade & Rantimi Jays Julius-Adeoye

There is a pattern to the ebb and flow in Africa's development experience and story. The continent's economic history can be broadly divided into four sub-periods: the post-1960 period, corresponding closely to the era of political sovereignty (1960-80), when the growth of many African economies equalled that in many other areas of the world; 1980-2000, when economic growth collapsed as a result of external shock; 2000-07, when many African economies recorded reasonable economic growth; and 2008 until the present, when economic uncertainty returned in some areas (see Roemer 1982; Olamosu & Wynne 2016). Particularly for the year 2015, a dip in GDP values became a marker for Antonius Dietz to express reservations about his hitherto optimistic stance of 'Silverlining Africa'. Dietz is not the first to express such a change in optimism regarding Africa's economic development. Fabricius (2015) reported on 'Africa rising or Africa uprising', while Gettleman (2016) challenged that 'Africa rising? Africa reeling' may be more fitting. In the *longue durée*, Africa's development seems to be in a constant state of flux—or transition, tenure, turning points, and outcomes which may be difficult to predict.

In this chapter, we will examine individual and societal transitioning in academic and life spaces. Our encounters converge on the theme 'Silverlining Africa' (Dietz 2011) and diverge on the current (2016) assessment of gloomy statistics that appear to overshadow the aforementioned promise. Some socio-economic data are thereby used to realign divergent thoughts to show that the latest dip in Africa's development trajectory may in the long run be a blip on Africa's radar.

As Julius-Adeoye recounts: I registered for my doctoral degree in February 2009 at the Leiden University Institute for Cultural Discipline (now Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society) but did not arrive in the Netherlands until six months later in August. One of my promoters, Dr Daniela Merolla, took me to the African Studies Centre library for registration, and she invited me to sit in on some of their Research Master (ResMA) lectures.

It was in one of these lectures that I had the opportunity of meeting Akinyinka Akinyoade, who in turn invited me to other events organized by the ASC and introduced me to a distinguished looking gentleman, Ton, ASC's new director. I attended Ton's inaugural lecture 'Silverlining Africa' in 2011, when he presented the glimmers of hope radiating from the African continent. I returned to ASCL as a Visiting Fellow in March 2017, amazed that Ton recognized me. But he appeared cautious and perhaps less optimistic about Africa's development trajectory on the basis of recent disturbing signs. This is what prompted us to write this chapter.

Akinyoade now speaking: On my part, it was not my wish to arrive late in Holland for my doctoral programme. In actual fact, it was stated quite clearly on the ISS website that a PhD programme is individual; invariably, the candidate could commence his/her programme on any chosen day. So I arrived in the Netherlands in April 2002, only to be told that I was late for the CERES course for PhD students that began a month before my arrival. I joined the CERES course mid-stream and had to present my draft research proposal to the group almost immediately. At the end of my presentation, one of the people in attendance told me that while he enjoyed my presentation, it was filled with intentions to calculate rates and figures to depict the slowing down of birth rates among Ghanaian women. He also said that my proposed thesis would be much better if it followed the style of a book he would like to give me. I accepted the book with thanks—quantitative technique is my joy and skill—but from a quick scan the book given to me had a qualitative leaning to it. My forte was technical demography, honed at the Regional Institute for Population Studies (University of Ghana), where I had obtained two Masters degrees with distinction in the late 1990s.

The majority of students of demography were primarily concerned about figures, rates, graphical illustrations, and continuous refinement of statistical procedures to get the most reliable rates. Economists such as Gary Becker (New Household Economics) were also part of the picture, as was Shryock and Siegel's (1973) *The methods and materials of demography* bible, while *Introduction to the mathematics of population* by Keyfitz (1968) had an abstract that encapsulated the statistical grandiosity of contemporary demography, not only showing advances in mathematical demography but also exploring problems in the mathematics of population. Some attention was also given to substantive demography. Professor Anquandah at Legon studied demographic dynamics of long-forgotten populations by deploying archaeology to derive levels of childbearing among bushmen of the Kalahari. The quantitative approach to population studies had the edge, but a few other scholars (Ebigbola and Olusanya) argued about the need to see human populations as more than just rates and figures.

It was with this background that I contributed to the growth of the Demography Unit at the University of Cape Coast, and later I arrived in Holland for my doctoral programme in development studies with a focus on population and rural development. After I arrived in ISS, my supervisor (Christine Sylvester), having read my proposal, wanted it to have a more substantive feel than the rates I promised to calculate. She advised that I add gender perspectives on childbearing, to which I curtly replied 'we study women'. And later in CERES the man who gave me a book decided not to argue but said that my PhD thesis would be fantastic if I could combine my yet-to-be calculated rates with some nice life stories on the childbearing aspirations and careers of women. The idea was not only to show rates indicating declining fertility of Ghanaian women, but to explain better the processes of this decline. One large question was whether lower fertility would be the end of demographic transition in Africa in general and Ghana in particular.

Demographic transition theory

Demography is a science short on theory but rich in quantification. In spite of this, it has produced one of the best-documented generalizations in the social sciences: the demographic transition (Kirk 1996). According to Caldwell (1976), 'our interpretation of past population movements and our expectations about future trends rest primarily on a body of observations and explanations known as demographic transition theory'. Stripped to essentials it states that societies experience modernization progress from a pre-modern regime of high fertility and high mortality to a post-modern one in which both are low. Basically, fertility is high in poor, traditional societies because of high mortality, the lack of opportunities for individual advancement, and the economic value of children. All these things change to lower fertility levels with modernization or urban industrialization, when individuals, once their viewpoints become oriented to the changes that have taken place, can make use of the new opportunities. In the transition process, a decline in mortality occurs first, and a decline in fertility much later, implying a period with high population growth as a transition period. The African demographic context finds itself in this stage of transition of high fertility and declining mortality. The resulting population figures do not bode well for per capita economic indices, which in comparison with other world regions look bleak. And with increasing numbers of migrants braving the unforgiving Sahara, perilous times in dinghies across the Mediterranean,[27] and lengthy times camping in Calais

27 BBC Online, Europe migrant crisis: EU blamed for 'soaring' death toll. www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-40515054 6 July 2017. Europe.

for opportunities to cross into the UK, the question of further increases in Africa's population goes beyond the discourse on food and water security in the continent.

The Danish government was more direct on 12 July 2017, when the country pledged more funds for family planning in developing nations so as to 'limit the migration pressure on Europe'.[28] This argument may appear clear and convincing, but fertility behaviour has elements and implications that are more complex or debatable, which impact on ways of looking at demographic change within and across countries. Cursory evidence from Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and in some parts of Nigeria and Ghana indicated that childbearing levels may rise as people's income increased. Demographic transition in some countries outside Africa has been aided by enforced contraception. Take for instance India: during the 1975 Emergency, a 'gruesome campaign' to sterilize 6.2 million men in just under a year was carried out under the direction of Sanjay Gandhi and a government encouraged by loans in millions of dollars from international sources (Biswas 2014; McCoy 2014).

Back to the man who gave me a book. I was to meet him on two other occasions: one short, and the other long. The former was in ISS when I met him with Mathew Kurian, who gleefully introduced him as 'my supervisor'. Mathew, of Indian parentage but Nigerian by birth, bonded well with me in ISS—especially when I told him his supervisor had given me a book at a previous meeting. Years later, on the other occasion, theatre stage Leiden, I met the man in the corridors of the ASC, near the secretariat bordering the director's office. The man who gave me a book, with his usual charismatic smile, informed me upon my questioning about what he came to do in the ASC that he was the new director. Everything appeared to fall in place. Still standing, we had our first discussions on research plans. Tracking Development (TD) was not in the desired trajectory at this time; I had not been given space to conduct the kinds of research I promised as a demographer during my interview. Despite the hiatus, I had already published elsewhere what TD authorities deemed unimportant. One of the papers (credit to the advice of Jan Kees van Donge) was based on a list that I had made of all ministers in Nigeria and Indonesia from 1970 up to 1999, which enabled me to statistically relate tenure of office of government ministers to policy performance. Outside TD, I had worked with Francesco Carchedi on the subject of forced labour in Nigeria. It turned out that Francesco had been Ton's colleague 30-odd years back. Ton rescued TD, and I eventually published a comparison

28 BBC Online, Denmark's contraception aid to Africa 'to limit migration'. www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-40588246 12 July 2017. Europe.

of population policies of Nigeria and Indonesia. Other discussions with Ton led to an examination of food and water security in Africa, on which I had a bit of side knowledge (Hilderink et al. 2012; Oyeniyi & Akinyoade 2012). This culminated in a book publication titled *Digging deeper: Inside Africa's agricultural, food and nutritional dynamics,* under the responsibility of the AFCA collaborative research group (Akinyoade et al. 2014).

It was in between the collaborative research and teaching activities that Ton gave a rousing and inspired inaugural address (Julius-Adeoye in attendance), where as an incurable optimist Ton informed the world that Africa has a rosy future. Using evidence from the deployment of PADev in Ghana, it was discovered that development initiatives are mainly improving the lives of people who are regarded locally as being in the rich and middle-income groups. Development agencies working in our research areas are most successful at directly improving the level of well-being of the upper part of the bottom of the pyramid (those who have slightly better education, are more entrepreneurial, have easier access to land, water, and public services, and are better connected to the rich and powerful both economically and politically). These are the ones who are not addicted to alcohol or drugs (do not engage in substance abuse), do not have excessive debts, and do not have a history of failure or 'bad luck' in life (Dietz 2011).

Ton turned the optimism up a notch by stating how FAOSTAT indicated that

> over the last fifty years, African farmers have succeeded in achieving a higher yield per hectare for all crops, with the exception of vegetables. The yield increases were most pronounced for fruit and cereals, with almost a doubling of average yields. Roots and tubers showed a 61% improvement in yield ... [Where] yield and acreage data are combined, the aggregated results for all major food crops show that Africa is better able to feed its population today than it was in 1961, despite its huge population increase over these fifty years. Both now and then, Africa produced, on average, a little more than the minimum food requirements for a healthy life, as outlined by the World Health Organization, although many Africans still do not get enough food every day. (ibid.)

In the area of physical infrastructure, 'various sources suggest an overall growth in air transport facilities and far better connectivity for major parts of the continent with outside destinations' (though internal connectivity requires substantial improvements). Road networks had vastly improved, numbers of vehicles had increased. Electricity provision had been slow, but new investments were being made, as Northern and Southern Africa had reached

electricity coverage of more than 80% (in these two regions, households using modern fuel were approximately 50%). Investments in communication infrastructure were booming, instigating rapid change in people's connectivity (cf. de Bruijn 2009)

Furthermore, urbanization had been on the increase since 1960. It had increased from 20% living in cities to 50% at the turn of the century. In the domain of human capabilities, health and education also improved a great deal over a similar time scale, even though Africa trailed behind in achievement of the MDGs. Health-wise, Africans have much better access to safe drinking water than 50 years ago. Life expectancy has improved tremendously, such that by 2008, no African country had life expectancy figures in the thirties anymore; 14 countries made the 50-60 years range; people living in five others have survival chances of over age 70 years, despite the decline in Zambia and Botswana due to the HIV/AIDS problem. Many countries have achieved near universal literacy, which is the result of investments particularly in primary education. It was recalled that in the 1960s and 1970s, economic growth was bleak in many parts of Africa; by 2009 economic growth had varied, with many countries experiencing remarkably high economic growth, such that signs of an 'emerging Africa' were evident. On the socio-political scene, Ton averred that compared with 1990, many African governments and presidents came to power as a result of multi-party elections; and there is clearly a perception of increasing decency, based on improved African performance in indexes such as the Democracy Index, Corruption Perception Index, Legal Rights Index, Freedom Index, and the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance. While there is still a lot of room for improvement, regular elections, legal protection for business interests, and improved press freedom are positive developments.

On the economic front, '[t]he target of reducing extreme poverty rates by half was met five years ahead of the 2015 deadline.' Food production had more than caught up with the extreme growth of population: in the 1960-2010 time frame, as population growth experienced a 3-fold increase, agricultural land had shown a 2-fold increase, yields nearly 2-fold increase, chickens over 5-fold increase, and food value per capita more than 1-fold increase. In stark figures, Africa's population increased from 275 million inhabitants in 1961 to 994 million in 2012 (an impressive or threatening 3.62-fold increase in 51 years). The situation in the 1980s and 1990s did indeed look rather gloomy, as Africa experienced a number of dramatic food crises and famines; however, looking at the last 50 years as a whole, most of Africa's food production has increased more than population growth. Although its traditional export crops increased by less impressive percentages, Africa's agricultural production volume became more oriented toward Africa itself,

particularly at the turn of the century. Interestingly, increases were observed for all the major basic food categories: cereals, pulses, and particularly roots and tubers.

Nutritionally, Africa's total (potential) food availability can be expressed in terms of the food energy and proteins available for human consumption in Africa. In Figure 4.1 below, we can see how total food availability increased since 1961: energy per capita increased by 31% and protein per capita by 30%. Instructively, hunger and undernutrition in Africa were actually not a matter of limited total quantities available for human consumption but of inadequate distribution. Therefore, in terms of dietary composition, consumption per capita, and average wealth levels, these figures represented impressive improvements for Africa, a continent that has also experienced a tremendous population explosion. It was cautioned that behind the averages there is considerable diversity, and that despite all the improvements in food availability, nutrition for the 'bottom half' of the population remains problematic. All the evidence provided by Ton Dietz in his inaugural address as well as subsequent joint publications did indicate 'Africa rising'. The President of United States could not have done better in an annual address, which always has a statement that the state of the union is strong (Carter 2016).

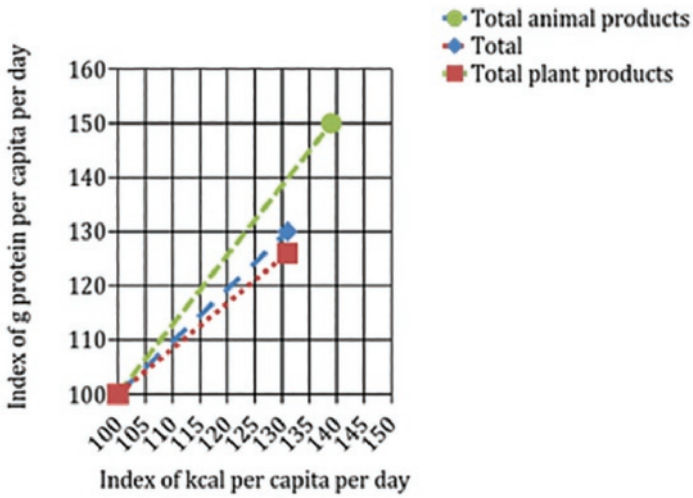

Figure 4.1

Growth in Africa's food available per capita at retail level, 2011 (index compared with 1961=100). Source: Adapted from Akinyoade et al. 2014

In 2008, a near-similar pattern led Barack Obama to stress the audacity of hope; but leaving the presidency eight years later after two tenures, his wife

Michele Obama stated: 'We are feeling what not having hope looks like', as the Democrats lost national elections to Republican Donald Trump (Scott 2016). It was sheer coincidence that in the same time frame Ton also started having doubts about the maintenance of Africa's economic growth and development toward the end of 2016, despite evidence supporting his earlier optimism. But permit us to digress a little before we present statistics that appeared to dent Ton's optimism.

Africa experienced mainly stagnation and crisis in the 1970s and 1980s; the 1990s marked the beginnings of recovery; high economic growth became the norm in the 2000s, as six African countries were counted among the world's ten Fastest Growing Economies (FGE); for 2010-15, further take-off was predicted for seven African countries among the ten FGE. But in 2014, a slowing down of growth coupled with major trade deficits was observed (Figure 4.2).

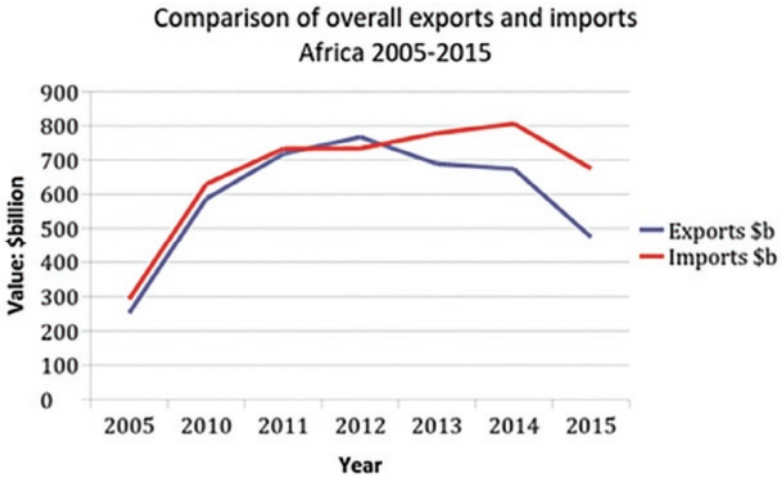

Figure 4.2
Exports and imports in Africa, 2005-16. Source: Adapted from www.trademap.org

Stephen Ellis had earlier cautioned in his book *Seasons of rain: Africa in the world* (2012)—though not in direct response to our book on Africa's agricultural productivity—that the notion of 'Africa rising' should be approached with caution. Some portions of this book and other questions led Ton to examine the 2010-15 data, which prompted his worries in late 2016. Julius-Adeoye and I observed Ton's worry; the statistics appear to indicate Africa in trouble once again. It is true that the improved commodity prices that fuelled the growth observed in many African countries are now experiencing falling prices. And regarding its population, Professor Alcinda Honwana (a

former holder of the Prins Claus Chair) had also presented millions of African youths as being in 'waithood', as population projections signify upcoming billions that will need to be fed and clothed, draining the continent's lean purse.

> Waithood constitutes a twilight zone, or an interstitial space, where the boundaries between legal and illegal, proper and improper, and right and wrong are often blurred. It is precisely at this juncture that young people are forced to make choices. Their decisions help to define their relationships towards work, family, and intimacy, as well as the type of citizens they will become. Rather than being a short interruption in their transition to adulthood, waithood is gradually replacing conventional adulthood itself. (see Honwana 2014: 2438)

Ton lamented in a lecture to MA students in Leiden (December 2016) that although Africa's private sector grew, it was more a case of female traders participating in the informal sector coupled with slow growth of secure jobs and not a growth in industry. He went on to describe a continent with little involvement of government in facilitating employment (where many young people with good education are not working in paid jobs), increasing outmigration, strong growth of remittances, and growth of microcredit (but mainly thanks to secular NGOs). He concluded that though change agents are still mainly NGOs and government, the involvement of the private sector in generating jobs is still not strong enough. And while foreign aid has played an important role as a driver of change, it will become rooted only if embedded in local agencies. Such agencies are generally much appreciated, but people not only judge 'initiatives' by the outcome (practical success) but also by the process (respect, decent relationships, trust, dependability). In general, all areas are experiencing both population pressure on local resources and expanding expectations for a 'better living'.

But, 'we ought to be cautious about the data we use … We have gotten Africa wrong so many times' (Fabricius, 2015). The Tracking Development project encourages us to consider that before a pattern can be deemed to be sustained, it needs to follow at least five years of similar trajectory. To us, Ton had observed only one year of dip, and we make bold to say it is not *déjà vu* 1980s Africa. And we also make bold to say there is a new resilience in Africa's economic activities and productive potential, which will not allow these warnings to be manifested in reality. Developments in the informal sector led to a new rebasing of Nigeria's economy that propelled it into becoming the foremost African economic giant; mobile connectivity is engendering new forms of social and financial transactions and inclusion: entrepreneur-

ship, health care delivery, frugal innovations (Heilbron et al. 2017; Rouse & Verhoef 2017). In terms of health services, mobile phone-based technological innovations are changing the service delivery landscape in Africa, especially among poor populations and those living in fragile states (Brinkel 2014; Kimenyi 2015); and in some areas, mid-level cadres are being used as substitutes for internationally mobile health professionals, saving lives and hard currency (Dovlo 2004). On the demographic side, waithood is leading to new modes of childbearing that will not result in the envisaged population explosion scenario. Longer birth intervals and reductions in fertility rate among women are emerging in West Africa. Population pyramids of Northern and Southern Africa have started taking on the Western shape of lower dependency burden; intra-African migrations are yielding more positive effects—new entrepreneurs, the use of frugal innovations to better African society—all conspiring toward positive results which will be more rooted by 2030, two decades earlier than the worst-case scenario projected in the world population data sheet (Gewald et al. 2012; Akinyoade & Gewald 2015). The level of current birth rates and Africa's youthful population imply that, for the foreseeable future, labour will be available to drive economic productivity in the continent.

Honwana (2014) examined the lives of young people struggling with unemployment and sustainable livelihoods in the context of widespread social and economic crisis in four African countries: Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, and Tunisia. Failed neo-liberal economic policies, bad governance, and the political instability of the 1980s had caused stable jobs to disappear—and without jobs, young people cannot support themselves and their families. By the turn of the century, many young Africans in the aforementioned countries were discovered to be living in 'waithood'—a period of suspension between childhood and adulthood, a state of limbo that appeared to be replacing conventional adulthood. For Honwana, the emergence of the 'Arab Spring' in Tunisia was an outcome of the crisis of joblessness and restricted futures, occasioned by the high unemployment experienced by the youth. Thus we need to caution that predicting changes in social systems is tricky. The Failed States Index (a composite of a dozen demographic, economic, political, and military indicators, covering 177 countries, and supposed to reveal which states around the globe are weak and failing) is supposed to give an 'early warning of conflict … to policymakers and the public at large' (Goodwin 2011). The assumption is that political conflict is more likely to occur where one finds weak and failing states. But the Failed States Index data for 2010 failed to suggest that conflict was about to erupt in the Arab world. Paradoxically, the index predicted an 'African Spring,' as Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Cameroon featured in the top 25 most weak

and failing states; only one Arab country, Yemen (ranked thirteenth), fell into the group. Arab Spring occurred elsewhere, and as Kurzman (2004) concluded, these estimations cannot be known in advance; nor can the willingness to participate. Even the most thorough survey could not have predicted very far into the future; for this reason, revolutions will remain unpredictable. The events of the Arab Spring remind us that demographic, economic, religious, and political processes within each country are not entirely independent. This reality violates many of the assumptions built into our analyses, so we need to be more careful when we construct our models (Saideman 2012).

Youth in waithood is not limited to Africa alone; a similar phenomenon is conceptualized as *parasaito shinguru* in Japan. This youth crisis is global. And despite the fact that marriage and motherhood are still the most important markers of adulthood for young African women, the crisis has resulted in a much longer wait to start childbearing, or an increase in birth intervals for those who already have a child (Akinyoade 2011)—which ironically is responsible for the observed slowing rate of population growth. This is quite different from the factors responsible according to the first accounts of demographic transition theory, thereby questioning the global applicability of the theory. Populations in transition need to be understood in terms of costs of transition, social contexts of transition, and the future of transition. Particularly for Ghana, it is emerging that as women with higher education acquire better job and employment conditions, fertility aspirations change, and lower fertility rates are likely not to be the end of the current transition, as demographic transition theory would have led us to assume. Fertility decline will occur in Ghana, but not to the level that will threaten replacement fertility. Currently, societies in the four African countries that Honwana studied seem not to endow young men and women with the social, economic, cultural, and moral resources they need to follow robust pathways to adulthood. Some of the youth risk all to travel across the Sahara to reach Europe in search of a better life. Many of those that survive the brutal Sahara and the Mediterranean graveyard confront another form of waithood in Calais,[29] where they camp for years in the hope of getting a better life in the UK, just across the Channel.

But the 'waithood generation' also possesses a tremendous transformative potential, as young people understand that the struggle to attain freedom from want requires radical social and political change. From riots and protests in the streets of Maputo, Dakar, Madrid, London, New York, and Santiago, to revolutions that overthrow dictatorships in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, the waithood generation appears to be conquering freedom from fear

29 Calais Migrant Crisis, www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/calais-migrant-crisis

and fighting for their rights. Waithood is creative; waithood is transformative. For the 'African youthman, it will get worse before it gets better', as espoused in the lyrics of a popular song in Sierra Leone (Honwana 2012). Newer engagement is needed for taming the wild, ungoverned digital and political spaces in bourgeoning super-urban environments spreading from Lagos through Cotonou, to Lome, and to Accra. For now, the youth and society at large will continue to adapt to new forms of waithood. Young people in waithood are dynamic, and they use their agency and creativity to invent new forms of being and interacting with society. Thousands of youths formerly labelled as illegal refinery operators are now being attracted to work with modular refineries in Nigeria's Niger Delta. Their new-found jobs as legally recognized artisanal refinery operators has positive implications for employment, income generation, and financial inclusion, bringing less reliance on imported refined oil products and bringing much-desired peace in the Niger Delta, which had been rife with militancy, military operations, and general instability in the past decade (Obasi 2017). Such ingenious engagement of the youth must start in all other areas of Africa; the benefits are unquantifiable.

The dent in Ton's optimism on Africa's Silverlining is an early warning sign. Africa is at a critical waithood juncture where it needs to make hard choices for socio-economic development. These decisions will help to maintain or re-define processes of investment, entrepreneurial development, financial inclusion, democracy, public service delivery, work, family, and the type of accountable citizens youths will become in the foreseeable future. Apart from leveraging human capital, the financial clout of the continent's billionaires is increasingly becoming more important than FDI from outside Africa. African countries will gain much from measures aimed at improving the domestic investment climate (Ndikumana & Verick 2007). As indicated in *The Economist* (2011), population trends could enhance these promising developments. A bulge of better-educated young people of working age is entering the job market, and birth rates are beginning to decline. Though roads are generally dreadful, some fundamental numbers are moving in the right direction. Africa is still capitalizing on advances in communications, with mobile banking and telephonic agro-info enjoying a huge boom. Autocracy, corruption, and strife will not disappear overnight. But at a dark time for the world economy, Africa's progress is a reminder of the transformative promise of growth. Tourism now accounts for approximately 10% of the continent's economy, with about 40% of tourists coming from within Africa.[30] Analysts say liberalizing air transport and further relaxing visa rules could boost tourism further. In addition, over 90% of African billionaires on the Forbes List

30 BBC Online, Big jump in African tourists, www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40519226

actually earned and invested their money in Africa. Dangote, for instance, has inspired and expanded cement manufacturing in African countries far more than foreign investors from outside Africa have ever done. Thus the continent is fast approaching self-sufficiency in the construction sector. Food security remains a challenge only in distribution, not in production. Other Nigerian tycoons are urging youth across the continent to embrace entrepreneurship. Impact Hub in Accra has been established toward engendering an enabling environment for the next wave of successful (West) African entrepreneurs. Across Africa, it was estimated in 2016 that there are over 314 active 'tech hubs', of which nearly three-fifths are incubators or accelerators (Sleurink 2017). These developments signpost that waithood is not for all African youth. And, in the Netherlands, Gerd Junne of the Network University (TNU) announced a free online course titled 'From Brain Drain to Brain Gain', spanning six weeks from 28 February to 11 April 2017. This course was designed to show the measures that countries of origin of highly educated migrants have taken to harness the potential of their diaspora for the development of the country. The aim is to assist policy makers to devise strategies to increase the interaction with this group and to facilitate their contribution to development—turning a 'brain drain' into a 'brain gain'. The man who gave me a book and the distinguished gentleman Ton must remain optimistic.

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5

Revisiting survival strategies from a frugal innovation perspective

A research idea

André Leliveld

Introduction

It must have been in 1988, when I had just started my PhD project on 'informal social security mechanisms in rural Swaziland', that my first promoter Hans Linnemann advised me to contact Ton Dietz, a human geographer at the University of Amsterdam, who had just finished his thesis on survival strategies among the Pokot in western Kenya (Dietz 1987). It was already in those days not easy to arrange a meeting with him. A note on his office door announced strict contact hours for students, among whom I still reckoned myself despite being *Doctorandus* for more than about a year. I managed to get an appointment though. His reaction to my PhD project was enthusiastic but also critical. Informal social security? What do you mean? Why apply such a Western idea and concept to an African rural society? I really needed to get a better understanding of how people in African rural societies live and work, what their motivations are, and how these relate to their location and environment. In other words, I should adopt a human geography perspective to understand these kinds of issues, and I would soon become aware then that the concept of survival strategies would be much more apt for analysing the phenomena I wanted to study. This would have caused a radical analytical change in my project, which was much more informed by an emerging line of economic literature on risk and insurance in low-income countries (Platteau & Abraham 1987; Rosenzweig 1988) and studies in legal and economic anthropology on solidarity, reciprocity, and reproduction (Polanyi 1957; Scott 1976; Meillassoux 1981; von Benda-Beckmann et al. 1988). I decided to stick to my course, perhaps also because of an 'angry young man' syndrome, and disciplinary boundaries might also have prevented a further cross-fertilization and collaboration. After more than 10 years, our roads

crossed again on the topic in the WOTRO research project 'Social Security in the Third World' (1999-2004), of which Ton Dietz was one of the founding fathers. He contributed with his vast knowledge and expertise on sustainable livelihoods, with which much of his earlier work on survival strategies resonated. In fact, his work in the 1980s on survival strategies among the Pokot can be considered a livelihood study *avant la lettre*. Today, the question can be asked what relevance these discussions still have within an increasingly dominant discourse on Africa which focuses on the continent's economic growth potential; the role of trade, investment, and business; its rising middle class; and its changing and new engagements in the world. The remainder of this essay is devoted to launching a research idea which, in line with Dietzian thinking, links at first glance unusual suspects—namely, survival strategies and frugal innovation. The remainder of this essay takes frugal innovation as a point of entry to launch a first explorative idea on how studies on survival and livelihood strategies can benefit frugal innovation studies.

The rise of frugal innovation

The Economist (2010) placed frugal innovation in the spotlight, and since then it has become an emerging field of scientific interest. Frugal innovation aims 'to do more and better with less' and has its roots in the Indian practice of *jugaad* innovation, a colloquial Hindi and Punjabi word used to signify creativity and a 'make do' attitude (Radjou & Prabhu 2015) to respond to limitations in resources, whether financial, material, or institutional. Generic definitions refer to frugal innovations as new, smart (re)combinations of available technologies, new business models and marketing models which lead to products, services, or systems that are considerably cheaper but maintain functionality, are affordable to low-income customers, and applicable in resource-constrained environments (Bhatti 2012; Knorringa et al. 2016). These products, services, and systems designed and produced by corporate business are not second-grade but characterized by good value for money; and the technology within frugal products, services, or systems can still be highly sophisticated. Examples include mobile money services (such as M-Pesa), portable ultrasound devices, single-use washing sachets suitable for cold water, the Q drum (rollable water container), WakaWaka lights, and cheap but reliable smartphones (Figure 5.1).

Portable ultrasound

Single-use washing sachets

Rollable water container (Q drum)

WakaWaka lamp

Figure 5.1
Examples of frugal innovation

Frugal innovation as a topic of academic interest evolved initially from the 'Bottom of the Pyramid' (BoP) discourse that arose in the business management and organization literature in the early 2000s. The BoP discourse suggests that businesses can find fortune by serving 'the billions of aspiring poor who are joining the market economy for the first time' (Prahalad & Hall 2002, cited in Knorringa et al. 2016). Those living on less than US $2 a day, an estimated 4 billion people worldwide, including Africa, would constitute a mega and still unsaturated market of 'micro consumers', who are underserved by existing products and services. Frugal innovations could lead to products, services, and systems that are affordable for low-income consumers and offer solutions to problems that arise from living in resource-constrained environments. International businesses have picked up this message since then. Among advocates, the ability of international businesses to serve the needs

of the BoP through frugal innovations has been celebrated as a 'win-win' proposition that would generate profits and simultaneously alleviate poverty (Prahalad 2006). Academic research on 'inclusive business for the poor' (alternatively 'social business', 'pro-poor business', or 'inclusive capitalism') has started to address questions such as how to marry profits with social aims, assuming that 'business activities can contribute to the long-term goal of poverty alleviation by embedding the neglected poor parts of the world population into efficient value chains and market structures' (Hahn 2012: 51).

Soon thereafter, a critical strand of literature—rooted in development studies—started to question the premises behind the BoP and frugal innovation discourses. Critical approaches to the BoP literature suggest that a better understanding is required on how corporate profits and the needs of the poor might be combined, whereas others simply dismiss outright such possible win-win scenarios

For example, BoP rhetoric might aggravate poverty and inequality by reconstituting poor people as 'modern' and value-conscious consumers, with unmet needs and wants that can only be satisfied through capitalist enterprise and market involvement (Dolan 2012). And multinationals might well crowd out local resources, transfer inappropriate technologies or practices, and enhance dependency (Meagher & Lindell 2013). BoP approaches also perceive people living in a resource-constrained environment only as the receivers of innovations, as consumers. But that is not the case. They are capable of innovating for themselves, of adapting innovations to fit with their requirements and environments, and they know what they want (bottom-up processes), but at times they do not have the means to achieve their objective (Bhaduri 2016). It is perhaps at the BoP itself where we may find the 'true' frugal innovations. This latter observation will be explored in more detail below.

Frugal innovations at the BoP

The idea that poor people are not only receivers of (frugal) innovations but can be also innovators themselves relates to a point that development scholars have been making for a long time—that innovations for the global North do not always satisfy the requirements of the global South. In the current frugal innovation literature, some scholars therefore emphasize the need to alter the process and organizational structure of frugal innovative activities (Prahalad 2012; Radjou & Prabhu 2015) to be able to reach out to the BoP. This view shares the spirit of the discourses on 'appropriate technology' (Stewart 1978) and 'technological capability' (Lall 1987). The appropriate technology discourse relies heavily on Schumacher's legacy of 'small is beau-

tiful' (Schumacher 1973) and took a radical approach to reconfigure technological activities in the global South by breaking away from the large-scale technological projects of the North. The technological capability school argue that developing economies cannot remain inactive recipients of technologies transferred from the global North. Rather, these economies must undertake well-articulated searches toward the adaptation and assimilation of the transferred technologies (Lall 1987; Bhaduri 2016). Both the appropriate technology and technological capability schools of thought worked out differently though in practice, and they did not succeed into creating a radical breakthrough in the dominant position of Northern actors in innovations for and in the global South.

According to Prince Claus Chair holder Professor Saradindu Bhaduri, the frugal innovation discourse opens up a new possibility in this discussion, however, by explicitly referring to the behavioural characteristics of agents and economic activities in informal economies in the discourse on innovation (Bhaduri 2016).[31] He refers to Radjou et al. (2012), who highlight the creative improvisations of individual economic actors who come up with small but creative solutions and innovative fixes for resource-constrained environments. These types of innovations are referred to as *jugaad* (in India), *zizhu chuanxin* (in China), and *gambiarra* (in Brazil) and are in many cases developed in large urban informal industrial clusters, of which *jua kali* in Kenya and Suame Magazine in Ghana are good examples (Figure 5.2).

By focusing on the creative improvisations or 'make-do-attitude' of informal sector agents who are part of the BoP themselves, Bhaduri (2016) and others (Bhatti 2012; Radjou & Prabhu 2015) show that the terms 'frugal' and 'frugality' are not as new as we may think, but have been part of people's daily practices for centuries. In this respect Bhatti (2012: 13) maintains that 'frugal innovation has always occurred since the invention of Neanderthal hand tools from stones and bones to make do with what is on hand'. Bhaduri (2016) refers to Adam Smith, who as early as 1776 observed frugality 'in demonstrating the value of "experience" in offering innovative solutions to frequently encountered problems in daily lives' (Smith 1776, quoted in Bhaduri 2016). But since the early industrial revolution, there has been a move toward mass consumption and therewith a need for mass production and high-end innovations, as a consequence of which the old concept of frugality slipped out of sight.

31 Ton Dietz is member of the Curatorium of the Prince Claus Chair, which carries out the procedure of the appointment of a candidate to the Prince Claus Chair. Professor Saradindu Bhaduri held the Chair between 2015 and 2017. Website: www.princeclauschair.nl

Jua kali lamp

Jua kali water tap locks

Jugaad waterpump

Jua kali charcoal stove

Figure 5.2
Examples of *jua kali* and *jugaad* innovations

The term 'innovation' also needs reconsideration here. Innovation is only in some cases disruptive, creating completely new development trajectories in societies (steam engine, electricity, computer). More often than not, innovation comes from the cumulative effect of implementing small-scale ideas over prolonged periods of time. It is a process that encompasses the acts of numerous individuals, not only the original inventors but also the producers, consumers, and middlemen that transmit and operationalize the innovations, making them acceptable to society (Gewald et al. 2012). Innovation in this sense thus refers to processes of invention, adoption, adaptation, appropriation, and transformation—not only of products but also of systems, and not only scientific and technological products and systems, but including all

institutional, organizational, social, and political dimensions (see also Bhatti 2012). These notions of 'minor innovation' and 'incremental innovations' are nowadays much more accepted among scholars, practitioners, and policy makers in the field of development and have brought the creative solutions by entrepreneurs operating in the informal economy and by members in local communities much more above the radar.

Linking frugal innovation and survival and livelihood studies

In short, for understanding phenomena of frugal innovation and frugality better, the creative improvisations at the BoP in the forms of *jugaad, zizhu chuanxin, gambiarra,* or *jua kali* are an important source of knowledge about frugal behaviour and activities. Therefore, we have witnessed a significant rise in interest among academic scholars in recognizing informal economic spheres as reservoirs of knowledge, skills, and creativity (Daniels 2010; Obeng-Odoom & Ameyawb 2014), besides the traditional focus on the exploitative work conditions of this sphere. White (2014: 22) notes that the informal economy is not just a 'dwelling for the poor people and home to indecent work, a lot of wealth is generated, stored and circulated informally within the informal sector'.

In his inaugural address, Bhaduri (2016) concludes that little energy has been spent, however, on contributing to a meaningful understanding of the way this reservoir of knowledge in the informal economy persists or evolves. He notes that such an understanding requires an intense engagement with the motivations behind the knowledge-generating activities, the underlying mechanisms used to approach uncertainty, and the affinity for solving the problems of daily life by the people at the BoP (ibid.). As Badhuri notes:

> the long neglect of the informal sector by the scholars of innovation and technology has indeed created a vacuum of theoretical scholarship through which one would have liked to analyse the knowledge-generating activities in this sector. It is, therefore, a challenge of the current generations of researchers (all of us) to ground our discussion in a suitable theoretical framework to meaningfully contribute to the emerging frugal innovation discourse. (ibid. 17)

I think that Bhaduri's challenge is valid but his observations on the long neglect may be too pessimistic. It is precisely in the numerous studies on survival and livelihood strategies that have been conducted since the 1980s that we can find many examples of frugal innovations at the BoP. The ways in which the Pokot in Kenya deal in their water and herd management with-

in their resource-constrained environment are expressions of frugality, creative solutions which try to ensure survival, rooted in generational transfer of predominantly tacit, non-codified knowledge. Frugal innovations which can provide affordable solutions for water management, for example, should build on this vast reservoir of knowledge to be effective and accepted. One of Dietz's key messages in his academic work is exactly this: uninformed external interventions may disturb a delicate balance between man and his environment with catastrophic consequences. This message is as relevant to development agencies as it is to business propositions that aim to produce and market frugal innovations for the BoP.

So, a first step in addressing the challenge by Bhaduri is to revisit the numerous studies on survival and livelihood strategies that have been done in the past, either in Africa, Latin America, or Asia, and look through a frugal innovation lens at their theoretical underpinnings and empirical findings. These studies will generate a vast amount of information on people's capabilities to create innovative solutions to be able to survive within and deal with the resource constraints they meet in daily life, and the knowledge that underlies these capabilities. We may also gain more insight into the factors which determine the success or failure of these solutions. And we could learn more about the methodologies that can be used to provide us with a broader and deeper understanding of frugality and frugal innovations. For instance, it would be interesting to take PADev methodology, developed by Dietz and others (see Dietz et al. 2013 and www.padev.nl), and explore how it could help us to gain more and better insights into histories of innovation and innovation trajectories in communities and regions in Africa and elsewhere in the global South. Intuitively, scholars seek for new, paradigm-changing insights. But sometimes adopting a frugal approach and lens in research by revisiting older concepts, paradigms, and methodologies and re-using and redesigning them accordingly might yield equally interesting results and insights. The proverbial 'not to re-invent the wheel again' might be applicable here.

Concluding note

The research on frugal innovation in Africa and elsewhere across the globe has gained momentum now, and various research institutes and centres across the world have started research projects on frugal innovation, with the aim to understand better the phenomenon of frugal innovation and its underlying idea of frugality: What exactly is frugal innovation? How does it manifest itself and what makes it different from other sorts of innovation? Does a better understanding of frugal innovations lead to a new paradigm

in innovation and development studies? How is frugal innovation related to discourses on the 4th industrial revolution? And what are its implications for (understanding) local and global developmental challenges and policies (Sustainable Development Goals)?

To address and investigate these questions, Leiden University, Delft University of Technology, and Erasmus University Rotterdam established the Centre for Frugal Innovation in Africa (CFIA) in 2014. On behalf of Leiden University, the African Studies Centre is a co-founder and constituting partner of CFIA. Ton Dietz is a member of CFIA's Steering Committee, while I participate in CFIA as Associate Director and researcher. Ton Dietz' successor at the ASC will probably succeed him in CFIA's Steering Committee as well, but I hope our roads will continue to cross on how studies on survival and livelihood strategies can yield further insights into frugal innovation phenomena among people who have to deal and cope with daily challenges and uncertainties in African rural and urban areas. His contact hours may be more numerous and more flexible after retirement. I am not an 'angry young man' anymore. This sounds like a good recipe for a fruitful and continued exchange of ideas on the above issues.

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6

From 'Livelihood & Environment' to assessing livelihoods and development aid

Leo de Haan

Introduction

There is no doubt Ton Dietz and I share a long-standing interest in poor people's livelihoods. Therefore, I thought it would be worthwhile to uncover where that joint interest came from, how it evolved over time, and where it is now. The trajectories of our academic careers have crossed many times in the past four decades, but for the purpose of this paper I will limit myself to those crossings which were relevant to our interest in the livelihoods of the poor. Undoubtedly, this brief quest into the past—that is what it has become—suffers from forgetfulness. Information has slipped my memory, and this account might even be the product of a selective memory. Moreover, it most certainly suffers from 'presentism'—that is, we imagine that we give an objective interpretation of the past, but in reality contemporary ideas colour our interpretation. Was it not Jan Blokker who wrote: *'Geschiedenis is niet wat er gebeurd is, geschiedenis is wat de mensen zich herinneren'*? ['History is not what has happened; history is what people remember.' My translation]. Hence, I will offset that bias by embedding that story line in a second, more objective story line, that of the scientific evolution of the concept of livelihoods itself. The first section deals therefore with the origins of the livelihoods concept. The second section shows how the concept matured. The third section discusses ways to examine livelihoods beyond the household level and beyond the case, and the fourth section places the same issue in the context of assessing development aid. In the final section, I will demonstrate how Ton's academic work came full circle.

Livelihood & Environment

'Livelihood & Environment' was the name of a research group, which Ton and I were part of in the 1980s, of geographers and urban planners of developing countries in the Faculty of Environmental Sciences at the University of Amsterdam. It was the first time that a Dutch research group labelled itself explicitly as working on livelihoods. Nowadays, 'Livelihood & Environment' would certainly be written in the plural, acknowledging that under contemporary post-modernism there are many realities and thus many livelihoods and many environments. But in those days, we were all positivist quantitative researchers: straightforward modernists for whom the singular was good enough. I am not sure who came up with that label, but credits should probably go to Ton and Ad de Bruijne, who led the group as chair in human geography of developing countries. I will explain further below why that label—innovative at first sight—was also solidly grounded in the tradition of geography.

'Livelihood & Environment' was not the first research programme on development in the faculty. That was SALPA (Semi-Arid Lands Project Amsterdam) and its informal predecessor, 'peripheral dry areas'. According to de Bruijne et al. (2002: 197), the notion 'peripheral' was a relic of the time that the Department of Geography at the University of Amsterdam reluctantly gave in to the demand of students for development issues in the curriculum, without committing itself to 'real' developing countries but instead to the periphery of Europe. SALPA's core was a collection of PhD research projects of Paolo De Mas, Jan Mansvelt Beck, Ton Dietz, and myself. It was expanded in 1985 with Peter Druijven's PhD project in Mexico after the Department of Geography of VU University Amsterdam involuntarily merged with the University of Amsterdam after a countrywide reshuffle of disciplines between universities. SALPA focused on

> livelihood strategies in dry areas… all five research projects were concerned with problems faced by households living in remote, politically and bureaucratically peripheral, and economically backward, rural, semiarid regions…. A major objective was to find out whether it might be possible to arrive at generalizations which could shed light on processes of change and, more specifically, provide insight into the manner in which changes in household strategies are conditioned by changes in contextual circumstances, partly induced by governments. (Reitsma et al. 1992: 11)

In fact, a lot of work was done to arrive at meaningful comparisons; but despite the fact that there were many similarities between the field areas in

physical conditions, population density, and economic activities, differences were also many, making comparison along thematic lines too ambitious (ibid. 11-12). Indeed, I retain lively memories of numerous attempts to compare our research areas on various variables. Often, Ton was the driver, with his distinctive style of presenting tables with scores of our fieldwork areas on variables such as rainfall, government interventions, seasonality, household incomes, and labour migration—to name just a few.

Indeed, heterogeneity of fieldwork areas—except for Ton's north-eastern Kenya and my northern Togo having many similarities because of their colonial, post-colonial, and geographical background—was one factor that hampered comparison. Aridity was supposed to be one converging dimension, and livelihoods strategies—and especially mechanisms for coping with aridity—were thought to be comparable. In my case, aridity always remained a delicate issue because, according to climate statistics, northern Togo was much too wet to qualify as arid or even semi-arid. But the odd man out was still welcome to jump on the bandwagon; SALPA stretched semi-aridity to include sub-humid (SA/SH: 'semi-arid to sub-humid', as it figured in Ton's comparative tables). Ironically, with hindsight my fieldwork in Togo took place in a period, the early 1980s, of particularly low levels of rainfall.

The other reason hampering meaningful comparison was the lack of a coherent theoretical perspective on the state. From the beginning of the 'peripheral dry areas' project, I remember a number of sessions—usually held in Willem Heinemeijer's office, then chair of human geography—on Tarrow's (1977) *Between center and periphery,* which should have laid a theoretical foundation under our perspective on the state. But I found the discussions, dominated by political geographers, largely uninspiring and of little interest to developmental state interventions. However, Ton did refer to it in his doctoral dissertation.

In 1989 (according to Reitsma et al. 1992: 11) or 1990 (according to de Bruijne et al. 2002: 200) SALPA developed into a new research programme, 'Livelihood & Environment'. The new academic policy context of stronger top-down research programming, increased accountability for research time in terms of efforts and output, increased competition for research funds, a focus on young PhD candidates, and more commissioned research required more robust planning and coordination—that is, management of research. 'Livelihood & Environment' was a bigger, stronger, and more visible outfit than SALPA, not least because it included all geographers and planners of developing countries as well as some development economists. Chaired by Ad de Bruijne, it aimed to study the practices and possibilities for livelihoods of poor groups in developing countries, with particular attention paid to the impact of regional contexts and specific local environments (de Bruijne et al.

2002: 201). To my perception, the forced merger of Amsterdam geographers was the most fortunate event in my early academic career. From a group of eager but young, rather inexperienced, rather marginalized, non-Amsterdam-trained geographers of developing countries, we established with our colleagues who came from VU University Amsterdam a lively and strong research group. 'Livelihood & Environment' became a *geuzennaam* and a vehicle to carve out our territory in geography practice and to distinguish ourselves from other geographers in the department, who in our view did not look out further into the world than the borders of the city of Amsterdam. Around the year 2000, the programme merged again into an even larger whole, but by that time I had already left for the University of Nijmegen.

With hindsight, if one compares it with contemporary academic practice, 'livelihood' as a concept was surprisingly under-theorized in the 'Livelihood & Environment' programme. There was some reference to Norman Long's early work on development practitioners and their interventions—the so-called development interface. But from the occasional research programme meetings I do not remember long and winding theoretical exposés and debates. We counted cattle, measured plots, registered harvests, enumerated household members, and specified non-agricultural incomes. Then we classified them in empirically generated categories and typologies. We did become increasingly interested in environmental degradation and management of environmental resources, in conflicts, and in the features of the state, but again without much theoretical depth. In an overview of Dutch research programmes on environment and development for the Werkgemeenschap Afrika, Peter Ton and I (de Haan & Ton 1994) classified 'Livelihood & Environment' under actor-oriented research—to distinguish it from village studies—and gave an explanation of livelihoods which was clearly inspired by—if not even paraphrased (and I do hope not copy-pasted)—introductory texts of the 'Livelihood & Environment' research programme, which were drawn up every few years (and unfortunately have disappeared from my personal archives).

> Livelihood strategies relate to the way people find a place to live, acquire goods and services by production and social networks, and obtain an income in order to buy goods and services and to maintain social networks. The word 'strategy' is used with some reluctance because it suggests a rational, long-term planning which especially the African poor cannot sustain. Livelihood strategies do not exist in a vacuum, but interact with the wider (regional, national and international) context and with the local environment. We emphatically wish to avoid the impression here that livelihood strategies are always re-active or defensive. All too often the African rural

> poor, for example, are seen as victims of inescapable circumstances such as drought. In our view, there is in reality a continuous scale, ranging from defensive strategies on the one hand to offensive strategies on the other. On the extreme defensive end of the scale there are the pure survival strategies in periods of environmental disasters such as drought; then come the coping mechanisms that serve to deal with regular environmental problems such as seasonality. On the offensive end we find activities aimed at improvement, for example by means of investment (cf. Reitsma et al. 1992) … Livelihood studies have very often chosen households as their unit of research, since households are considered important decision-making units for production and consumption. As a consequence, household livelihood strategies also take a prominent position in research that attempts to understand the links with the environment. (de Haan & Ton 1994: 21-22)

Similarly, Dietz et al. (1992: 42) classified livelihood strategies, after a brief review of the literature, along two dimensions—time and goal—and into four categories: recovery, conservation, opportunistic, and improvement. Livelihood strategies in their view have three objectives: meeting daily needs, maintaining social networks, and preserving or improving productive capacity.

Livelihoods: A serious matter

But then the concept of livelihoods received momentum and became a serious matter. By that time, I had moved to the University of Nijmegen and made livelihoods the central concept of my inaugural address and the research plan of the Centre for International Development Issues Nijmegen I was chairing. It received quite some attention in academic and development policy and practitioners' circles, not least because 'livelihoods' had broken through internationally. DFID had made it its principal approach and had asked various reputable academic institutes and think-tanks to develop the concept further for development aid purposes. Parallel to this a lively academic debate developed in which the livelihoods approach was criticized but also furnished with theoretical and methodological bedrocks—a debate to which I passionately contributed by positioning 'livelihoods' flanked by Giddens and Bourdieu, by discussing notions of power, and by surpassing the *locale* through contextualizing livelihoods in globalization. My papers with Annelies Zoomers are still being quoted when in geography (de Haan & Zoomers 2003) and in development studies (de Haan & Zoomers 2005) the principles of livelihoods studies are being reviewed.

This need for theory in 'livelihoods', I always argued, emerged from my new academic context. That is, I not only moved from Amsterdam to Nijme-

gen but also from disciplinary geography to interdisciplinary development studies, be it understood in a social sciences faculty. Perhaps the latter was an even more decisive factor. But the soul-searching for this paper also made me aware that I have to revise somewhat my statement in the previous section on the under-theorization of 'livelihood' in 'Livelihood & Environment'. While writing my inaugural lecture (de Haan 2000), the collection of photocopies, books, papers, and references on my bookshelves was one source of inspiration. No doubt, that collection stemmed also from 'Livelihood & Environment': as in any good research group, we frequently exchanged and photocopied 'interesting stuff'. There were documents by Norman Long and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan—the latter through my French connection—references to Giddens, livelihood papers from ODI's Pastoral Development Network, and, last but not least, Chambers and Conway's (1992) founding livelihoods paper, defining it as follows:

> A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base. (ibid. 6)

A small innovation grant by CERES, our National Research School, put additional wind into the sails of 'livelihoods'. It brought a group of Dutch geographers, anthropologists, and economists together and it enabled us to deepen the concept, to connect it to our various disciplinary traditions in order to improve its interdisciplinary potential, and to invite scholars from the UK to provide feedback on our paper (Kaag et al. 2004). Ton was CERES director at that time and was instrumental in granting the funds.

Livelihoods studies matured thanks to all these considerations. It carried a strong flavour of agency at the start and was a-political (de Haan 2012: 349), but we realized soon that the poor's agency is limited by structural constraints—by markets, property relations, gender norms, and so on. Livelihoods studies learned to keep an open eye for power struggles and exclusionary mechanisms in livelihoods resulting in marginalization and social exclusion of the poor. Moreover, we comprehended the multi-dimensionality of poverty and realized that a livelihood was more than an economic activity, a material way of making a living: livelihoods also give meaning to the poor's lives. Thus livelihoods became a holistic concept. Livelihoods studies

> has after the 1990s come to mean people-centred studies that—through a holistic perspective on how they organise themselves a living—illuminate

> the processes of exclusion they are subject to and think through the interventions and policies that are intended to counteract that. (de Haan 2016: 6)

Examining livelihoods beyond the household level and the case

One issue worth discussing further is how livelihoods studies could arrive at meaningful generalizations from research that usually takes households, families, and nowadays increasingly individuals—think of migrants—as point of departure. In my farewell lecture as director of the African Studies Centre Leiden, I criticized actor-oriented studies on Africa for their inability to arrive at generalizations that would help to reveal long-term trends in livelihoods. I partly blamed it, following Chabal (2005), on African studies' 'excessive specialisation' and 'tautology of exceptionalism'.

> On the one hand, [I found it] logical because an enormous differentiation in living conditions is hidden in averages over the long- term, so the picture can only be diffuse. However, on the other hand there is also the challenge of coming to grips with that same endless variation in living conditions. Attempts should be made to deduce conclusions from actor-oriented research that surpass the micro level and by doing so enter the debate about macro trends in standards of living. This roughly applies to other themes, too, such as environmental degradation and climate change, ethnicity and conflict, and mobility and migration. Consequently, I call for two supplementary research strategies: meta-analysis and comparative research. (de Haan 2010: 104-105).

For livelihoods research, Annelies Zoomers and I pointed already at a specific method of meta-analysis through the study of livelihoods trajectories and pathways. Livelihoods pathways are

> patterns of livelihood activities which emerge from a coordination process among actors, arising from individual strategic behaviour embedded both in a historical repertoire and in social differentiation, including power relations and institutional processes, both of which play a role in subsequent decision-making. (de Haan & Zoomers 2005: 45)

Livelihoods trajectories are an important stage in the analysis of pathways because these examine individual (household) behaviour. Pathways are the collective result of individual trajectories.

Needless to say, Ton cannot be identified with that lack of vigour and that interest in generalizing. On the contrary, throughout his academic career he

wanted to ascend from the case and the specific to the whole and the general. Already above, I referred to his drive during SALPA and 'Livelihood & Environment' to compare the research areas on various indicators, aiming to reveal more general processes. He also led a large-scale research project on the impact of climate change on drylands in West Africa. Detailed comparative studies on the local level in Burkina Faso and Ghana were combined with analyses of previous research. From coping strategies to climate change at the individual and household-farm level in a context of rapid population growth urbanization, pathways of adaptation to climate change were identified (Dietz at al. 2004).

Again in the context of CERES, now in collaboration with the Mansholt Research School in Wageningen, Ton also embarked upon another line of analysis beyond the individual and household level in livelihoods research and reflected in collective action.

> A broader focus … could shed new light on the dynamic relationship between the individual and the collective … There is a need for analysis at the aggregate level of communities and regions of the effect of individual (household) behaviour as well as of the causes and effects of collective action based on collective vision. Pathway analysis provides a promising tool for such analyses.... Pathway effects encompass the externalities of the behaviour of the poor as well as the wealthy. Livelihood behaviour incited by poverty conditions may increase external vulnerabily, which may lead to collective awareness and action to redress this. (Brons et al. 2007: 10, 11)

At present, trajectories and pathways have become an accepted methodology in livelihoods studies to arrive at generalizations beyond the individual. Two prime examples are worth mentioning in this respect. The first is a study by do Rego (2012) on the livelihoods of poor farmers from the Portuguese Atlantic island of Madeira who migrated to the oil industry on the Caribbean island of Curaçao. Through a longitudinal analysis of individual livelihood trajectories over a period of almost 80 years, the pathway of this group to sustainable livelihoods could be examined. From a group of marginalized and excluded oil workers—and later ice vendors and street sweepers—the Portuguese immigrants started producing food on irrigated plots abandoned by the local population. The small outlets from which they sold their produce all became grocery shops and, more importantly, became social focal points in many dispersed neighbourhoods. For its part, this transitional pathway facilitated significantly the integration and social inclusion of the group into local society. And it established the stepping stone from which their groceries de-

veloped into supermarkets when the local middle class started growing. The Portuguese grew into a business elite, the final stage of their pathway.

The second pathway study is longitudinal and comparative analysis of the development pathways of 17 rural communities in the Andes valleys of Bolivia (le Grand 2014). Though very heterogeneous in terms of agro-ecology, livelihoods, and demography, the research communities showed similar trajectories over a period of 20 years. These trajectories could be grouped into four distinct pathways, depending on the resource base (irrigation or dryland) and demographic change (population growth or population decline). In the end, a successful—and sustainable—livelihoods pathway proved to be less determined by capitals, assets, and capabilities on the individual and household level, but more and more by critical mass, collective action, and the ability to establish translocal connections. Both studies are exemplary. Both demonstrate that solid analyses of livelihood trajectories and pathways require a longitudinal approach. Not by coincidence perhaps, both researchers are geographers.

Evaluating development aid beyond the micro

There is a direct line from the intention to arrive at telling generalizations, discussed in the previous section, and Ton's unceasing work to picture the effects of development aid on the livelihoods of the poor. Already his PhD project was embedded in Dutch development aid to Kenya, followed by numerous similar activities throughout the world. In the past decade, he devoted quite some energy and time to PADev (Participatory Assessment of Development), which I followed for some time on the sidelines as a member of a *klankbordgroep* [sounding board group]. PADev was a research project of several academic institutes, including ASC Leiden and some Dutch developmental NGOs. It was a daring attempt to significantly improve evaluating practices of development interventions and to design a new participatory and holistic methodology. According to Ton, evaluations of development interventions tend to focus on too short a period, are nearly always sponsor-driven, are too narrowly focused on input and output, are isolated from wider developments in the region, and neglect the opinions of the supposed beneficiaries (www.padev.nl).

> PADev can be differentiated from conventional assessment methodologies, which often focus on a single agency, project/programme or sector with quite a 'technical' expert-driven approach to evaluation of output, effect and sometimes impact. In PADev, participants assess a wide range of changes, projects and agencies based on their perceptions. Further, PADev assess-

> ments typically look back at development and change over the past twenty to thirty years. This yields extremely valuable information for development agencies in the area: they learn about their own impact vis-à-vis other actors, and in addition, they find out which types of projects have been regarded as most effective and relevant in that particular geographic and cultural setting and more importantly: for whom and why, according to people's own experiences and criteria. This can be an important lesson for future interventions. (Dietz et al. 2013: 9)

In sum, PADev is about the big picture of development change. It is not only interested in the views of the poor but also cross-cuts through the society of a region.

PADev is not livelihood research; it bears many features of livelihoods research, but it is bigger: it is regional analysis—very good regional analysis. It resembles livelihoods studies in its multidimensional and holistic perspective; however, it is not solely focused on poverty but on development overall. Livelihood concepts such as 'capitals', 'capabilities', and 'livelihood domains' figure on all sides (Rijneveld et al. 2015). As in livelihoods studies, the required methodologies are participatory. Like livelihoods trajectories and pathways, it considers a longitudinal perspective indispensable, although in this respect the right term is probably 'historical' or 'historicizing' rather than 'longitudinal'. Interestingly, here Ton's academic practice with respect to 'livelihoods' comes full circle, as I will show below in the concluding section.

By way of conclusion: Re-assessing and re-valuating the past and the origins

Looking back at this stage upon 'under-theorized Livelihood & Environment' (which turned out less under-theorized at a later stage, as discussed above), an important insight flashes. At the onset of our journey through academia, Ton and I and our colleagues were equipped with a body of thought which informed our academic practice without our always being very conscious of it. Implicit theoretical assumptions did not have to be discussed, because they were undisputed. That was possible because most of us were geographers; even most urban planners were trained as geographers. Not only that: we were 'Utrecht School'—even though we worked at the University of Amsterdam—for the simple reason that the Amsterdam School had not engaged itself in the geography of developing countries. Ton and I and others were recruited to fill that gap, to meet the demand of students for teaching and supervision in development issues. I was trained in the Utrecht School by Jan Hinderink. Ton was definitely Utrecht School too, though trained in Nij-

megen by Jan Kleinpenning. Jan Kleinpenning had studied geography and completed his PhD in Utrecht and worked there as a lecturer, before moving to Nijmegen where he chaired the most successful research group in human geography of developing countries in the country. Also, Ad de Bruijne, the chair of 'Livelihood & Environment', had studied at Utrecht. Human geography of developing countries at VU University Amsterdam was modelled on the Utrecht School, and the team of geographers and urban planners he brought with him to the University of Amsterdam, after the involuntarily merger, were all Utrecht School. I have always considered that merger as a blessing in disguise—though I know that Ad de Bruijne regretted it deeply—because it reinforced considerably our group at the University of Amsterdam, as explained in the second section.

To the Utrecht School, 'livelihood' was basically synonymous with *bestaansverwerving*. That concept was so robustly embedded in geographical tradition that it went without saying. We were practically imbued with it, and so 'the fish never talks about the water'. In his recent autobiography, Jan Kleinpenning (2016) explained what geography, as he learned it in the 1950s, stood for. In Utrecht, it was pointed out to students

> that human geography examines the way in which larger and smaller human groups (societies) try to develop a livelihood on earth and how successful they are in doing that. Existence, making a living, livelihood, mode of existence, struggle for life, *genre de vie,* and striving for prosperity were concepts that soon sounded familiar to students in those days. We learned in addition that in human geography, as developed by the French school, not only *genres de vie*, modes of existence / livelihoods, etc. matter, but also the resulting 'men-environment' relationship—better and more specifically: society-habitat .... From a range of opportunities offered by nature, men make a choice that depends to a large degree on *civilization*, the whole of the material and organizational techniques a group or society has as its disposal to realize its striving for prosperity. That attention to the relationship of society-habitat meant in this particular case that geographers—as we learned—are interested in how people, in organizing their livelihood, use, arrange, and transform their habitat. (Kleinpenning 2016: 39) [my translation]

This is the geography Ton subsequently learned in Nijmegen as I had learned it in Utrecht. Note that Jan Kleinpenning's view on the discipline—as explained in his Nijmegen valedictory address—inspired me while writing my Nijmegen inaugural (de Haan 2000: 346).

A few points stand out: according to the Utrecht School, 'livelihoods' was making a living, as modes of existence; at the core was the exploitation of

opportunities offered by the local environment—physical in the first place, but then also social, economic, and cultural; finally, livelihoods were further shaped by regional contexts, be they economic, social, cultural, or political. Moreover, a proper understanding of livelihoods not only required a spatial perspective; it was to be underpinned by historical analysis. This was precisely the kind of geography we practised in SALPA and 'Livelihood & Environment', though in a modern guise. And the other way around: this was the tradition in which our take on livelihoods was embedded: geography and livelihoods were strongly intertwined. In the new look, there was more attention paid to higher levels of scale—that is, to the national and global, and to the state and the political. And the historical underpinning was still taken seriously: Ton's PhD thesis covered eight decades, mine not less than a century. Interestingly, more than elsewhere in Dutch geography our research concentrated—under the impact of the Amsterdam School—on the household level, while elsewhere the study of society-habitat relationships also took the form of regional analyses.

It is fair to confirm that, in an way, 'Livelihood & Environment' was still under-theorized. Jan Kleinpenning (2016: 42), referring to his *kandidaatsstudie*, explains: 'there was no reference to theories, because these were hardly developed, if not entirely non-existent'. But this was compensated for by a thorough introduction to the object of the discipline through lectures and the study of regional monographs. That was in the 1950s. Things have changed also in geography, but our original practice in livelihoods research was very much shaped by it.

Now, returning to the previous section on PADev, it is clear why Ton's academic practice on 'livelihoods' comes full circle here. PADev is about the striving for prosperity of a society—nowadays called development—in a particular area; it is holistic; it takes into account a wide range of features: natural, economic, social, cultural; and it is historical. In other words: Ton, it is regional geography—damned good regional geography!

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7

Climate change, drylands and conflict in Africa

Han van Dijk

Introduction

At present, the West African Sahel is one the most marginal and volatile agro-ecosystems in the world, inhabited by millions of people, often below the poverty line (Raynaut 2001). Over time the region has been plagued by devastating droughts (1913-14, 1968-73, 1984-85), leading to large-scale famines and massive losses of livestock. Despite these droughts and the ecological instability, deep poverty, and high levels of malnutrition, the region has been relatively stable in a political sense. Yet in the more distant past the area was also the scene of jihadist movements that formed the basis of a large number of Muslim emirates all across the region (see Burnham & Last 1994; de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001). These empires were reactively stable in some places, but in other places they soon succumbed to internal and external pressures (see van Dijk 1999; de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001, 2002). The colonial period and during the first decades after independence was an era of relative calm, despite revolts by the Saharan Tuareg, first in Mali (1962-64) and later in both Niger and Mali (1990-96).

For an innocent observer, this relative calm changed abruptly in 2012 when Tuareg rebels took over most of the north of Mali and were subsequently overrun by Muslim jihadist movements, which even dared to threaten an attack on the Malian capital Bamako. In January 2013 the French army stepped in and chased away these Muslim groups in a rapid military intervention (aided by Chadian troops). After this operation a combined military-civilian UN-mission was started under the heading MINUSMA (Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations Unies pour la Stabilization au Mali), to stabilize the country and reach a political solution for the grievances of the people in the north. Despite this multi-billion dollar mission, the political situation did not improve much in the three northern regions (Gao, Tombouctou, Kidal) where most effort was concentrated, and the situation in

the Mopti region further destabilized, leading to further destabilization not only in the south of Mali but also in neighbouring Niger and Burkina Faso. In other countries the number of incidents of political violence are also on the increase despite efforts to stabilize the region.

Yet the tendencies toward destabilization of the entire region were already there long before. Political unrest and small groups of rebels (jihadist and non-jihadist) have been active in the region for longer periods of time. Chad has of course been the scene of a succession of rebellions and civil war in the period 1965-90 (see Buijtenhuijs 1978, 1985, 1993); however, extremist Islam was never the undercurrent in these conflicts, but rather internal factional conflicts fuelled by the Libyan dictator Khadafy, who wanted to add Chad to Libya in his pan-African dream. Mali was the scene of several Tuareg uprisings (1962-64, 1990-96), but these never threatened the integrity of the Malian state and were largely based on political and economic grievances.

Many issues can be raised about the origins and root causes of this gradual descent into instability. The situation in Mali is not an isolated unhappy incident. In northern Nigeria and around Lake Chad, a radical Muslim movement, Boko Haram, creates terror, and in other areas such as Darfur and other parts of Sudan such as Kordofan, political unrest has been the rule rather than the exception over the past decades. Chad, though apparently stable at this moment in time, has a recent history of successive rebellions against the government (see van Dijk 2007). In the 1990s Algeria also was the scene of a rebellion against the government by the GIA (Groupe Islamique Armé). More recently, with the fall of Khadafy, Libya descended into chaos, with different governments and different parts of the country ruled by a multitude of armed militias which emerged all over the country. As the region is quite empty and governance control is weak, the region is perceived as a security threat and there are worries that it will produce large numbers of migrants and refugees.

As the climate is very dry and unstable, the current situation raises the question whether this political instability is related to climate change and what has been labelled progressive desertification of the sub-continent as a result of overexploitation and increasing scarcity of natural resources (pastures, land, forest). The Sahel/Sahara is not the only dryland region that is unstable. What are the effects of climate change and how are these translated into violent conflict? What is the role of political mobilization and Muslim extremism in these conflicts? And is this something specific to dryland areas of the world, as they are the most vulnerable to climate change and among the poorest in the world? Of course this complex set of questions cannot be answered in the course of this essay, but some observations will be made on the climate factor involved and its consequences for future scenarios.

From desertification and degradation to non-equilibrium ecology

Following the Sahelian droughts of 1968-73 and 1983-85, with their images of dying children and livestock skeletons scattered over the landscape, alarm was raised over the situation in the Sahel. It was argued that a combination of population growth, ill-adapted agricultural technology, overgrazing, and deforestation were causing a major environmental disaster. This would lead to a Malthusian doom scenario with an ever-increasing population destroying its own environment. In particular, nomadic pastoralists were targeted, with their ever-increasing herds of cattle and goats said to be destroying all vegetation in the Sahel and Sahara.

Only a decade later this discourse was severely attacked from different corners. Some range-land experts propagating opportunistic range-land management (Sandford 1983) argued that pastoralist strategies for livestock keeping were perfectly compatible with the non-equilibrium ecology of the dryland areas and would do no harm to semi-arid and arid areas of pasture land (Ellis & Swift 1988; Behnke et al. 1993; Scoones 1995). According to non-equilibrium ecologists, these pastures areas are largely controlled by external factors such as rainfall and temperature, and they argued that human activity would do no harm. Later results of long-term research on the impact of grazing on vegetation sites in Mali largely confirmed this picture (Hiernaux & Gérard 1999; Hiernaux et al. 2009). Only small corridors (100 metres wide) where a lot of livestock pass showed some effects of grazing on the vegetation (Hiernaux & Gérard 1999). Even large-scale analyses by means of satellite images and model studies also confirmed that human impact on the vegetation, if it was there at all, was not harmful and that rainfall was a much more powerful predictor of desertification (Hélden 1991, 2008). So what in general is taken as land degradation at first sight is often the same condition that has existed for decades.

A similar case was made for the expansion of agriculture as a driver for degradation. To practise agriculture, the vegetation has to be removed to a large extent, leading to a loss of biomass, which may have an effect on soil carbon and, when the land is continuously cultivated, cause a decline in natural fertility of the soil. Here too the evidence is mixed. In an overview study by Olsson et al. (2005), the NDVI (a measure of greenness and available biomass) and the millet production per capita increased between 1982 and 1999 in Burkina Faso and Mali. Where there is degradation, it is not so easy to disentangle anthropogenic from natural causes of land degradation (Sietz & van Dijk 2015). In other studies, human influence also had a positive influence in the vegetation in Burkina Faso and southern Niger (Reij et al. 2000). In areas where people actively engage in soil and water conservation, one can actually

observe a 'greening' of the Sahel rather than a desertification (Sendzimir et al. 2005).

So for both nomadic pastoralism and rain-fed agriculture, the contributions to desertification and land degradation is unclear and contested. It is also clear that demographic growth does not necessarily lead to problems, provided that people invest in soil and water conservation. The two most densely populated areas in the Sahel, the Central Plateau in Burkina Faso and the south of Niger, are also from a political point of view fairly calm and are not known for large-scale violence and political instability.

From climate change to climate variability

So instead of focusing on large-scale neo-Malthusian narratives that predict doom, it is better to focus on more differentiated and varied messages about the drylands, and about the Sahel in particular. Two landmark studies inspired a lot of this research. One of them (Cour 2001) emphasized the potentially positive impact of population growth and urbanization. In his paper and the original study for the Club du Sahel, the West Africa Log Term Perspective Study (WALPTS), Cour argued that vast demographic and economic changes will change the sub-continent. Whereas during the colonial period the majority of the sub-continent's population lived in semi-arid areas, this will have changed completely by 2020, when two-thirds of the population will live in the costal countries (and zones). West Africa will also have changed from a sub-continent without cities into a continent with a number of mega-cities and 50% of its population in cities, compared with 10% in 1960 (Cour 2001). Urbanization will be a major driver of economic growth and a stimulus for agriculture as well, because cities are markets for agricultural products, and with this demand the countryside will also experience economic growth. This urbanization will not limit itself to the coastal countries. The Sahelian cities of Bamako, Ouagadougou, Niamey, and N'Djaména are also growing enormously and beginning to have an influence on their surroundings. The second landmark study was published by Raynaut (2001), based on his book *Les Sahels,* and emphasized the enormous diversity of situations in the Sahel. Far from being a uniform area, where population densities are low and agricultural productions systems all look alike, it is an area of high diversity, both in population distribution and in what these people do for a living to make the best use of all kinds of micro-climatic and hydrological differences.

These two landmark studies inspired a third important study, which focused on the diversity of strategies by Sahelian populations and was based on the interdisciplinary work of the programme 'Impact of Climate Change on Drylands' (Dietz et al. 2004). This programme was a kind of afterthought in

the Dutch NWO-funded programme on climate change, which was 95% oriented toward the situation in the Netherlands. Despite the limited funding, a considerable programme of research was executed thanks to the personal contributions of the participating institutions. This programme was started when climate change became a real political issue in the 1990s and the Dutch government and its research organization NWO started investing in climate change research. Almost all attention was oriented toward natural science research and the situation in the Netherlands. This is still a major feature of global change research. Even if social issues related to global change are the object of research, they are the domain of people that try to find connections between climate change and social issues on the basis of econometric models, such as the relation between climate change and conflict (Hsiang et al. 2013), or basing themselves on crude neo-Malthusian frameworks, such as the environmental security studies by Homer-Dixon (1999) and related research.

In this context the project 'Impact of Climate Change on Drylands' made an innovative contribution to the debate on climate change adaptation. The project, the first collaboration between geographers of the University of Amsterdam and the African Studies Centre, and conceptualized by Ton Dietz,[32] Mirjam de Bruijn, and the author,[33] positioned adaptation to climate change squarely within the context of a number of other issues in the Sahel. It positioned adaptation to climate change in the middle of the vast ongoing political, economic, and demographic changes that had been triggered in the colonial and post-colonial period (see Cour 2001; Raynaut 2001) and capitalized on thorough and data-based research in drylands conducted by the authors of the proposal (Dietz 1987; de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995). In addition, it added a new but important dimension: the mobility of the people inhabiting drylands—as theorized in the 1970s by the French geographer Jean Gallais (1975), the work of de Bruijn and van Dijk (2003) on the mobility of Fulani pastoralists, and work by others such as Breusers (1999) on farmer mobility, who collaborated in the project later on.

The initial focus of climate change research was on climate change as a driver for adaptive strategies of farmers and herdsmen in a number of situations. A number of sites were selected for further investigation, based on earlier work of the research groups of the consortium. These sites were the Douentza region in central Mali, Koutiala in central Mali, the Central Plateau in Burkina Faso, and the north of Ghana. It soon appeared that the sites were very different in terms of livelihood strategies of the population, risk pro-

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33 Then post-doc fellows at the African Studies Centre

files, crops, and ethnic composition, which made a systematic comparative framework a difficult avenue to follow. In addition, the availability of data per site differed greatly, with, for example, detailed quantitative data-sets over a number of years obtained from the Compagnie Malienne de Développement de Textiles (CMDT) for the south of Mali, compared with the Douentza region, where detailed qualitative data were available on strategies of the population to cope with drought along with an absence of detailed quantitative data on crop and livestock production. In short, the end publication of this project testified to this diversity and flexibility of the strategies of Sahelian populations to deal with climate variability and risk (Dietz et al. 2004)

One of the basic differences among the different regions was the variability of the climate. With decreasing rainfall, the variability of crop and pasture production increased exponentially (de Steenhuijsen-Piters 1995; Gandah 1999; Hiernaux 2009). These variations were at the basis of crop and pastures failures that contributed to the famines and large-scale loss of livestock of Sahelian pastoralists in the 1970s and 1980s. Yet, rainfall is variable not only in time but also in space. Given these basic conditions in spatial variability, decreasing rainfall mobility is increasingly at the basis of local livelihood strategies, ranging from long-range camel pastoralism as practised by Tuareg pastoralists, to medium-range pastoralism of cattle and sheep by Fulani herdsmen, to more small-scale mobility of sedentary farmers, such as the Dogon in central Mali, who exploited various soil types that fitted with different rainfall regimes (see Nijenhuis 2013). In fact, as was argued by the French geographer Gallais (1975), mobility was an intrinsic part of livelihood strategies in the Sahel, which he labelled *'la condition sahélienne'*. Therefore, research focused not only on people fixed in space, but also on how people were combining production in different agro-ecological zones and were constantly shifting from one area to another (see Breusers 1999; de Bruijn & van Dijk 2003).

Climate change may have an effect on the current situation in two ways. In an early study of the direction of climate change in West Africa (van den Born et al. 2001), Global Circulation Models gave largely contradictory outcomes, from a progressive desiccation of the Central Sahel by 20-25% of total rainfall, to a considerably much wetter future with a rainfall increase of the same magnitude. Both outcomes would cause fundamental changes. The desiccation scenario would have a catastrophic outcome, with an end to rain-fed agriculture in much of Mali, Burkina Faso, and southern Niger (30 million inhabitants), which would lead to massive migration out of the area. Current scenarios (see Niang et al. 2014) are much more moderate, though significant changes may be on the way. According to this IPCC study, rainfall trends are not significant—meaning that they may have a large impact

in some places, but that the overall impact will probably be moderate. More worrying is that the predicted increase in temperature, which is already very high, may have negative effects on the production of the main rain-fed crops, millet and sorghum, which are the basis of the staple food in West Africa. This impact may be stronger in the savannah region than in the Sahel and stronger on the modern varieties (ibid.)

If we take a more detailed look at the nature of the changes in the distribution of population and the individual decisions underlying these changes, we should take several things into account. Mobility is nothing new in the region. Nomadic pastoralists in the Sahel and so-called sedentary farmers often were itinerant farmers, or were confined to mountain areas such as the Bandiagara region in Mali (Gallais 1975), the Guéra region in Chad (Fuchs 1970), and the Highlands of Northern Cameroon (van Beek 1987). This began to take different forms under colonialism, when the freedom of movement increased and people started to move toward the coastal areas (Cordell et al. 1998; Cour 2001). Cities began to grow, with the coastal areas as the main attraction point. Over time also, the middle belt and forest areas began to be populated with decreasing pressure of diseases. Following the Sahelian droughts in the 1970s and 1980s, a new wave of migration emerged. At the moment, many inhabitants from dryland areas are moving back and forth between the coastal and Sahelian countries and between the savannah and coastal zones within the coastal countries.

The question is of course whether these movements are related to climate change or are the result of larger economic and demographic changes. This would require that we are able to relate migration to vulnerability to climate change. A typology of vulnerability to climate change was developed by Kok et al. (2010) and further refined by Neumann et al. (2015) to relate vulnerability to migration. This method is based on a cluster analysis of different indicators related to climate change, and to vulnerability indicated by data on malnutrition that were available in a spatially explicit manner. The results, however, are severely limited by the availability of data-sets. Up to today we do not have a good measure of rainfall variability at the sub-continental level, and therefore we have to take water availability and soil quality as the main indicators for vulnerability to climate change. This analysis shows that the relation between climate and migration is at most indirect, because water availability and soil quality do not directly determine the relative magnitude of migration. Demographic factors, such as population density, do not appear to be decisive either. Relative migration is lower from areas with higher population density, though of course in absolute numbers these areas produce the highest number of migrants.

What is more relevant for the current context is that the absolute numbers of migrants in each of all the different clusters is around 10% over a decade, which is lower than population growth; so, despite the fact that many people move out, population will continue to grow in the dryland areas of West Africa. When we take a further look at the areas with the highest numbers of migrants, some other interesting observations can be made. When focusing on areas with high outmigration, we have to take into account historical and political factors. An important area of outmigration, the Guéra region in central Chad, is clearly distinct from the neighbouring areas because of the intensity of conflict there in the 30 years of civil war in Chad (see de Bruijn & van Dijk 2007). The area east of Dakar is an area of high outmigration as well, called urban polarization by Raynaut (2001), and is oriented toward Dakar and Europe. It is also striking that some of the areas that are currently exhibiting high levels of conflict also showed high levels of outmigration in the past. Examples of these are the northeast of Nigeria and parts of central Mali.

Political instability

The increase in political instability is the single most important political development since climate change research started in West Africa. During most of the post-colonial period, the larger part of the Sahel was relatively peaceful compared with some other parts of West Africa (Biafra War, Sierra Leone, Liberia). As noted above, there were revolts by the Tuareg in the Sahara (1962 in Mali, 1990-96 in Mali-Niger), and of course there has been the long period of civil unrest in Chad. However, the Tuareg revolts never took on a large scale, and the latter revolt soon fell apart into different factions. The unrest in Chad, though started as an internal conflict within Chad, soon took regional dimensions with the involvement of Libya (Khadafy) and the French. Over the 1990s and 2000s, the situation was largely conditioned by the interests of Algeria in controlling its internal opposition in the form of the GIA and Khadafy's interest in exerting control over the Sahara and returning to normal relations with Europe and the USA. Therefore, both powers did not have an interest in large-scale political unrest in the region.

However, even within the 1990s and even more so after 9/11, a gradual destabilization process was already under way in the larger region. This destabilization was promoted by a number of larger trends. In the first place, there was the emergence of a clandestine economy in the Sahara in the 1990s consisting of the smuggling of cigarettes and narcotics, and more recently of human trafficking (Molenaar & El-Kanoumi-Janssen 2017).

In the second place, the Sahara was identified by the administration of Bush Jnr as one of the battlegrounds in the global war on terror. This led to

a number of counter-insurgency activities by the US army in collaboration with the national armies of a number of countries in the region. This was started in 2002 under the banner of the Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI), with Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Chad. It was later increased in scope under the heading of Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) to include a larger number of countries (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal) to fight Al-Qaida in the Sahara. However, there was never a coherent strategy. There were persistent rumours that the Algerians were nurturing some of the groups related to Al-Qaida; and, for example in Mali, high government officials were involved in the clandestine economy (Keenan 2013), which was closely interrelated with the jihadists groups in the Sahara.

Thirdly, these military interventions, which were mainly aimed at fighting terrorist splinter groups and in doing so antagonized the local population, were not accompanied by a coherent strategy to address the underlying social, economic, and political problems of the Sahel/Sahara region. Ever since the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, there has been a lack of investments in the Sahel and Sahara regions by governments in these regions. In Mali, for example, all attention was oriented toward cotton production in the south and rice production in the Inner Delta of the Niger. For the pastoral populations in the Sahara and the Sahel, there was hardly any attention, leading to an unbalanced economic development. After the peace accords in 1996 that ended the Tuareg rebellion, promises were made with respect to economic development, of which part was implemented with the help of foreign partners (among them the Dutch government), but these activities were soon abandoned because of the lack of interest shown by the governments involved.

Fourthly, there was an important rupture in the balance of power in the Sahara when the Libyan dictator Khadafy was toppled after a rebellion, supported by the Western powers who decided that his era had ended. Khadafy, though a fervent Muslim, always fiercely opposed extremist versions of Islam and never supported groups related to Al-Qaida in the region. With his fall, the enormous stock of weaponry amassed by his regime became available to all kinds of splinter groups, among whom the MNLA (Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad), a Tuareg movement started by Tuareg who were part of Khadafy's Islamic legion and were forced to flee after the collapse of the regime. As the Malian army was very weak, the MNLA easily took power over the north of Mali, but were soon after swept away by fundamentalist Islamic groups, such as the MUJAO (Mouvement pour l'Unicité et le Jihad en Afrique de L'Ouest), AQIM (Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb), and Ansar-Dine (the Helpers of God). When these groups formed a threat to the

heartland of Mali, the French army, with the help of Chadian troops, intervened and chased these groups away into the desert again. This involvement of both international Muslim extremists and a UN stabilization mission indicates that the instability has acquired international dimensions and is fuelled by international actors. However, these interventions did little to stop political instability. Conflict and extremists are creeping further south into central Mali, where the situation is deteriorating rapidly (ICG 2016). Therefore, it is important to take a look at the internal dynamics of the region to fully explain the current turmoil.

Unbalanced development

Despite the fact that the West African sub-continent has exhibited enormous dynamism, substantial economic growth, increasing urbanization, and the expansion of markets, the benefits of these positive developments have been quite unevenly distributed. This unequal distribution of infrastructure, economic opportunities, and income, together with high demographic growth and a volatile climate, forms the basis for major political upheavals. There are five major drivers for these political conflicts: (a) north-south imbalances within the countries of the region; (b) north-south imbalances in the region as a whole; (c) high numbers of people migrating within the region; (d) the possibilities of major natural disasters because of climate change; and (e) the fundamental conflict between mobile and sedentary forms of production, coupled with the saturation of space in a number of places in West Africa.

The unequal distribution of infrastructure and opportunities within the countries is leading to internal political struggles as well. In a number of countries, populations in the north do not feel represented at the level of national politics, and infrastructures and government services such as education and health care are most often concentrated in the south and also in the large cities there.

The region as a whole is also imbalanced along the north-south axis. As a result, large numbers of people will continue to migrate from the north of the region to the south. However, this migration is directed not only toward the urban centres, but also toward the rural areas with higher rainfall and better soils in the savannah region. Because of migration from the Central Plateau in Burkina Faso, in some areas in south-west Burkina Faso migrants already form the majority of the population (Howorth & O'Keefe 1999). In Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, the cocoa-producing zones host numerous migrants from the Sahel countries looking for employment and land. Migration was one of the key issues underlying civil conflict in Côte d'Ivoire (Mitchell 2011).

Yet, in the Sahelian countries and the semi-arid parts of the coastal countries the population will continue to grow substantially over the coming decades. The population of Niger, the country with the highest fertility rate in the world, is expected to grow up to 38 million in 2050 (Hilderink et al. 2012). Other Sahelian countries will exhibit similar demographic growth. Nigeria's population, now estimated at 170 million people, will reach 340 million by 2025 (ibid.). This enormous concentration of people in a region which has known already such major climatic disasters requires the building of systems that are able to deal with drought and large fluctuations in food production. At present these systems are not in place. As a result, disasters may produce large numbers of migrants and refugees.

In addition, numerous nomadic pastoralists have been moving south for decades (Bassett 1988; Blench 1994; Diallo 2001) and are now in many coastal countries a factor of importance as they exploit so-called empty spaces. In doing so, there is potentially an enormous increase in conflict with local sedentary populations, whose cropping land is endangered by the pressure of livestock. This, in combination with large-scale land acquisitions, will lead to increasing pressure on land and natural resources. This pressure will have to be managed carefully by all parties involved.

Discussion: a research agenda

To sum up, the situation in the Sahel/Sahara region tends toward political instability because of a number of tendencies that are related both to the management of investments and wealth within the countries and to climate. In contrast with accepted notions of climate change and Malthusian scenarios, this essay argues that climate variability is a much more important driver of social and economic changes than climate change as such. Over centuries the populations of the Sahel and Sahara developed all kinds of strategies to deal with this climate variability by being mobile and flexible. Adaptation is a complicated term to use here, because in an area of high volatility and variability it is difficult to know exactly to which conditions to adapt, since they vary in space and time. Rather, people look for the conditions that suit them best and offer the most secure livelihoods. As a result, people tend to become extremely mobile and move to look for labour and land to all corners of the sub-continent, accompanied or not by their livestock, or by trying to get access to land in multiple locations to offset risks in one area against risks in another area.

The failure of policy makers and governments to provide better conditions for development in high-risk areas will translate itself into even more mobility and higher political risks in areas already overburdened in an eco-

logical sense. In addition, the concentration of a large number of people in areas that are at high risk of climate-related disasters increases the risks for large-scale upheaval once these disasters actually arrive. The risks for receiving areas in the coastal areas cannot be neglected either, because the inflow of high numbers of people within a short period of time is bound to increase political and social tensions.

Yet, the precise relations between these phenomena still requires a lot of fundamental research. The linkages between large-scale demographic, climatic, and economic changes (Cour 2001; Neumann et al. 2015) and the micro-level strategies of local land users (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995; Breusers 1999; Dietz et al. 2004) require further focused research. Macro-level studies need to take on board different variables such as climate variability and more detailed data-sets of soil conditions and regional differentiation of political stability. Micro-level studies need to be better contextualized in relation to the ecological and political conditions in place.

Underlying trends toward increasing levels of conflict, perceptions of exclusion, and political mobilization require further study. It does not help to take individual perceptions of justice, greed, and grievance into account, when no answer can be given to questions such as how people are mobilized and decide to become part of large movements and rebellions. For this we have to look at the position of these people (youth) in these societies and from which groups they are recruited. Unless we can answer these questions, the current trend toward political instability in the Sahel cannot be explained. We can only say that basic conditions at the level of climate, economy, and politics do not favour a smooth transition to development.

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PART II
Maps, stamps and the environment

8

The critical fence
A Dietzian reflection on divergent fieldwork experiences in Southern Africa

Rijk van Dijk, Marja Spierenburg & Harry Wels

Introduction

In our contribution to this Festschrift celebrating Ton Dietz's energetic input into the development of a wider socio- and politico-geographic understanding of Africa, we aim to highlight the significance of what at first glance seems one of the most important markers of geographical space: the fence. Needless to say, fences have great socio-political and geographical significance. We believe that Ton Dietz's work on the significance of geographical territories in Africa is inspirational in terms of the manner in which his work aims to draw in and expand multi-disciplinary perspectives. His work on the Kenyan Pokot (e.g. Dietz 1991) was and is exemplary in this regard: spatial activities that take place in bounded domains require, by definition, the involvement of multiple disciplines so as to provoke deeper understandings—social and/or human geography alone cannot do the job. Ton's work is therefore marked by a surprising openness to the validity of incorporating divergent—and not necessarily mutually supporting—views and interpretations (see for instance van den Bergh et al. 2013; Dietz et al. 2014; Dietz 2015). These can come from anthropology, political science, economy, and history, and while their epistemologies, methods of research, and conceptual frameworks can be widely divergent and conflicting, Ton's work marks these in our view as being 'productive tensions' that turn academia into an open field of exchange. Obviously, much of this multi-disciplinary openness is driven by a problem-oriented approach; this openness is, in his mind, not an end-in-itself but must bring pragmatic value to the understanding of issues at hand.

Hence, what has inspired us to write this contribution to the Festschrift is exactly this productive tension that we see between the elusive openness of this epistemological position and the 'closedness' of the topic that we aim

to discuss—namely, the idea of the fence, interpreted from a Latourian perspective in which 'things' have agency. The challenge is this: can the fence as an 'instrument' of closing, bounding, and demarcating be profitably studied from a 'Dietzian' perspective of what the openness of a multi-disciplinary approach might bring? After all, we know all too well, for example, how a singular politico-historical approach to such a thing as the prison led to Foucauldian understandings of the functioning of the panopticon, the manner in which walls and fences lead to monolithic systems of discipline and punishment, for which contradicting views as to the meaning, execution, and significance of such regimes of power may not add much to their understanding. In other words, following the Dietzian challenge, can there be an understanding of the significance of the fence from the perspective of a 'productive tension' between conflicting views and conflicting disciplinary approaches? Or is the fence at the same time fencing our views, making such openness impossible? The three authors of this piece took up this challenge by engaging our views on understanding the significance of the fences that we met while conducting our research in Africa. Was/is there an interdisciplinary openness among the three of us that would do justice to a Dietzian challenge? Impartial observers of the disciplinary backgrounds of the three of us might disagree: all three of us have been trained in anthropology, have demonstrated great interest in ethnographic research in various African localities, and have been publishing our research results in anthropologically oriented journals. Yet, our anthropology is broad—actually, extremely broad—so much so that the domains in which we have been working only rarely see points of convergence where our topics of research or our theoretical and conceptual frameworks are concerned. And, in addition to this, all three of us have been meeting fences in widely divergent circumstances, cultural contexts, and political realities. Taking 'the fence' as a central point of convergence is for us as challenging as the Dietzian approach to the life of the Pokot has been in making relevant contrasting (disciplinary) views of their lived reality.

Harry Wels met fences in South Africa while conducting anthropological fieldwork on human-animal interactions—the fence here being a highly contested instrument of separation, of conflicting (economic) interests of land use, of wildlife protection, and so forth. Marja Spierenburg met fences as part of conservation strategies, implying political regimes of control and supervision, but also of increasing inequalities, exploitation, and the power brokering of investors and stakeholders. Rijk van Dijk met fences as markers of spiritual domains in the life of religious communities. Here fences are religiously charged as means to indicate spiritual geographies where, for instance, the power of churches, healing prophets, or traditional doctors can be indicated.

In all these cases, however, we are interested in exploring how and why these various fences do something to the people and the communities involved. The fence is not passive but generates processes of inclusion and exclusion, of connection and disconnection, and of protection as well as danger for the people that are subjected to the fence (cf. Appadurai 1988; Verbeek 2010). This makes the fence an agent of some sort, and in many cases a critical one. The fence becomes critical in the way it generates this impact on the social life of people and their (everyday) concerns that in a sense also produces a social life of the fence itself. Things in this sense can easily get out of hand, and uncountable are the cases in which the fence became the primary source of conflict in many African situations. This calls for a Dietzian approach to the fence; that is, the fence needs to be opened up for multi-disciplinary analysis in a critical manner.

We will do so by offering three different vignettes from our fieldwork experiences that will each demonstrate how a particular fence became agentive critically—that is, showing how the fence is not just a passive object but instead sets in motion specific forms of further action and reaction.

Vignette 1: The spiritual fence in Botswana [Rijk van Dijk]

In working among a number of spirit-healing churches in Botswana, I was reminded repeatedly of the active mode of the fences that were demarcating the places of worship, the localities where certain churches would meet and gather their flock, and the way in which these fences would invoke the positioning of forms of religious authority. In Botswana, spirit-healing churches—sometimes also referred to as prophet-healing churches—have a long history that is related to the introduction of missionary Christianity into this part of Africa. Not very long after the introduction of missionary Christianity, which involved the spreading of Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist forms of the faith, Africanized forms of Christianity started to make their appearance. Often called 'syncretic' churches, many of the Africanized Christianities creatively combined elements of mainline, missionary traditions with elements of African historical religious traditions in which spiritual healing takes a central place. Usually under the leadership of a prophetic or charismatic figure, these new-found churches began to grow and to spread rapidly throughout the Southern African region in the decades preceding World War II, thereby often following the flows of massive labour migration that began to emerge in this region at the same time.

This is why these types of churches also landed in what is now Botswana. In this country these churches have emerged in many different forms, making for a truly colourful and richly diversified religious domain. Many of these so-called 'independent churches' specialize in spiritual healing, for which they

commonly use particular artefacts and substances largely derived from the wide field of traditional healing. Among these objects and substances, one can find the use of fire and water, of medicinal plants, herbs, and roots, and of particular sacrifices or other objects. This can be combined with the use of the Bible, the singing of Christian hymns, preaching, praying, and speaking in tongues. Much can be said about the symbolic and ritual repertoires of these churches, their colourful outfits, and expressions of religious authority; my point is to indicate the symbolic value of the ways in which demarcations of space play a crucial role.

At one point I decided to visit one of these churches in the place of my fieldwork in Botswana—Molepolole—which happens to also be a place where one of the most well-known spirit-healing churches in the country has a congregation: the Eloyi Christian Church. This church has frequently been in the news in the country's media because of its spectacular but at times controversial exorcist rituals, which as such have also been the subject of extensive anthropological study (see Werbner 2011). I am not claiming to be an expert on this particular church, its practices, ideologies, and symbolic repertoires; my visit to the church in Molepolole just served the purpose of acquainting myself with this congregation and of getting an impression of its relative size and composition.

Yet in meeting the congregation at their small place in Molepolole, I was first of all confronted with a fence. While plots in Molepolole are commonly fenced so as to demarcate the places that households occupy, in this case this singular 'geographical' purpose of simply demarcating the plot of the church was not the only function of the fence. The fence was above all demarcating the contours of a spiritual 'clearing ground', so I was made to understand in quite a 'physical' manner. Meeting one of the prophets of the church, very colourfully dressed in a bright red-coloured gown and adorned with some brightly coloured emblems and symbols, I was made to stand still at the entrance of the fence. At this entrance a bucket with water was placed in which there was a fly-whisk (commonly made of a cow-tail). While the prophet greeted me in a most friendly manner, he nevertheless made clear that before I was to be allowed into the fenced yard—in which, toward the back, a small, dilapidated building was situated from where singing and the clapping of hands emanated—I was to be spiritually cleansed. Dipping the whisk into the water, the prophet now splashed the cold water over my head and chest and then asked me to turn around so that the whisk could then splash my back as well. While some other members of the church came out to have a look at what was happening, this splashing of water was conducted in an atmosphere of great hilarity, obviously also produced by my shivers when the cold water hit my spine. I successfully passed this 'water-fence' of controlling my

spiritual powers and was now happily invited to come into the dusty church yard and proceed into the small building.

This kind of cleansing by using water that is 'doctored' by inserting traditional medicines to strengthen its spiritual powers is a method of warding off evil and avenging powers and spirits. The water-fence is in that sense a critical fence, since any visitor will have to pass through it, so as to shield the church community and its location from the potential intrusion of evil powers. This cleansing is not just a passive activity of washing off symbolically that which may harm the spiritual status of the church community, as its splashing is much more an active statement of bouncing-back these powers, of ensuring that the powers that are contained in the water are more forceful than what the stranger may be bringing along. It thus creates the inside of the fenced area of the church yard as a spiritually purified and protected zone. And the water-fence creates this specific moment of the exercise of (religious) authority whereby nobody can just walk in while having an un-purified status.

Spiritual water thus creates a double meaning in becoming a critical fence. Firstly, the water-fence actively puts up a barrier to (potential) avenging spirits and forces that may damage the purified church ground and its community; and it produces a particular form of authority to which any visitor, such as the anthropologist, can be subjected. If one is not open to what this water-fence wants to establish in terms of one's personal subjection and one's personal spiritual cleansing, just forget about meeting the Eloyi on their own turf—in other words, the fence produces an openness of a very particular kind.

Vignette 2: Fencing for conservation [Marja Spierenburg]

As Rijk mentions above, fences are indeed a common sight when walking through towns and cities in Southern Africa. The fences mark ownership—whether supported by title deeds or not—and keep people and animals both in and out. Fences can be knee-high and easy to jump over, or they can construct formidable, impenetrable fortresses. And, in combination with other tools—such as the religious ones mentioned above—they can produce particular forms of authority.

An example can be found in my earlier research on Zimbabwe, in Dande in northern Zimbabwe, where many villagers refused to give up their land management system. This system allowed different users to use different plots of land for different purposes at different times of the year, and the villagers did not want to move to the pegged plots designed to create 'modern farmers' with neatly separated homesteads and fields allocated to individual households. While this 'modern' form of land management was supposed to

reduce soil degradation and deforestation, the ironic result was the opposite (Derman 1997; Spierenburg 2004). Attempts to fence people in had the contradictory result of causing larger and geographically more extended ecological footprints.

From these contestations about boundaries and conservation, I moved into the arena of protected areas, studying changes in the old fines-and-fences-approach—which in many cases turned out to be mainly discursive. Together with Harry Wels I wrote about how transfrontier conservation areas were promoted by the Peace Parks Foundation as undoing the 'unnatural' and colonial boundaries, opening up the borders to wildlife and neighbouring communities, and including the latter in sharing the benefits of tourism (Spierenburg & Wels 2006, 2010). Alas, as we discovered, the boundaries were mainly opened for investors, who thus managed to obtain control over land hitherto farmed by local communities, while at the same time the borders were rendered ever more impassable to local community members, who now ran increased risks of confrontations with dangerous animals, game guards, and border police. The cutting of part of the fence between the South African Kruger Park and the Mozambican Limpopo National Park (LNP) resulted in panic among conservation authorities, as the herd of TB-free buffaloes in the LNP had to be rescued and translocated to protect them from TB-infected buffaloes and lions coming in from South Africa (Caron et al. 2014).

From private sector investments in publicly owned and managed protected areas, I moved to the private protected areas in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of South Africa. Together with Shirley Brooks and Harry Wels, we were motivated to study this when we saw the endless 2-metre high fences which seemed to have expanded further every time we returned to the areas. It is on these fences I would like to focus in this vignette.

One sunny morning in March 2009, I was driving with Femke Brandt—one of the PhD students involved in the research project—toward the gate of one of the game farms on the road between Cradock and Graaff Reinet in the Eastern Cape. Just outside the gate we came across a man, his wife, and their three children, one of whom was ill. Femke opened the car window and asked where they were going. They responded that they were on their way to the main road, hoping to catch a lift to either Cradock or Graaff Reinet to visit a doctor. They came from the farm, where they lived in a small cluster of workers' houses. Their walk across the game farm toward the gate had been quite scary, as wildlife roams freely across the farm. While the house of the owner as well as the accommodation for the visiting tourists were fenced off to protect them at night, the workers' houses were not. The wife commented that the journey on foot had been long, since shortcuts across neighbouring farms had been closed off by the 2.1-metre-high electric fences (mandatory

for game farms with dangerous animals and those that offer hunting all year around). As many of the sheep and goat farms—with their low fences mainly designed to keep livestock in—had been sold to game farmers, the latter added them to their properties, moving the perimeters and destroying most farming infrastructure (including internal fencing of grazing camps) except for the water points to manage the movement of the animals. As game farming, and especially the hunting sector—contrary to claims made by game farmers—provides less employment opportunities, the amalgamation of farms and reduction of the work force resulted in an exodus from the rural areas into the small towns and cities in between the farms. For the remaining farm dwellers, this had a severe impact on access to services. Farm schools had been closed one-by-one, as there were not enough children, and it became too dangerous for children to walk across the farms; farm clinics and churches closed, and mini-bus services stopped operating between the farms and the towns and cities.

The farms which were converted from (mainly) livestock production to wildlife-based production were primarily owned by white farmers. They argue that the conversions return the landscape to what it was when their ancestors arrived in the Eastern Cape and contribute to the restoration and conservation of a severely overgrazed area. By erasing most of the farming infrastructure, land owners claim to contribute to nature conservation, but they are also effectively erasing the traces of the native herdsmen and agriculturalists who shaped the landscape before colonial conquest denied them access to land. Those who remained on the white-owned farms as farm workers and tenants are now facing renewed threats of eviction. While livestock farmers prefer to have farm dwellers scattered across the farm to keep an eye on sheep and goats, game farmers transform the landscape to create 'pristine' nature, devoid of human occupation. Farm dwellers are often moved to the edges of the farms—and preferably over the edges (Brooks et al. 2011). This displacement prevents farm dwellers from lodging tenant claims under the Extension of Security of Tenure Act—and even when the displacement takes place within the boundaries of the game farm, the move makes it difficult for farm dwellers to prove they have stayed in the same place for more than ten years (as the Act stipulates). The conversions are hence an effective way of safeguarding white ownership from land reform (Brandt 2013; Spierenburg & Brooks 2014). In the Eastern Cape the nature conservation argument also helps in preventing redistribution of white-owned farm land, as many provincial and district officials accept the game farmers' claims (Andrew et al. 2013), while in some other provinces attempts have been made to restitute and/or redistribute game farms to land claimants (Ngubane & Brooks 2013).

Figure 8.1
Swimmingpool with cattle

On the farm, within the fences, an image is created of wilderness, but also a romanticized version of a colonial past—the 'safari' experience—with a combination of white hosts and professional hunters to assist the tourist, and some dedicated servants. Those who wish to enjoy this experience are eagerly awaited at the locked gate and can enter, but only—as Rijk also describes above—on the owner's terms. The fence creates a purified space here as much as the fence around the church in Molepolole—a space of 'untouched, pristine' nature, devoid of the traces of pre-colonial land use but filled with colonial longing, and devoid as much as possible of farm dwellers and their threatening land claims.

Vignette 3: Safeguarding non-human animals: More fences [Harry Wels]

Marja and I indeed share many research experiences in (and fond memories of) Southern Africa and joint publications reporting on them. While Marja moved beyond 'the fences' of our department and university to accept a professorship in Nijmegen, I continued my research by actually adding *more* focus on fences to my research agenda: trying to understand the rewilding of (white) lions, apex predators, in an intellectual context contesting the Cartesian divide between human and non-human animals, and strongly influenced by an animal rights discourse as translated into a political science argument under the concept of 'Zoopolis' by Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka (2011).

The concept of Zoopolis was coined in 1998 by urban *geographer* Jennifer Wolch (there we go).

More focus on fences means that I now not only try to understand it as I used to do from a strictly social sciences perspective, reducing 'the social' to only the human species, but now also try to understand the fences from a non-human, in this case, lion perspective. The vignette I would like to present is based on recent fieldwork in South Africa and reveals what only a 24/7 presence and hanging out in the field can uncover. Before I settled in the field I had read about the lion rewilding project extensively and talked to the owners of this conservancy on several occasions about what they want to establish with these (white) lions. They told me that they basically want two things: to rewild white lions in their endemic environment in Timbavati, and to take care that more white lions are born in the wild—and not bred in and for captivity, nor 'bred for the bullet' of the (canned) hunting industry, rife in this part of South Africa. This double goal has led to a strategic decision that, as an organization, they take care that they never publish a picture of any of their lions in the vicinity of a fence or where a fence is visible in the picture. This would contradict everything they stand for in terms of 'rewilding' and 'anti-breeding', and they made this very clear to me. As they—on top of this more earthly consideration—consider the white lions, such as the Shangaan, sacred, as 'messengers from God' or 'star lions', they ask visitors to abstain from taking photographs of the lions. As a researcher, I am allowed to take pictures for research purposes only, but I am asked not to share them on social media (which I solemnly promise).

After the first few weeks in the field, with daily lion checks in the early morning and late afternoon (and sometimes in between), ranging from one-and-a-half to three hours, I soon come to realize that it is almost impossible to take photographs of the lions without fences! There are fences everywhere; wherever I find the lions, I see fences. On this particular property, as it is close to a busy and popular public tar road and therefore prone to poaching, they have in addition to the double electrified perimeter fence created another electrically fenced-in island, where the lions can in a way live their lives without the threat of poaching, in the process basically assigning the rest of the property the function of (heavily patrolled) buffer. The island is actually not large enough for the lions to fend for themselves, as the Lion Zone is too small to sustainably maintain a browser population which they could hunt and on which they could feed and live independently. As a result, they need to be supplemented with meat every five to six days (ironically, they are fed with the cheap left-overs from the hunting industry the owners fight so vehemently, but which is also conveniently close down the road from them).

The fences and gates you pass from the main tar road are as follows. Where the tar road turns to the dirt road passing by the property, there is a general 24/7 check point before you can enter the dirt road. You must stop in front of closed steel doors, and your car is registered by an officer dressed in military attire. From there you continue until there is an off-ramp that leads you to the Security Gate, which gives access to the actual property. Once through that gate, you drive past Security Camp, where the five field rangers live, and the manager's house, and then you approach a choice between the Lion Zone (to the left) and the Lion Free Zone (to the right). If you want to go into the Lion Zone, the protocol is that before you open the gate, you check with your telemetry that there are no lions close by; otherwise you have to enter the Lion Zone via another gate, which you can reach only via the Lion Free Zone (which takes you to another three gates). All gates have different padlocks, and it requires some experience to find the right key and to avoid being electrocuted by the fence, by accidentally touching one of the electrified wires in the process of unlocking the gate. If you opt for the Lion Zone to check on the lions, assuming you can enter the gate based on the signals of your telemetry, you now have to find the lions with a combination of telemetry, knowledge of the area and its roads, knowledge of where the lions usually like to hang out, where they were last spotted and, last but not least, spotting skills, as they know very well how to play hide and seek in the thicket (believe me).

Figure 8.2
Khanyezi, tawny lioness, patrolling the fence (Photograph by Harry Wels)

And where do the lions usually like to hang out? Exactly near fences and gates, with longing and intense stares across the fence where the grass seems always greener, or at least the impalas more frequent and fatter (there is usually a correlation between 'greener' and 'fatter').

Figure 8.3
Lebata and Regeus, white male lions, resting near almost invisible fence (Photograph by Harry Wels)

So by the time you are finally able to take a photograph of the lions (for research purposes), there is hardly any escape from picturing them with a fence or gate in the background. Or you have to manipulate the angle of, or even 'Photoshop', your photographs to get rid of the fences. The everyday reality is that the lions are usually socializing close to the fences. And, like humans and other sentient beings, lions give meaning to the fences: they curse (read: growl) when they accidentally touch one of the electrified wires; they test if the wires are 'hot' and, if not, they try to take the wires down (so every indication that the electricity on the fences is down for one or another reason brings the whole maintenance team in a state of red alert); they check the fence around the Lion Zone systematically for weak spots; they roar toward the male lion that is on a property across the dirt road and who always answers the challenge with a counter roar; on one of their other properties with more prey animals, the lions systematically use the fence to corner prey and kill it—in other words, they make strategic use of the fence for hunting (especially the lionesses); if for some or other reason, like a medical check up, they

are lured with food in the bomas,[34] you can interpret their behaviour and body language as that they become sad and as a result pace up and down the boma fence (like lions in zoos). In other words, they are sentient beings with a mind of their own, giving their own interpretations to the endless fences by which they are surrounded. It shows in this case the incredible power differences between the non-human and the human animal—between the lions and the ones who can find the money to pay for the erection of the fences, humans who do that in the name of conservation and representing the lions, giving them 'a voice', doing it for the lions' own good and saving them from extinction and the 'bullet next door'. Power differences that also haunt the perceptions of fences and feelings of inclusion and exclusion in human configurations, as described by Marja; power differences that also make Rijk 'bite the bullet' of a ritual cleansing, which he survives. Can we compare the vignettes? Can we compare the powerlessness of lions to marginalized communities and to rituals in religious communities? Can the fence bring the human and the non-human together in one social analysis, in one chapter? Is the fence, which usually only divides and excludes, perhaps also the symbolic and paradoxical marker of a cross-disciplinary openness in a Dietzian way?

Conclusion

In his inaugural address, which he held upon his appointment as director of the ASC and as Professor of the Study of African Development—both in Leiden—Ton Dietz spoke of the 'silver lining' of Africa (Dietz 2011). Every dark cloud—when the sun is shining behind it—will show its brighter side by being circumvented and captured by a silver line. The metaphor is one of hope and optimism in the sense that while the inner part of the cloud may be pitch-dark, the outer part is a lining of silver that may announce the imminent coming of a brighter day. Ton Dietz used the metaphor not only to fight Afro-pessimism, but also to set a new research agenda in which the prospects of African societies were going to be explored as to their challenges, dynamisms, and opportunities; new economic initiatives, a better positioning on the world market; clear signs of the reduction in poverty, rising educational standards, improved health care; and better functioning political systems. Pointing at the African miracles of success, such as Botswana, he claimed a new silver lining for Africa. And, strangely, the silver line itself became an agent, as it set in motion different perspectives and imaginaries, opened new avenues into research and policy making, and managed to connect differ-

34 In eastern and southern Africa, an enclosure, especially for animals.

ent—academic, policy, business—actors with each other in new ways (the conferences on 'Africa Works' were a direct outcome of this silver lining).

Are fences silver linings? At least by the very look of them, they are: shiny metal strands, reflecting the light like any silver object does. But more metaphorically, do fences demarcate while allowing for a brighter day to emerge on the horizon, demarcating spaces for experiments with new ways of living? We may not want to push the metaphor too far, yet it is clear from our vignettes that fences are more than only the dark constructs of control and discipline; perceiving the fence as an agent capable of setting certain things in motion allows for a more challenging view of the fence than that of it being just this dark cloud that hangs over the mobility of people, animals, or even spirits.

While approaching the fences from different perspectives—and different anthropological interests, some of which border on other disciplines and fields such as development studies, organization studies, philosophy, and even a hint of geography—there are a number of commonalities in the vignettes in relation to open/closedness, in- and exclusion, but also of purity.

The fences of the church, the game farms, and lion conservancy are all meant to create safe havens where believers, game farmers and their guests, and the lions can move freely and safely. Within the fences, open interactions are possible between different people and other animals (the believer and the visiting anthropologist, the game farmers, their guests and again the anthropologists, and the lions and the anthropologist), but one party dictates the rules… In all these spaces, an idealized and 'purified' kind of utopia is created, often with references to an idealized past—Eden, the colonial period when white farmers and big game hunters could do as they pleased, 'pristine nature' as it existed 'long ago' (but did it ever?), or an idealized future, like a Zoopolis. Are these the silver linings, catching the light by either looking back in nostalgia or dreaming ahead? As all safe havens do, they are created to keep 'menaces' out, evil spirits, poachers, and land claimants. Some move freely between inside and outside; others cannot. Yet, some try to force their way in—human (for instance, poachers and land claimants) or non-human 'outsiders' rebelling against the fences erected to keep them out—and sometimes succeed in that.

These spaces take a lot of imagination—especially in the last two vignettes. 'Pristine nature' is not supposed to include fences, so guests and researchers refrain from taking pictures of wild animals and fences and pretend the fences are not there; the agency of the fences is paradoxically articulated by their imaginary absence.

In conclusion, the fence does need to be looked at from various perspectives: those fenced in and those fenced out, while indeed attention is required

to focus on what the fence does to the various human and non-human animals in the configurations around the fences. Hence, a Dietzian open outlook, combining various disciplines, may result in a better understanding of the workings and impacts of these markers. There is one last point to make, one which we feel can directly be linked to Ton Dietz's open outlook on matters, and one which intriguingly may lead to unsuspecting insights: without a gate a fence ceases to exist! Indeed, without openings it can no longer perform its function of allowing an inner and outer that can be crossed. After all, what is a fence without a gate/an opening? What kind of space is it then demarcating, if any? If gates remain closed, or selectively closed to some, people and animals may force their way in or out; a gate is therefore a moral entity, as it may help to judge behaviour in terms of trespassing and poaching when the conditions of gate-keeping are not being respected. The fences' openings and closures thus make for yet another intriguing domain of investigation. Anticipating an open-minded Dietzian reflection on this intrigue, we look forward to reading Ton's first publication on the topic.

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9

Gods of the East, gods of the West

A Dogon cartography

Wouter van Beek

The invocation

The imposing cliff already casts its shadow on the small public place when the crowd falls silent to listen to Asama Ajuro, one of the village speakers, for his *tərə*, the ritual invocation, will send the deceased to his final abode. The speaker of the dead, Asama, may be old, but his voice easily carries from the little square to the caverns up in the cliff, as he calls upon Ama, the sky god, Lèwè, the god of the earth, and Nomo, who rules the water. Each of them is honoured by his *tige*, the honorific name that can be lengthy and sometimes is quite revealing. The one for Ama is 'the one who changes everything', followed by a long standard explanation: 'Who walks in the bush, he will set on the path; who walks on the path, he will put in the bush; who has a bowl of food, he changes for a bowl of leaves; while whoever just has leaves will find his bowl full of food.' Ama is a fickle and capricious god on whom all depend, but who has his own agenda, inscrutable to us humans. This fundamental ambivalence characterizes the whole of the 'other world', with all the various beings that populate it, who represent both the good and the bad side of existence, both threat and comfort, both harm and healing, both famine and fortune. After the three major gods, all spiritual beings are mentioned, called upon with their honorifics, and each and every one of them is asked to be nice to the newcomer into their realm, to receive him as one of them, to welcome him in his new home. Thus, the various spirits that roam the bush and the village have to weigh in with their share, as have the first people arriving at the spot, those ancestors that made the stairs up the cliff, together with the more recent ancestors, plus the one whose death we are mourning here: 'Your big evening has come; thank you, thank you; be well and be well mourned.' About halfway through the list, Asama mentions four gods without *tige*: 'Gods of the East (*manu*) receive him; gods of the West (*dono*) receive him; gods of the

North (*dudaga*) receive him; gods of the South (*tɛŋunu*)[35] receive him; bid him a welcome.' The whole discourse is directed to the high cliff, where a few days ago the body of the deceased was laid to rest in one of the many caverns that dot the cliff face.

Directions

The Bandiagara cliff, a landmark in West Africa, is highly present in Dogon culture with its over 200 m height and spanning more than 150 km. In this Festschrift for Ton Dietz, who as a geographer has always been greatly interested in the relation between topical setting and culture, I want to focus on one geographical item that features in all cultures, the cardinal directions. We saw Asama invoke the gods of East, West, North, and South; that they bore no *tige* is significant, since in Dogon culture every personalized being has one. Thus the gods of East and West are more the directions themselves than specific gods. They feature in many of the texts and show up in various parts of the rituals.

When a woman is buried, the bearers bring the stretcher to the public square of their ward and dance with the corpse on their heads: they shuffle the corpse toward the four directions, North-East-South-West, before bringing it up to the burial cave. At one particular sacrifice that is part of another ritual complex, Mèninyu, the elder in charge, performed an invocation to the cardinal directions: he took the iron lance that lay alongside the altar and stabbed it in the four directions, making a full circle when doing so. As shown in Figure 9.1, luckily I happened to have my camera ready.[36]

Also, the famous Dogon masquerades are shot through with directional elements. During the long preparations for this second funeral, the *saru jogu* (spear mask) appears and dances, clothed in a death blanket with a black fibre hood on its head, a lance in hand. He dances slowly, turning around, swings the lance to the North, East, South, and West, sending the evil things away and drawing the good stuff in with the movements of his spear. Later in the liturgy, the main rituals consist of the arrivals of the masks from the cardinal directions, each day from one: the mountainside setting is a natural theatre as well as a collection of sacred spaces.

During a major song cycle called *baja ni*, the group of singers chants about the Dogon prophet Abirè, who roamed the plains and cliff area during the last part of the 19th century (van Beek 2012). One of his chants echoes a complaint of all times and eras: the world is changing for the worse: 'Former-

35 ɛ mid-central, unrounded (cap), ŋ voiced velar halfvocal (long), ɔ, back, rounded (long).
36 Sorry, I missed *manu*.

a b c

Figure 9.1
Mèninyu points toward *dudaga* (a), toward *dono* (b) and toward *tɛŋunu* (c)

ly, when someone lived in the same village, he could give you his daughter in marriage, as his neighbour. No longer so: the world is spoilt'; and then it continues: 'The East is spoilt, we might even have to move South. For this funeral, how do we organize it: we start at the East, how do we organize it in the South?'

Other examples could easily be found, but these will do for the moment to highlight the cultural importance of cardinal directions, though the latter one is curious: only two directions are mentioned, East and South. Why not all four? Why these two? So let us take a look at these cardinal directions among the Dogon, for they are by no means the standard directional cross. We start with my research village, Tireli, where people speak a version of Dogon called Toro So and use the following terms for the cardinal directions:

North: *dudaga*
East: *manu*
South: *tɛŋunu*
West: *dono*

This sounds pretty straightforward, but here we encounter a major translation problem, since the identification of the directions is far from simple, as a look at Figure 9.2 immediately reveals.

Figure 9.2
The Dogon region (Source: van Beek & Hollyman, 2001)

The central part of the Dogon area—that is, the cliff plus part of the plateau and the plains (called Gondo)—has been a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site since 1989.[37] The map shows the cliff as an almost perfect diagonal, South-West to North-East. How do the Dogon lexemes match the geographical directions? For the emic map, meaning the Dogon definitions of the cardinal cross, we have to see what these Dogon terms actually mean. Sketching the cliff in its geographical directions with the Dogon perceptions of the cardinal directions, we arrive at Figure 9.3, which depicts just the direction of the cliff.

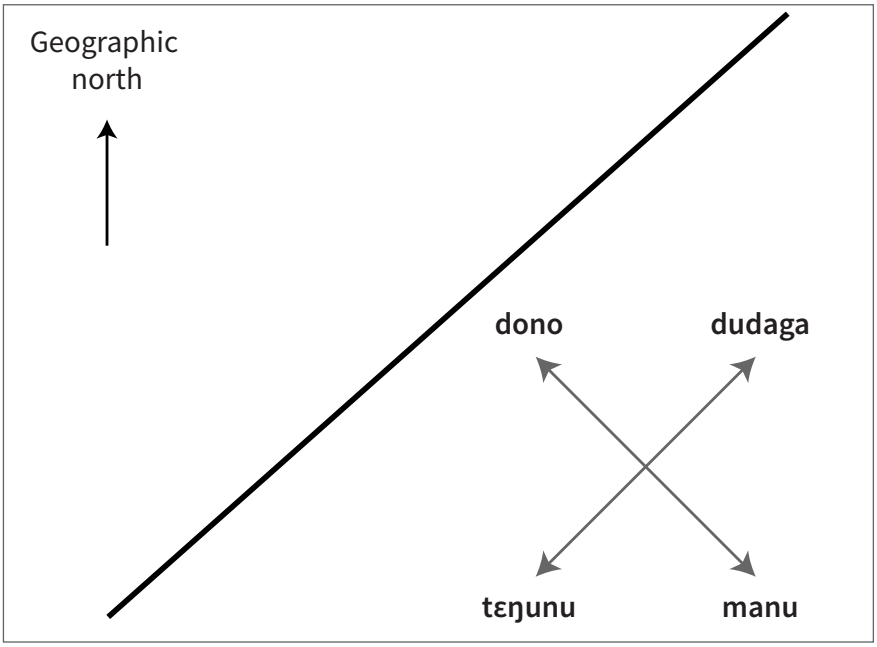

Figure 9.3
Dogon emic cardinal directions

Clearly our translation was off, by some 45%! The gods of the East in geographic fact are the gods of the South-East; the gods of the West come from the North-West. Actually, there seems to be little reason to insist on translating, for instance, *t*ɛŋunu as South and not as West, and we will come to that choice later. Whatever the direction of the cliff, the sun still rises in the geographical East and sets on the opposite side, the West, and if anything it is the movement of the sun (yes, of course, it is the earth rotating) that dominates

37 The area was listed by Decree No 89-428 P-RM of 28 December 1989 as a natural and cultural sanctuary.

the cardinal directions, at least with people that do not live at the cliff-side. That raises two questions: How do the Dogon tally this with their 'skewed' (saltire) cross? And secondly, how do Dogon that live out of sight of the cliff define their cardinal directions?

Associations

First, the Dogon have a series of symbolic associations that go along with their skewed directions: from the 'North' come the good things, like the rain, the 'child of heaven', whereas from the 'South' nothing good can be expected: any wind blowing from there will spoil the rains. 'Never marry a woman from the *tɛŋunu*,' my main informant Mèninyu repeatedly warned his grandson Emanuel. From the 'East' come the foodstuffs, millet, peanuts, the 'goodies'. The 'West' holds an absolutely surprising association: from that direction comes the caiman, the small caiman species to be found in the deep wells and pools at the cliff-side. The pond in Amani, just '*dudaga* from Tireli', was particularly famous with tourists since it is packed with caiman, and its pool population is admired also by the other Dogon as the grand Amani *binu*, totem. The caiman is a familiar of the water god Nomo, and its presence is crucial, as without a well no village is possible. 'Our ancestors had to find the traces of caiman before founding the village,' elders explained to me. Also Tireli, with its deep main village well, sports its caiman.

Viewing these North-South associations, the sun tends, for the Dogon in Tireli, to rise in *dudaga* and set in *tɛŋunu*, so this is one place in the world where the sun travels to some extent from North to South. They are, evidently, aware that the actual direction is from between *dudaga* and *manu*, to between *tɛŋunu* and *dono*; but whatever the direction the sun takes, it is thought to more or less follow the escarpment rim. That North-East to South-West direction is also the way the wind travels and the rains come and go. The discrepancy between the sun's trajectory and the orientation of the cliff-side for the Dogon is not difficult to live with, as the exact provenance of the rain is more important than the path of the sun. Of course, the cliff in the afternoon casts its shadow over the village—that was the scene we started out with—and all are perfectly aware of this fact, but the perceived geography follows the setting of the cliff, so somehow the sun does the same. As do the moon and the stars, of course.

Second, not all Dogon live at the cliff-side, not by far. The great majority of the Dogon live either on the plains, well out of sight of the escarpment, or on the plateau, with no view of the plains. They too have their axes of orientation, which cannot be expected to be skewed, just the normal—rather boring, I think—cartographic North-South orientation. The terms we saw the Tire-

li Dogon use are part of their language called Toro So, the 'language of the mountainside'. Linguistics are highly relevant here as there is not one Dogon language, but there are a lot! Fortunately, Dogon languages are under thorough investigation by a team of linguists headed by the University of Michigan. What formerly was considered as one Dogon language with eight dialects (Calame-Griaule 1968), on closer inspection turns out to be much more than that: 22 languages plus one or more isolates.[38] Dogon has moved from a language to a language family, on a par with Mande or Gur families but with one major difference: the almost two dozen Dogon languages are confined to a very restricted area: they all live closely together, on and around the plateau and cliff called the '*falaise de Bandiagara*'.[39] Since language and territory walk hand in hand around here, let us take a look at how speakers from other Dogon languages, most of whom never see the escarpment, orient themselves.

First, the other Toro So speakers living on top of the plateau, as in Sangha, share more or less the same terms:[40]

North: *du-na:*[41]
East: *du*
South: *tɛŋulu* or *tɛŋuru*
West: *dono*

Though the villages of Sangha and Tireli are just 12 km apart, there is a marked dialect difference between them; in the Dogon region a small geographical distance is enough for a significant change in dialect. The main difference is in East: in Sangha *du*, in Tireli *manu*. The people in Tireli know the word *du* very well, but prefer *manu*, meaning 'the plains', exactly the feature the people from Sangha never see, and which in downhill Tireli cannot be missed. If there is a minor difference already over 12 km, how do the words for directions fare in the whole corpus of Dogon languages, spread out over a much larger area? Thanks to the Michigan-based project (see dogonlanguages.org) and the work of Roger Blench,[42] plus two major dictionaries,[43] I could retrieve 19 examples of Dogon directionality, as far as known now[44] (Table 9.1).

38 Discussed below are more than 24 languages, but two sub-languages are included, Gourou and Yomo So, and some classifications are not fully clear yet.
39 That does not hold for the isolates, of course, such as Bangime, which has no discernible 'relatives' in West Africa, but which is considered culturally a Dogon village (Blench & Dendo 2005).
40 Calame-Griaule (1968, resp. p. 81, 271, 71)
41 *Na* means 'large'.
42 See www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/Dogon/DogOP.htm [Accessed 21 November 2016].
43 Calame-Griaule (1968) for Toro So, and Kervran (1982) for Donno So.
44 The lexicons are informative but provisional.

Tabel 9.1
Overview of directional terms

Dogon language	North	East	South	West
Northern W → E[a]				
Bondum Dom / Najamba-Kindige	*kolal*	*dûn*	*tombal*	*yɛndɛ*
Bankan Tey	*hawsa*	*du:-jiro*	*gurŋga*	*usu taŋga-ya-i / gorgal*
Ben Tey	*boson-da*	*dû / du-dâ*	*munyurɔ-dâ*	*tɛŋi-dâ / tɛŋ-dâ*
Toro Tegu	*haws*	*du*	*dɛwri*	*luwo*
Central W → E[b]				
Mombo	*nyomboli ko:lo*	*a:sugu*	*nyomboli sigok*	*a:tege*
Tommo So[c]	*paigai*	*du:daga*	*sada*	*tan-daga*
Nanga	*du:-daga*	*usi-(tum-no)*	*teŋ-daga*	*usi-(yegi-nɔ)*
Tebul Ure[d]	*dubari*	*tumbemgo*	*teŋgule*	*pilɛmgo*
Ana Tinga[e]	*dudaga*	*tumɔn*	*tɛndaga*	*pilɛm*
Yanda Dom	*du-daga*	*tum-oŋ*	*teŋ-daga*	*piloŋ*
Perge Tegu[f]	*ilam*	*dû / dû: gire*	*tɛŋ-daga*	*numɔgu*
Jamsay[g]	*tɔrɔ / tɔrɔdaga*	*dû: / du-daga*	*munyurɔ-daga / oru*	*tɛŋ / tɛn-daga*
Southern W → E[h]				*Ampari*
Ampari Dogon[i]	*?*	*du-rigitu mbere*	*?*	*ku-rugitu mbere*
Donno So	*wazuba*	*du*	*tɛŋulu*	*kolu*
Toro So[j]	*du-daga*	*du*	*tɛŋulu*	*dono*
Yomo So[k]	*donô*	*dû:*	*tɛŋîl*	*nam [numɔ-ŋ]*
Gourou[l]	*tɔrɔ-daya*	*du-daya*	*nɔŋɔ-daya*	*tɛŋu-daya*
Togo Kan	*tɔrɔ-digi*	*du-daga*	*nɔŋɔ-digi*	*tɛŋ-daga*
Tomo Kan[m]	jigi	du	jigi	sara

a No information available on Penangwe, Tiranige Diga Dogon, nor, for that matter, on Bangime, which is not classified as a Dogon language but appears to be an isolate.

b No information on terms for directionality available in Tomo Kan, Ampari Dogon, Bunoge, Dogul Dom, Nyaambeeŋge (also not in the wordlists on the Blench). www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/Dogon). Walo, mentioned by Blench & Dendo (2005), probably is the same as Ben Tey.

c Here the 'dogonlanguages' lexicon gives different lexemes for Tommo So, i.e. kɔlɔlu, tummu-go/du:, tumbalu, daa, respectively. The terms given come from a trusted informant in Kassa, by the mediation of Oumar Ongoiba, and I have chosen his version of directionality.

d From www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/Dogon/DogOP.htm [Accessed 21 November 2016].

e A language spoken by one village only, Ana (meaning 'village'), and closely related to Nanga and Tegul. Information from www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/Dogon/DogOP.htm [Accessed 21 November 2016].

f Perge (Pergue) is a village on the southern edge of a long inselberg that begins East of Douentza and runs South-East toward Bamba. Perge has an aberrant Jamsay-like variety with a lot of Nanga lexicon (due to intermarriage). With thanks to Jeffrey Heath for this and the following information.
g Both from private information and the lexicon.
h No information available on Tomo Kan,
i From www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/Dogon/DogOP.htm [Accessed 21 November 2016].
j This includes the terms as used in Tireli, a variant of Toro So, mentioned at the start of our article.
k A Toro So version spoken in Yendouma (local name Yorno). Info: Jeffrey Heath.
l A Jamsay version, taken as a separate entry, spoken in several villages east and south of Koro, such as Kiri. Info: Jeffrey Heath.
m The lexicon does not give lexemes for the cardinal directions for Tomo Kan; these lexemes stem from a Tomo Kan speaker who is a mathematics teacher in Bamako, by mediation of Oumar Ongoiba. The terms for North and South depend on the spot the speaker is in: the name of a village in the North or South, followed by –jigi, the Togon Kan variant of daga.

Of course, in this comparative linguistic exercise there is no checking of the actual directionality, and I assume that most languages do follow an upright cardinal cross.

The first observation is that the Dogon have two basic directional terms, *du* and *tɛŋunu*. The other terms differ from language to language and often refer to people living in that direction, or to geographical features: *dono* is the area of the Donno So speakers,[45] *tɔrɔ* is the direction of Toro So speakers—the word itself means 'mountain', so fits well with the escarpment—while *oru*, the other Jamsay term for South, simply means 'bush', comparable to *manu* in Tireli.[46] Incidentally, the use of *tɔrɔ* as North in Jamsay brings to mind the skewed directionality we mentioned, since for most Jamsay speakers the escarpment is toward the West, at best to the North-West. *Mombo* and *bondum* refer to the Kolu people, who live near Ningari.[47] For North in Donno So, *wazuba*, Kervran mentions the region North of Gondo people by the Wazuba people.[48] For many other incidental terms this may well hold, but these cannot be checked in the present state of knowledge.

The second observation, and the most germane to my discussion, is that both directions, *du* and *tɛŋunu* (or its variants *tɛŋ*, *tɛŋi* or *tan*), are not completely fixed. *Du* is predominantly East, but with a suffix can mean North, the 'fixed East',[49] or East-side', though with the same suffix it is East as well in other Dogon languages. *Tɛŋunu* is predominantly Southwards but can move to the West.

45 Though a hillock toward the West is also mentioned, Calame-Griaule ibidem p. 71

46 According to Jeffrey Heath, even *tɛŋunu* might refer to an ethnic Dogon group, Tengu, near Bankass. Personal communication.

47 Kervran (1982: 227)

48 I have not been able to trace this group, which is also not mentioned on the Dogon languages website at www.dogonlanguages.org or on Blench's website, see note 52.

49 Calame-Griaule (1968: 54)

As the lexemes seem to depend on their location, let us follow the zones. In the Northern languages, *du* (in its varieties) clearly means East, while for North and South no joint markers are available. South lacks any common term, while the stem *usu* or *usi* may well indicate 'wind', also in Nanga. The suffixes *da, dâ, daga* or *daya* were translated by Calame-Griaule for Toro So as 'closed'.[50] However, only Toro So differentiates between *du* and *dudaga*, so in this semantic domain *daga* or *daya* might be interpreted either as 'fixed' or simply as 'the side of'.[51]

Other lexemes are hard to interpret, especially in Mombo, which seems the odd one out in this domain.[52] The terms *nɔŋɔ* might refer to a ward of the village, *nɔŋ* in Jamsay, *nɔŋɔ* in Toro So, such as a faraway ward lying in that particular direction. Some lexemes are intriguing in themselves: *tumbalu* in the lexicon variant of Tommo So (note 50) and *tombal* in Bondum both mean South, the two languages are neighbours. The term is enigmatic but might be related to *tum*, and thus to *du:*. For *munyurɔ dâ* (South in Ben Tey) and *munyurɔ* (South in Jamsay), which do point in the same direction, the referent is probably an enemy of old, the Mossi in Burkina Faso, *munyu* in Jamsay and other Dogon languages. As the Mossi were feared slave raiders, it makes perfect sense to name this dangerous direction after them.

In the Central languages, *du*, the one constant directional term, seems to shift toward the North, with the East predominantly represented by *tum*, in many varieties. This group consists of a series of very small, closely related languages, often comprising just one or a few villages, and I tend to view *tum* as a local variant of *du*. In this cluster *du* and *teŋ* seem to be clearly oppositional terms as South and North,[53] while in the Southern group they are more South and East (like in the *baja ni* example we mentioned above). So

50 For Toro So, 'small' would also be an option as a viable translation, thus the 'small' East. After all, *du na*, the large East, in Toro So means the North-East, the important direction for the rains. But it is questionable whether such a distinction within *du* holds for the other languages as well; it does not in Donno So, at least.

51 *daga* is 'side' in Jamsay. With thanks to Oumar Ongoiba.

52 Blench & Dendo (2005) mention Ambaleeŋge as one of the languages—and have no directional terms on their wordlist—but it seems to be classified as Mombo elsewhere: see www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/Dogon/Ambaleenge%20wordlist%20paper.pdf.

53 Jeffrey Heath, as mentioned above, refers in this context to the Tengu, a group living South of Koro (personal communication); if the term *tɛŋ* indeed is a generic directional term, the name Tengu might be an exonym, like 'People from the South'. The shifting of the direction of *tɛŋ* in itself would be consistent with a referral to a people somewhere in the South, as the central languages tend to associate it with South, and the South-Eastern ones with West. But this does not hold at all for Ben Tey, up in the North, for which *tɛŋ* means West. Occurring as northerly as Nanga and Ben Tey—even if it is West there—*tɛŋ* is hard to see as a reference to a particular people South of Koro, and all in all there are simply too many languages using a variant of *tɛŋ* not to see it as a primary term of directionality.

the basic directional opposition in the Dogon language family probably is *du* > < *tɛŋ*, a duo that comes into full bloom in the Southern group of languages, where *du* is clearly East with a slight arabesque to the North in Toro So, but where *tɛŋ* is divided between South and West.

Thus two major dynamics seem to inform Dogon directionality: one pair of terms in clear opposition, plus 'swinging'. The terms tend to be defined in opposition to each other, *du* as East calls for a *tɛŋ* as West, while *du(-daga)* in the North finds itself paired to a *tɛŋ* version in the South, and *du-daya* in the East is opposed by *tɛŋ-daya* in the West. The swinging element is what we started out with—that is, the Tireli (=Toro So) vision of the skewed axis. Throughout the corpus of closely related Dogon languages a remarkable indecision reigns over the ultimate direction of *du* and *tɛŋ*, *du* moving between North and East while *tɛŋ* cannot really decide whether it means South or West. The dominant original meanings might well be East and South, respectively, but other forces, like that of opposition, intervene, pulling them in opposite directions. As shown in Figure 9.4, the cliff is an imposing background to the village; orientation to that feature is almost self-evident.

Figure 9.4
Dwelling at the cliff-side

Interpretation

Here we come back to our opening example, the gods of the East and the West in Tireli, and their peculiar skewed axis. Dictionaries and lexicons do not check directions; that is not possible. But the Tireli people, with their version of Toro So, would not be the only ones with a skewed axial cross. Some of their North-Eastern co-inhabitants of the cliff, the Nanga, Ben Tey, Ana Tinga, and Tebul Ure Dogon would be expected to share a similar directionality, just as would a few of the South-Western neighbours near Kani Bonzon, some of whom are still unclassified language-wise. For all of these, an indecision as to whether *du* means East or North, or whether *tɛŋ* implies South or West, makes perfect sense, as the natural orientation of the escarpment does not tally well with the cartographic one. And precisely this is what we see in the whole corpus of Dogon languages, an indecision over what exactly *du* and *tɛŋunu* mean.

My main point here is that our criteria for the construction of the world, like the cardinal directions, are not nearly so self-evident as we think them to be. People do not live inside an environment, they live with it; they interact with it while it interacts with them: they *dwell* their environment:

> When I discussed the cardinal directions last October in Bamako with the *baja ni* singers, I showed them the map of the Dogon area, a cartographic highlight for us researchers.[54] The reaction of the Tireli men was characteristic: 'Ah, that is the white man's thing; they do not live there.'

This is what Ingold calls 'dwelling', a perspective in which 'the world continuously comes into being around the person' (Ingold 2000: 153), where man and environment are mutually constituted. The environment is what people see in it, which is mostly based upon what they do with it. Yet, it is not completely 'in the eye of the beholder' either: some natural phenomena are simply too large, too important, or too obvious to be ignored, like the Dogon escarpment. So here, in the cardinal axis of the escarpment, the Dogon are confronted with a different choice of criteria: not the rising and setting of the sun dictate East and West, and consequently North and South, but the mountain habitat, running in a perfect diagonal, skews the cardinal directions. In Dogon country, the sun and the moon have to follow the mountainside. This cliff is too large to play second fiddle, and the heavenly bodies simply have to follow its lead and direction.

54 Despite the drawbacks and shortcomings, as noted on the dogonlanguages.com website

> In one of the opening songs *baja ni*, the funeral cycle mentioned above, the singers from Tireli invite all the villages in their neighbourhood to their night of singing, and finally exclaim: 'If we enumerate all villages, the sun will rise above Bamba.' But from the vantage point of Tireli, Bamba is straight North-West![55]

But why do the languages of plains and plateau show the same indecision about direction? One obvious reason would be that in the past their ancestral population did in fact live at the cliff-side. If that was the case, we may be able to interpret our linguistic data in a historical-semantic fashion, and this forms the conclusion of my chapter. Of course, the lexical basis is much too small for any serious semantic reconstruction, so this part of my homage to Ton Dietz is highly speculative—but that is what a Festschrift is for.

The problem is that the views on the deep Dogon history from linguistics, archaeology, and oral history do not match. Oral history has the Dogon arrive somewhere during the 13th century at the escarpment after a major migration from Mande, in the far South-West of Mali. From one central place of arrival at the cliff-side, Kani Na, nowadays a deserted village near Kani Kombole, the Dogon reportedly started colonizing the cliff-side. As such, this move from Mande to the escarpment region, which is central in Dogon oral tradition, may well be more of a mythical charter than actual history, but the designation of Kani Na as the central place of arrival is surprisingly beyond debate. From Kani Na the group split in three—Jon, Aru, and Ono—and from the latter, other Dogon groups trace their descent, such as the Domno. Moving North-East alongside the escarpment, these early Dogon encountered the Tellem who had settled part of the area, and who later gradually moved out, probably after quite some time of living together. Tradition holds that they became the Kurumba of Burkina Faso, but that is debated. From the escarpment area, the Dogon then moved out onto the plateau and into the plains over the following centuries, a movement that is still going on.[56] So oral history and some ritual data indicate a first presence of the Dogon at the escarpment not before 1250 CE.

Linguistic data, however, paint a completely different picture. Viewing the array of languages and the measure of their differentiation, some linguists propose a much longer Dogon presence in the area, not one of centuries but of millennia: 3,000-4,000 years![57] We saw the Dogon language family to be very homogeneous as such, but with a surprisingly large internal variation, even discounting isolates such as Bangime, a village which is culturally quite

55 See van Beek, Saye & Ongoiba (2018: 104)

56 The Ono may well have moved directly into the plains from Kani Na (Gallay 2012: 217).

57 Blench & Dendo (2005: 14-15)

Dogon but linguistically unrelated to any other language in the area. The main question is how fast a language can split up into first dialects and then related languages from one initial point of immigration. Linguists differ on the presumed speed of linguistic radiation, but most are of the opinion that seven centuries would not be sufficient. For them, the Dogon linguistic situation provides a direct challenge, if they have to accept the data from oral history.

The third historical source, archaeology, for its part, does indeed show a gradual replacement of the Tellem by the Dogon during the 14th and 15th century.[58] But that is only at the cliff-side; much earlier traces of occupation have been found on the plateau,[59] even from the early Palaeolithic.[60] There is, in short, no way the area has ever been empty, though archaeology does not give an indication as yet of any specific group identity. So, for how long have the people from whom the Dogon descended been present in the region?

Whatever the time scale and the historical relevance of the oral traditions, it is difficult to imagine that also in the deep past the escarpment area was not the epicentre of Dogon culture. Recently, a major attempt at synthesis has been undertaken by a Swiss team headed by Alain Gallay, on the basis of extensive research into pottery traditions.[61] As one of the core regions of their Sahel research, Gallay has focused on the Dogon area, its oral history, linguistics, and archaeology, in particular ethno-archaeology of pottery traditions. He shows how the various Dogon 'tribus' (as he calls them; they are in fact descent traditions) coincide with language variation and with pottery traditions—to some extent at least. His overview is the most complete to date and adheres to the one-point-dispersal, from the mountainside. For instance, Aru, the descent tradition in which Tireli is situated, is closely linked to Toro So and to one specific pottery line[62]—and so too, to a lesser extent, is the Jon tradition. So let us see what that means for my cardinal speculations. Our small semantic domain suggests that we indeed start from a first settlement of the Dogon at the escarpment area and that the cartographic diagonal of the cliff has continued to serve as a basic frame of reference for the groups migrating outwards.

In the long linguistic scenario, the languages would have split slowly, radiating out from the escarpment and developing separated vocabularies in

58 The same holds for the much scantier evidence for an earlier population, the Toloy, present at the escarpment at the start of the CE.

59 A. Mayor et al. (2005); see also Aline Robert et al. (2003).

60 These earlier groups have not been identified with the elusive Toloy, who occupied the escarpment around the start of the CE. Gallay (2012: 224), Bedaux (1991), Bedaux & Lange (1983).

61 Gallay (2012: 223)

62 Gallay (2012: 253)

the course of time, with the basis opposition between du and tɛŋ. But then they would also have retained their relative lack of fixed direction, and it is an open question whether languages are conservative enough to do so over such a long time period—plus, I have to admit, a millennia-long presence of the Dogon at the cliff-side implies a paradigmatic shift that I am not yet ready for. Nor are the Dogon themselves. So I opt for the other scenario, with the short time span of oral history—just seven centuries. This time span requires a different dynamic, where the escarpment settlements, the core of which stem from Kani, spawn small groups moving out onto the plateau and plains whenever resources open up, creating daughter settlements which then interact with groups at the rim of the Dogon area, leading to a rapid dialectization. The age of insecurity, between the 16th and 19th centuries,[63] may well have boosted language differentiation. A high degree of village endogamy, relative social isolation of the villages through slave raiding, and a sub-current of inter-village hostilities led to isolation of the social units and thus to—admittedly very rapid—linguistic radiation. Gallay posits the option of an ancient population, like the Tellem, remaining in place and providing deep historical roots for the separation of the Dogon language groups, but this runs against all oral history and has little to no basis in archaeology.

All in all, to conclude this speculative part of my contribution to Ton Dietz's volume, the direction of the escarpment may well have influenced the peculiar situation of this semantic domain, and we see the echo of the dominance of the cliff 'diagonal' in the indecision that reigns in the major terms in question. These wishy-washy cardinal directions of the Dogon, in my opinion, point to a relatively recent dispersal of the Dogon from the escarpment area, offering us a view on a geographical situation where the struggle between the mountainside and the sun is not yet over: just two main directional lexemes which swing like a pendulum between two points of the compass. Read this way, the direction of the escarpment provides a handsome, elegant clue to this exotic conundrum, thus providing an argument for the first settlement of the Dogon at the escarpment in a not too remote time period—but, anyway, a reminder that geography is in the eye of the beholder.

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63 Van Beek (2004: 213)

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10

Stamps surrender to mobile phones

Reading the communication ecology of erstwhile West Cameroon[64]

Mirjam de Bruijn & Walter Gam Nkwi

The film *Elephant's Dream*,[65] a sketch of the decline of the State of the Democratic Republic of Congo, shows the expectations of post office personnel in the era of advancing mobile communication technologies. The film reminds us of our own observations in Cameroon, where the postal offices are increasingly empty, some even closing their doors, or transformed into Western Union offices. The days of letters and stamps are increasingly coming to an end. Meanwhile, the national post office and the stamps are concrete symbols of the nation-state. They are the emblem of the state itself. Since 2000 these functions are increasingly being replaced by mobile phones and ICT companies, which make international calls accessible and apparently make national borders disappear. Their symbolisms are of an international world. In the synopsis of the film, it is formulated as follows: 'Although these three government-owned institutions are running on their last legs, the film allows for a surprisingly poetic and empathetic look at a state in decline. Yet, it also

64 West Cameroon existed in the political chessboard of Cameroon from 1961 to 1972 as a federated state. This was following the constitutional conference which took place in Foumban on 14-17 July 1961 to harmonize the bi-cultural structures of the British and French colonization that had existed since 1916. One effect of the constitutional conference was that it gave birth to the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Following the constitution, Cameroon became a federal Republic of Cameroon made up of two states: The Federal State of West Cameroon and the Federal State of East Cameroon. This was a permanent clause, but within ten years and eleven months a referendum was organized by the president of the First Republic, El Hadjj Ahmadou Ahidjo, and the federal system was supplanted by the United Republic of Cameroon. West Cameroon was further divided into two provinces—the Northwest and Southwest provinces—as a consequence of the referendum. Recently, the provinces became regions. At the tail-end of 2016, there were strikes called by teachers and lawyers as well as the common people, and one of their demands was to restore the state of West Cameroon or return to the Federation. For more on West Cameroon, see Ngoh 2001.

65 *Elephant's Dream* – a film by Kristof Bilsen, 2013.

makes us witness the small but apparent moments of change and revolution.' How is the mobile telephone a symbol of the state in decline and at the same time a pivotal moment of change and revolution?

Introduction: Communication research at the ASC

The African Studies Centre (ASC) research on mobile telephony that began in 2006 has written history. We mean this literally. From 2006 to 2012, we observed radical changes in the communication ecology/landscape in Cameroon, Chad, and Mali—that is, the introduction of the mobile phone, now referred to as 'the past', being overtaken again by the smartphone making access to the Internet increasingly easy, leading to a rise in the use of social media and Internet services. In this article, we examine a question that popped up during our research but one we never explored in depth. What happened to the national symbolism that was part of the older forms of communication technologies, such as the postal stamps, and also to the organizations of the postal services in general (Kevane 2008; Wallach 2011)? Were these symbols replaced by other symbols in the mobile phones? What do the mobile phones and the ICT companies symbolize? How does it relate to the recent period of increasing access to the Internet through smartphones? And how do these developments coincide with the decline or revival of the nation-state?

This article is based on the results of the research programmes 'Mobile Africa Revisited' and 'Connecting in Times of Duress' and on a study on Mobile Money dynamics in different African regions.[66] These research programmes allowed us to follow with qualitative methods the social, economic, and political changes in relation to changes in communication technologies.

Fatima Diallo, who was part of the first programme, related her exploration of ICTs to the changing governance practices in Senegal/Casamance (Diallo 2009). Her conclusion was that the state could increasingly control its bureaucratic services by controlling the digital space. Her work relates to the discussions on e-governance. Her hypothesis that new ICTs in fact will reinforce the state goes against the argument often heard in the literature on ICT4D—that is, the argument that ICTs democratize communication and hence also remove control of governance from the state to the people. This democratizing feature of ICTs was especially ascribed to the mobile phone and its communication features, features that cross borders, make communication uncontrollable, and have become transformed into the so-called

66 Mobileafricarevisited.wordpress.com; www.connecting-in-times-of-duress.nl; mobilemoney.wordpress.com

power of social media (Wasserman 2011).[67] In our Mobile Money study,[68] it appeared that the introduction of mobile payments leads on the one hand to an increase in control by the state through the payment, for instance, of electricity bills via mobile money systems, and on the other hand it gives people more of a free hand in the way they can send their money and helps them achieve a certain economic liberty. In these studies, the core of the analysis is on governance patterns and control of services and people, and hence they provide insight into the strengthening or decline of the state. However, the question remains what these developments change in the symbols of the state/nation—and hence, how they hint at national identity.

As we also discovered during our research, ICTs are not only tools to do things; they are as well symbols and expressions of identity. This brought us to reflect on how the different periods of ICTs and the communication landscapes that go with them have influenced not only the practice of governance but also the symbols of government and governance. While going through the publications of Ton Dietz to discover linkages with our work, we came across his working papers on stamps in German colonial Africa. Hence, Ton made us aware of the symbolism of ICTs (Dietz 2015). One of his papers discusses the case of stamps in German colonial Cameroon. In this paper, we will further focus on the link between state decline and national symbolism and the role of changing ICTs in Anglophone Cameroon (a former German territory).

Symbolism and stamps (and post office)

> After money, postage stamps are the most common public medium for displaying the identifying symbols of a State and its people (Roberts 2006: 32)

According to (Adedze 2006):

> Postage stamps are public art and public art in general embodies the beliefs and aspirations of its patrons, which in this case are governments. Stamps are handy because as cultural productions, they are politically expedient and very cheap—they satisfy current political needs.

In the colonial and post-colonial period, the issuing of postage stamps has remained the monopoly of central government—the metropolitan capitals during the colonial period, and now the post-colonial state. As a result, it will

67 There are many articles on ICT4D and development that include the idea that these technologies 'democratize'. However, see articles based on our observations in Cameroon (de Bruijn, Angwafo & Nyamnjoh 2010; Brinkman, de Bruijn & Nyamnjoh 2013).

68 www.ascleiden.nl/research/projects/ethnographic-study-mobile-money-africa

not be an overstatement to say that the issuing of stamps is politically motivated. Despite the fact that stamps have been widely used, especially in the post-colonial period, little or no research have been carried out detailing the symbols and history found on stamps (Reid 1984; Posnansky 2001). However, stamps were introduced as a currency for mail only in the later years of colonial Africa. In this section, we provide a quick overview of the post office and its working, and the stamps and their symbols, in relation to the different states that dominated the territory we call now West Cameroon.[69] It is assumed that the postal system was a means of communication introduced in Cameroon by the Germans during German colonial rule (1884-1916).[70] In the Bamenda Grassfields, postal services were carried out during the German rule, but a post office was not built. Mail was transported by foot in a relay system. Messengers and relay runners dealt most of the time with administrative mail and served the *Fons*, native authorities, and colonial masters. Even though at creation this post service served just the administrative body of the area, it gradually also became useful for the common people.[71] The use of foot messengers with sign messages like the grass sticks that symbolized modern post offices today relayed messages and information in several nodal points of the territory. These colonial messengers who stood in for the letters were precursors of modern-day postal services.[72] What therefore changed were the medium of transportation, the means of passing the message, and the introduction of stamps with colonial symbols (Maddock 1996; Nkwi & de Bruijn 2014).[73] Post offices were built on the ashes of the flag post huts.

The post office in Bamenda started as a sub post office opened to the public on 10 February 1919.[74] It was a temporary building unsuitable for protecting the modern technology instruments.[75] In 1924, work began on the construction of a semi-permanent post office, which was completed in 1925.[76] The post office was situated at the old German fort at Station Hill and was built of mud and stone.[77] During that period it was roofed with thatch, with

69 Walter had already done some archival work and conducted some interviews with people who were involved in the post office in 2016.

70 File No. Cb1921/1, file no 520/22, Bamenda division annual report 1921.NAB.

71 Interview with Mbiybe John, Bamenda, 7 October 2015, 70 years, retired post worker.

72 Interview with Ngiewih Asunkwan, Bamenda, 24 March 2016, 70 years, retired civil servant from the Ministry of Communication.

73 Also see File No. Rg (1916)1, Establishment of Postal Services in British Cameroons, 1916; Rg (1916)5, Postal Orders and Stamps, 1920.

74 File No. Cb1919/1, file no 53/1920B, Annual report 1919 Bamenda Division.NAB.

75 File No. Cb1921/1, file no 520/22, Bamenda division annual report 1921.NAB.

76 File No.Cb1925/1, file no 1568, Bamenda Division annual report 1925.NAB.

77 File No.Cb1924/2, Quarterly reports on the Bamenda Division, Cameroons Province March 1924–September 1927.NAB.

grass which was collected at the station. In 1956, the post office was transferred to Commercial Avenue opposite the Community Hall known today as the Bamenda Council Library.[14]

At creation, the post office served only the colonial administrators in a mail system referred to as Her Majesty's Royal Mail.[78] Letters and parcels were transported from one administrative unit to the next, be it within the Grassfields or out of the Grassfields. Individuals gained interest in sending mail through the post office because it proved faster for long-distance communication.[79] It was realized by the administration that letting individuals make use of the post office would enable the post office to generate income for itself. Individuals began to send mail through the post office by buying stamps corresponding to the weight of the letter or parcel.[80] The heavier the letter or parcel, the more expensive was the cost of the stamp.[81]

The post office offered two different communication services: the mail service and the telegraphic service. As far as the mail service was concerned, it was a system of communication in which various forms of mail were transported by any means possible under the authority of the post office.[82] Mail could be letters or parcels. With the involvement of the general public in the post office service, pillar boxes were placed around the different communities, where letters were dropped for collection by the post messengers.[83] In some areas, the mail was kept in the *Fon's* palace or with the churches, from where the people could collect them.[84]

Letters were the most common things posted through the post office. When a letter was brought to the post office, the sender bought a stamp according to the weight of the letter and placed it on the letter before leaving it for posting.[85] The stamps were a source of revenue for the postal system. Stamps were sold at different prices, depending on the weight of the mail; the cost increased as the weight increased.[86]

At independence, the post service was functioning well and the post-colonial state kept the buildings and system going. In a society as we know it from Bamenda, where the plantation economy and later economic migration

78 Interview with Mbiybe John, Bamenda, 7 October 2015, 70 years, retired post worker.
79 Ibid.
80 Interview with Mbah David, Batibo, 5 April 2016, 75 years, retired Principal Controller of Post and Telecommunications,
81 Figures 10.8 and 10.9 show typical stamps widely used during the period.
82 Interview with Mbom Valentine, Bamenda,18 July 2016, 73 years, retired post office worker.
83 Interview with Mbah David, Batibo, 5 April 2016, 75 years, retired Principal Controller of Post and Telecommunications.
84 Interview with Ngwa Rachel, Bamenda, 4 November 2015, 60 years, trader.
85 Interview with Mbom Valentine, Bamenda, 18 July 2016, 73 years, retired post office worker.
86 Ibid.

affect almost all families, this postal service did indeed touch the common man. Contrary to telephony, which was an elitist form of communication, the postal service was used by everybody. We have observed the archives of letters of many families in the villages in the region. And as the interviews have shown, letter writing was a real tradition. This did not change profoundly under the two presidents that Cameroon has known, Ahidjo and Biya, until 2006 when mobile telephony started to enter the more remote areas of Anglophone Cameroon, as we witnessed during our research.

The visualization of belonging to the 'Nation' on stamps

And as we can read from these stamps, they symbolized the colonial and later post-colonial state. In a very broad perspective, the images on the stamps convey the symbolic image of the master narrative of the ruling elite, with the hope that the masses will rally behind these narratives and thereby suppress alternative interpretations (Adedze 2006). The stamps changed in content under the different colonial regimes, German to French/English, and from colonialism to independence. Furthermore, stamps often represent moments of unification, of war, and historic dates, as well as symbols to show that all in the country was good, or they show the beauty of the country. These all refer to histories of nationalism and are meant for people to identify with. Yet images on stamps can also carry 'deceitful history' if not well handled; and at the same time, stamps can be a very powerful route into the history of a country. The situation in Cameroon is no exception.

Stamps show what types of images there were during colonial rule. Figure 10.1 shows the German colonial rule, and in its middle is a symbol of a ship. In the nascent years of colonial rule, ships were the most common form of communication technology. The Germans annexed Cameroon in 1884 after outsmarting the British. The Germans defeated almost all the indigenous resistance and then established a commercial economy, albeit there were some reforms in the domains of education, agriculture, and road infrastructure. The year 1906 stands out as quite important because it was in that year that the first German school was opened in the Muslim centre of Garoua in Adamawa (Rudin 1938; Fanso 1989). Figure 10.2 symbolises the former West Cameroon as part of Nigeria. The Germans were in Cameroon for approximately 30 years (1884-1914) when they were pushed out by combined Anglo-French and Belgian forces. The German territory was then partitioned into two unequal parts. While France took four-fifths and administered it as part of French Equatorial Africa, Britain took one-fifth and administered as part of the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria. Britain called this portion British Southern Cameroons, which she governed from 1916 to 1961.

Figure 10.1
German colonial stamp 1906

Figure 10.2
British colonial stamp

One important symbol of the state is the flag. When carefully handled, flags symbolize historic moments as well as ecological and environmental issues. Figures 10.3 and 10.4 show the Cameroon flag of green, red, and yellow. Figure 10.4 has a star. The colours symbolize different vegetational zones of the state: green symbolizes the equatorial forest of the south, the red symbolizes the savannah, and yellow symbolizes the Sahel of the north. Figure 10.3 does not have a star because it symbolizes French Cameroon in 1960. It gained independence on 1 January 1960 and took its seat in the United Nations six months later. The star in Figure 10.4 symbolizes the Unitary State which existed between 1972 and 1984, when the Biya government changed it to just the 'Republic of Cameroon'.

Figure 10.3
Stamp at independence

Figure 10.4
Stamp 1972 Cameroonian flag

Labour was crucial to the colonial and post-colonial state. Figure 10.5 symbolizes the Cameroon coat of arms as well as the labour code, which is peace-work-fatherland. Figure 10.6 symbolizes Paul Biya, who has ruled

Cameroon since 1982. The immediate post-independent Africa postage stamps in Sub-Saharan Africa carried images of their presidents, and these images on stamps have become the medium of transmission of propagandist messages about the country of issue to its citizens and perhaps to the rest of the world (Scott 1991; Jones 2001; Dobson 2002). This tradition had been emulated from the colonialists, who introduced the tradition of postage stamps by inscribing their heroes, heroines, and conquerors, just to name but a few (Adedze 2006). Unlike in Ghana—where the Stamp Advisory Committee, according to its policy guidelines, is to issue stamps that portray aspects of Ghanaian heritage, life, culture, achievements, and arts, as well commemorate important international and local events—in Cameroon the issuing of stamps is the monopoly of the state. Cameroon constitutionally is a bilingual country, but a closer look shows that it is French. Figure 10.7 shows that it is a Francophone country and also gives the impression that the country gained independence in 1960. Historically, the country gained independence in 1960 and 1961. The presidential palace on the stamp symbolizes the opulence in which President Biya has been living since 1982. Many things have been debated under Biya's regime, but the issue of citizenship has been the most hotly debated in Cameroon.

Figure 10.5
Stamp to celebrate

Figure 10.6
Stamp with President Biya Independence 1961

Figure 10.7
Anniversary stamp in 1990

Figure 10.8
Federal Republic of Cameroon, 1959-69

Figure 10.9
Federal Republic of Cameroon stamp showing a prawn

Citizenship in Cameroon under President Biya: 1980–present

Who are the citizens who consume the national symbols? And what is their relation to the nation-state and the nation? Broadly speaking, a citizen is a person who is entitled to enjoy all the legal rights and privileges granted by a state to the people comprising its constituency and is obligated to obey its laws and fulfil his or her duties as called upon. Related denominations are national, domicile, and resident.[87] Consequently, a citizen can be a citizen only if he or she has rights to services of the state and is protected by that same state. In Cameroon this is certainly not the reality for all layers of the population. In Cameroon the whole idea of citizenship has been an 'invention' in the divide between the Anglophones and Francophones. In general, the Anglophones feel more subjects than citizens (Mamdani 1996). They feel badly treated by the government. Apart from the near absence of basic necessities such as water, the Anglophone region has one of the worst road infrastructures compared with other parts of Cameroon. Also, in the appointments of governmental staff, Anglophones are most of the time given second-tier positions in the state bureaucracy, while some of the key ministries have been denied to them. They have grievances with the civil and common law (Jua & Konings 2004). The civil law, which actually operates within the Gallic tradition, has found its way into Anglophone Cameroon where common law has been swept away. The Francophonization of Anglophone Cameroon has therefore denied the Anglophones their traditional rights. Yet the logos of the ruling party inscribed on stamps and fabrics show that all is bright and cheerful in Cameroon, especially under the presidency of Paul Biya since 1982.

87 Read more: www.businessdictionary.com/definition/citizen.html [Accessed on 29 December 2016].

In Cameroon, President Biya has become the symbol of the nation, as he has been in power for 35 years. He is the incarnation of the Cameroon state; he is the head of state and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, although Cameroon is a civilian state. He has become the unseen guest at every meal and the 'Silent Listener to every conversation'. His strings have penetrated all the cronies of the state. In every public office his photograph hangs behind the chair of the person sitting in the office. His power is best illustrated during his outings to fly out of the country to Europe or attend a national ceremony. The motorcade is all-powerful. Approximately 9-12 people run alongside his limousine while a military helicopter guards him from the air. He has constructed his power around a network of political acolytes whose duty is to sing his praises. From the ministers to secretaries of state to members of his political party, Biya has been deified, to say the least. Certainly his figure has been inscribed on some of the country's stamps. He and his CDPM party have in fact become representative of the state. The symbols of the CDPM (Figure 10.10), the ruling party in Cameroon, are all over the cities, as is the figure of the President Biya himself (Figure 10.6), for instance on the cloth women wear for special occasions (Figure 10.11). Interestingly, Biya also figures on the stamps of the nation. The nation is the party as personified in the president and his family. He is thus personified and internalized. Among the Anglophones, he is more the president of the Francophones, because in his 35 years in power he has never addressed the nation in English, and in 1984 he re-baptized the United Republic of Cameroon to just Republic of Cameroon, which is symptomatic of what existed before reunification. So the Anglophones feel they do not belong.

Figure 10.10
CDPM logo

Figure 10.11
Women wearing Biya/CDPM cloth; the cloth is often given for free

Nevertheless, the dominance of the party and president is and has been contested in Cameroon—for instance, by the strong opposition party of John Fru Ndi, the Social Democratic Front (SDF), which was formed in Bamenda on Saturday, 6 May 1990 and soon became a broad-based party in almost all regions of Cameroon. Since 1961, Bamenda and its surroundings have never benefited greatly from the development projects run by the Cameroonian government. There was not much development during the colonial period either, but the people of this area expected more development from their own government than from the colonial administration. Bamenda has always remained on the fringes of state development. It had no state-run industry, electricity was most of the time quite inadequate, road infrastructure was poor, and even water was scarce. Representation in the government as far as influential positions were concerned was absent. Thus, this area is often depicted as marginal by the people who view themselves as being marginal and regard state representatives as the dominant others. Such marginality came in various forms and was related to the economy, politics, and social sphere. The economic and political situation of the people in Bamenda at the end of the 1980s was not the best. To add insult to the injuries, the economic crisis set in in the late 1980s. The economic blizzard that generally affected the world struck Bamenda particularly hard because of the absence of any previous economic lifeline in the region. Consequently, life became unbearable, exacerbated by mass unemployment of the youth who at the time were just leaving university and institutions of higher learning. The year 1990 approached with much disillusionment and hopelessness among the people, and Ni John Fru Ndi, formerly a bookseller, emerged as a messiah, the hope of a disillusioned Bamenda, by forming the SDF. However, the attempts to join elections and to challenge power have been repressed in violent ways, as was also recently again the case.

The Cameroonian government uses the armed forces to gain legitimacy at any time there is a sign of resistance from the population. In the Anglophone Cameroon, the gendarmerie—the 'territorial masquerades', to use the words of Mbembe (2001)—was introduced from the French Cameroon as early as 1962 to quell any resistance (Nkwi 2014). Shortly after the reunification of Cameroon, a pseudo-military force, the gendarmerie, which had been in operation in East Cameroon prior to reunification, was quartered in all administrative divisions of West Cameroon. The object was, like that of the police, to maintain safety and security of the state and her citizens. The gendarmerie was a federal security force, and in the 1960s this force caused panic and fear among West Cameroonians, who had until then been used to the British and Nigerian police force. To that effect, there was a litany of complaints from

all administrative divisions of West Cameroon against this force.[88] The gendarme officers in West Cameroon were regularly accused of arrogance and of acting brutally against people. According to colonial reports found in the Buea National Archives, in some quarters it was argued:

> The gendarmes in West Cameroon behaved with brutality and reckless arrogance as if they were an occupation force in a vanquished territory. The brandishing of weapons, the show of power and the throwing of weight around areas inhabited by the population gave rise to great concern and disquiet.[89]

Since 1990 this force has continued with atrocities, maiming, killing, and raping innocent civilians. The government relies heavily on this force to maintain its legitimacy. In February 2008, the youths in almost all ten regions of the country rebelled against the increase of fuel prices, a rebellion fed by related grievances with very deep historical roots against the ruling regime (Amin 2013). The gendarmes were not enough to handle the situation, although at the end the protest was silenced. The government in turn created another force, *Battaillon d'Intervention Rapide* (BIR.). It has two main headquarters, both in Anglophone Cameroon: Limbe and Bamenda. The BIR are charged with maintaining order at all costs. Such measures deny any form of citizenship and create a distance between the state and the population.

Just recently in August 2016, when lawyers attempted a peaceful march in Bamenda and Buea, the two administrative capitals of Anglophone Cameroon, the military was dispatched to harass and intimidate the lawyers into submission. Soon after these confrontations more protests took place in the cities of West Cameroon. These protests were again violently repressed, with even killings as a consequence.[90]

88 Letter No 1566/52 A, 5 March 1962. From the Federal Minister of Armed Forces to the Federal Inspector of Administration, National Archives Buea, henceforth cited as NAB.

89 Confidential Letter from J. N. Foncha to the Minister of Armed Forces, PMO 330/s.1/24 January 1968; Letter from the Minister of Armed Forces to the Vice President of the Republic, Prime Minister of West Cameroon, no. 38/MINFA/cf/9, NAB.

90 See: https://mirjamdebruijn.wordpress.com/2016/12/12/cameroon-alert/

Figure 10.12
Bad roads in the Northwest Region 2016 © Walter Gam Nkwi

These examples raise the question: Does the form of citizenship as it is officially defined exist in Anglophone Cameroon, and for whom? Being a citizen is almost impossible: rights are not defended; in fact, fundamental rights are trampled upon. The nation is mixed up with the dominant political party and with the figure of the president. One could therefore just as well question the strength of national symbols and how these interact with feelings of citizenship. Or is it the case that in these governance constellations citizens seek for alternatives and therefore embrace, for instance, symbols of internationalization or of the alternatives to their own lives in the very limited space of citizenship in their own countries.

In such circumstances of violence, one can imagine that the symbol of nationhood is not difficult to abandon. In the next section, we will delve into the recent phase of communication as it has appeared with the advancement of mobile telephony.

Symbolisms of belonging and the mobile phone companies/ advertisements

The advancement of mobile telephony has been hailed for its revolutionary impact, particularly in regions where communication technologies were not that well developed. Indeed, also in West Cameroon, after the first connections in the urban areas, from 2006 onwards the interior has also been con-

nected. Especially in this area, where roads are a luxury, where fixed telephony was mainly for the elites, we can indeed say that the mobile phone has had a huge impact on the frequency of communication and the disappearance of distance. In our research project, this has been amply proven. And certainly the introduction of mobile phones has also been one of the factors in the decline of the post office's function—and hence the disappearance of letter writing and the use of stamps. But that is not the only transformation we observed. Another very important development, but not as widely discussed, is the appearance of the telecommunication companies in the economy and their visibility in the landscape. As Prideaux remarks: 'an often overlooked element in "mundane" nationalism [is] company advertising' (Prideaux 2009: 613).

At present, the post office in Bamenda is almost non-functional. One can send a letter, but entering the office gives an impression similar to the one in the film *Elephant's Dream*. The office is non-functional; most of the postal boxes are empty. On the other hand, in the streets of Bamenda one encounters huge billboards of the telephone companies. They shout a message to the public in colours and large images.

Figure 10.13
MTN advertisement in the main commercial street of Bamenda © Mirjam de Bruijn 2008

Figure 10.14
Billboards along the road Bamenda–Douala at election time 2011 © Sjoerd Sijsma

What do we see on the advertisements in Cameroon? They are not advertising Cameroonianism, but instead we read them as the creation of a middle-class consumers' group. It is nice to call to your family abroad, and the music comes to you. Welcome to the 'New World' that is clearly brought by the company with the new technology and the possibilities this has (Obadare 2005).

Figure 10.15
Remarkable advertisement © from MTN site

Are these advertisements a symbol of 'new' nationalism? Or do they offer people a new identification? In our view, these advertisements refer indeed to a 'new' world, more or less outside present-day authoritarian Cameroon, where the national becomes less important; on the contrary, family ties and friends are increasingly digitized—that is, 'mobile phoned'—and become international

and cross borders. Any national reference here is lacking (de Bruijn 2010; Nkwi 2014). People 'engineer' in new ways their relations and in doing so they define what is important. Symbols of nationalism seem to disappear and make place for symbols of wealth and internationalism (van Dijck 2012).

Identity in a mobile phone

Figure 10.16
A tailor's identity © Mirjam de Bruijn 2009

The mobile phone also introduced a new, more private identity marking. As we stated in another article, the mobile phone is increasingly the archive that is comparable to the letter archive of a person (De Bruijn & Nkwi 2013). This picture refers to the beginning of the period of mobile telephony in Bamenda, when people indeed took their phone number as their identity card. The mobile phone itself became increasingly a gadget, especially in the urban environment, where the colour, mark, and possible accessories are a personal choice and reflect a person's identity.

For our argument it is important to note that the phone as a communication tool probably does have the same function as letters had, but its form is completely different. And it is clear that the state again has nothing at stake here. It is simple: the control of the symbols in the phone is completely in the hands of the people themselves—the pictures they communicate, the messages they send, and so on. However, this proved not completely true when, during the election campaign, the president sent SMS messages to people to favour his party, or when on New Year's Day he sends messages of luck to the people. These become as well symbols of nationalism in the Cameroonian form: veneration of the president and his party.

Mobile money and the like

The last phase in mobile phone development is the payment function. Is the payment of bills through mobile phones a way to control people? It certainly is, and it can be a way to organize the state better, to understand who the citizens are. However, in a state where control is related to violence, one can expect that such digitalization of the bureaucracy will not be a simple thing and certainly not automatic. For instance, when the mobile phone companies tried to register people for their SIM cards, the Cameroonians were eager to circumvent these rules, and indeed today many people do not register but still use their phones. From our study on mobile money, we found a similar response of rejection to such measures. People mistrust these attempts to control them, although it is sold to them as being for the betterment of society.

Some concluding remarks

This article is a first attempt to understand symbols of communication as symbols of a national identity, in the context of the history of the state and citizenship in Cameroon. We argued that the replacement of post offices and their important technological tool, the stamp, by the mobile phone and Internet tell a story about the decline of the state—at least in the 'heads' of the people who are assumed to be the citizens of these states. In Cameroon the arrival of the mobile phone goes hand in hand with increasing protests against the Biya regime. Probably here the mobile phone goes beyond its function of identification and even enters into the realm of being a tool of rebellion (Castells 2009; Branch & Mampilly 2015). Mobile phones and their communication flows can never be real symbols of the nation because of the way these phones are appropriated by people as their private field of communication, a way of making their own choices. In the case of Anglophone Cameroon, we argued that given their feelings of being subjected to and marginalized by the Cameroonian (in their eyes Francophone Cameroonian) state, the mobile phone gave people a way out of nationalism toward a more individual and at the same time international identity. In addition, the companies that come with this technology impose a certain image of citizenship: users are supposedly world citizens with middle-class lifestyles. Finally, however, the authoritarian state will enter into both domains with its intrusive character and will try to regain control of identification processes. The more protests occur, the more the Cameroonian state will develop its antenna for the possibilities of the mobile phone also as a tool to control its citizens. And then we are back to the fact that in Cameroon, and especially the West Cameroons,

the citizen is a subject of the state and not a participant. Even the most democratic and pro-poor tool of communication, which the mobile phone can be, will not be able to resist the power of the authoritarian state.

With this article we have opened the agenda for new research, a follow-up on the ASC research on communication that began in 2006. Include the first attempts of Ton Dietz to further understand the meaning of symbols of the state as evidenced in its services, such as the post office, and then we are back to the film *Elephant's Dream*. We hope to build on these ideas in the coming years.

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11

Stemming the tide?
The promise of environmental rehabilitation scenarios in Ethiopia

Jan Abbink

Introduction

This chapter highlights some positive developments in environmental rehabilitation that are in progress in various parts of Ethiopia—as yet, small-scale but promising and showing the way forward.

Environmental challenges mar the developmental trajectory of many countries in Africa (and elsewhere). While economic growth pathways are visible and often hopeful, the combined pressure of population growth,[91] 'modernist' consumer ideals, global inequalities, and elite strategies of accumulation and power abuse make heavy demands on ecological systems. In much of his work, Ton Dietz has called attention to the multifarious trajectories and development potentials in Africa in an engaging and stimulating manner—for instance, in his Leiden inaugural lecture (2011) and in the policy brief on 'agricultural pockets of effectiveness' (Dietz & Leliveld 2014). He has also repeatedly pointed to challenging environmental problems occurring in Africa, both urban and rural. In his interesting 'Still silverlining' presentation of March 2016 at the ASC, he mentioned increasing population explosion-induced pressures on 'natural resources'. This is indeed a crucial issue impacting on Africa and the world's development trajectory. Next to population growth, there is of course climate change. This threat, due in part to massive fossil fuel burning (with China now as the largest producer of emissions) and ill-regulated capitalist practices (see Klein 2014), is often compounded by misguided top-down developmental plans in Africa, led by false ideas and schemes of central planning and fantasies of mega-growth.

91 For an impression, see: www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/gallery/2015/apr/01/over-population-over-consumption-in-pictures?CMP=share_btn_fb. See also the rather depressing World Population Clock: www.worldometers.info/world-population.

These factors contribute to an ecological crunch scenario that seems to be unfolding slowly but inexorably (see WWF 2008: 1; Rockström 2010; OECD 2012).

In the developed, industrialized countries the antidote is a radical greening of the economy and the energy infrastructure, only hesitantly taking shape. The developing world, notably Africa, will still be largely based on agriculture and externalized resource extraction, despite the fact that the urban economy and urban zones of industrialization will make an upsurge in the coming decades.[92] An agrarian-based food production economy is long going to remain basic, and the way forward to avoid the eco-crunch is to decentre this agrarian economy toward the producers, and to enhance a symbiosis between the emerging large-scale agrarian investments and environmental and eco-systems control by local communities, aided by new scientific insights. It is unlikely that the massive 'replacement' of local smallholders and agro-pastoral systems by large-scale commercial agrarian enterprises—propagated by certain states and often also by donor countries and the World Bank—will do the job. The evidence available from studies on massive mono-crop plantations (biofuels, cotton, maize, or sugar cane) shows that profitability is very disappointing, stakeholder involvement minimal, and long-term environmental damage significant (e.g. WWF, ZSL & GFN 2008; Behnke & Kerven 2013 evaluating the disaster in Afar, Ethiopia; Muluken 2014; Maru 2016).

However, a closer look at *positive* local-level developments in Ethiopia reveals the potential regarding environmental initiatives by local communities, set against the background of their intricate local economies and agro-ecological systems. By *agro-ecology* I here mean agrarian cultivation that is embedded in and somehow takes into account its natural preconditions and environmental sustainability, and in its modern form an approach applying 'the principles of ecology to the design and management of sustainable food systems' (Montenegro 2015). It also is geared to furthering agricultural biodiversity. Various efforts underway show the potential of rural communities in realizing long-term viability and in (re)taking charge of their environments, often beyond governmental projects that favour the large-scale land enterprises that have not yet proven their worth. Partly, this chapter was inspired by experiences of agro-pastoralists in southwest Ethiopia, where I have done fieldwork over the years among the Me'en and Suri peoples, who are no strangers to environmental challenges.

92 Also, cities can make a significant contribution to taking climate action, as many of them are more directly confronted with the negative effects. As Naomi Klein noted (2014: 364), instead of national governments, '…cities are leading the way on climate action around the world, from Bogotá to Vancouver'.

The thesis here is that, far from being a romantic, small-scale domain, indigenous ecological knowledge in relation with local production practices can play an essential role in addressing extant environmental problems in Ethiopia. These bodies of knowledge are of course not the only 'wisdom' available and have aspects not backed by scientific evidence. But they are evolved products of adaptive processes (see Amborn 2012) and can form the basis of any scaling up or market-based commercialization of agrarian production in the country. In addition, the government structures of Ethiopia always being volatile and unstable necessitates the cultivation of locally embedded resilience in the food economy rather than going for dependency. This also implies recognition of the quality of the agricultural areas available: low-potential areas do not benefit much from large-scale fertilizer input, and so on, but from the use of alternative crops, water retentions techniques, and pastoral herding. First, a little more on the background of Ethiopian environmental and agrarian challenges.

The Ethiopian economy and environment: Tensions

Ethiopia, a self-declared developmental state, has realized significant quantitative economic growth—that is, higher GDP rates, agricultural production increase, infrastructure outlays, budding industries, and especially service sector growth. But it continues to struggle with long-term environmental problems: top-soil loss, depletion of soil organic matter, erosion, species loss, declining biodiversity, pollution of the land due to untreated chemicals, and more droughts due to vegetation loss—all compounded by rapid population growth. The policy toward the rural sector has a curious mix of furthering large-scale commercialization via plantations given in concession to foreigners and wealthy domestic investors, and a half-hearted and unpredictable policy toward smallholder farmers. While there is also a policy toward (agro-) pastoralists with a rhetoric of support, investments and use rights protection for this sector are neglected (see Mohammud 2007; Berihun 2016).

Ethiopia's agrarian sector is very diverse according to landscape features, crop systems, and ethnic agro-ecology traditions. There are intricate systems of intercropping and cultivation, with often finely tuned interdependencies of species and crops, as well as livestock (with dung used as fertilizer and in house building). The cultural ecology of Ethiopian rural societies cannot be broken without serious consequences for production systems and productivity, and it must ideally be expanded gradually via context-sensitive technological, agronomic (especially 'climate-smart'), and politico-economic innovations. The lure of large-scale agriculture and mono-crop production is strong, despite this not being a one-size-fits-all solution.

With land, food production, and agrarian exports (and employment) still forming the basis of the national economy, the objective need for land conservation, biodiversity maintenance, and improvement of current small-scale production systems is paramount. Production output might have been higher if certain property rights and thereby the stakes of producers in the land had been recognized (e.g. as community property). But all land is state-owned in Ethiopia, even the urban plots on which houses and enterprises are built. Land can thus be redistributed by the state authorities at will, although under certain conditions. This in origin socialist-Marxist idea has always been defended by the current EPRDF government (1991-) with reference to 'social justice' motives: to prevent a rich class of landed power-holders or elites emerging and to discourage rural-urban migration of impoverished farmers. Few citizens, however, buy this argument nowadays, although they have adapted to the lack of rights to property via ingenious schemes of land leasing, sub-letting, share-cropping, temporary use rights, etc. The Ethiopian government is, however, aware of the need for soil conservation and rehabilitation of agrarian lands and has policies for it. Until now, much of the execution of this policy was not solidly based within communities and this has limited its success.

Figure 11.1
Eroded Ethiopian highlands (Wollo), due to overgrazing and wood cutting (Photo J. Abbink 2006)

Figure 11.2
Soil erosion due to over-cultivation and vegetation loss, Wolaitta, southern Ethiopia (Photo J. Abbink 2006)

But some recent efforts made and ongoing in parts of Ethiopia for soil conservation, reforestation, and rehabilitation of eroded lands are remarkable. While these initiatives are still small-scale, a few have shown results and hold much promise. They represent an emerging movement of *locally based* efforts by people confronted daily with the effects of erosion and degradation of their environment and show a notable fusion of 'traditional' agrarian production methods and modernizing tendencies—for example, diversification and market-oriented production. For the initiatives to spread and be integrated in mainstream economic practice, a couple of conditions are required, as well as policy changes. In view of a clear scepticism of the government to autonomous local-level initiatives and context-based scientific advice, it is to be seen whether these 'grass-roots' projects can expand. The national development policy of Ethiopia, as laid out in the 'Growth and Transformation Plans' (now GTP 2 is in progress, for 2015-20), does not foresee, for instance, massive investment in the smallholder sector or the (agro-)pastoral areas, which are both seen as 'stagnant' and 'backward', nor connect to local bodies of agricultural knowledge. But ca. 90% of Ethiopia's food production still comes from small-scale farmers and agro-pastoralists. Also a problem is that the 1997 Ethiopian *Environmental Policy* does not recognize the importance of indigenous ecological knowledge. National policy at present privileges the above-mentioned large-scale plantation investments and massive fertilizer

use, driven by exogenous interests. But *community-based* restoration has a key role in durable agrarian production and resilience in the developing world (see Leigh 2005) and has to be invested in more.

Embedding economic practices in local ecological systems: Ethiopian initiatives

Ethiopian initiatives at rehabilitation are of two kinds: the local, cultural-ecology-based ones, as an extension of time-proven 'good practices' in a particular cultural-geographical setting; and the externally (donor-) supported ones.

In the following, we discuss some examples of both categories, starting with the second. Notably, when donor countries and global organizations like the UN and its various sections (UNEP, UNSDC) make funds available for environmental rehabilitation and biodiversity conservation, the Ethiopian government will take up the proposals. It has also shown awareness of the need for green energy and the sustainability of agrarian production, as evident from policy documents (like FDRE 2011; see also FDRE 2005; Davison 2015). But relying chiefly on large donor plans and funding is risky and inappropriate.[93] The Ethiopian government is (too) slowly developing its own action plans in environmental matters, and indeed future donor funding is going to be less reliable.

The first kind, the local, cultural-ecology-based practices of reproduction and 'sustainability' (although local people do not use that word), is the more hopeful and interesting one. These may not have direct solutions to natural risks—pests, drought—and not reach top productivity levels in 'economies of scale'. But agro-ecological practices account more for the depreciation of natural capital (see Barbier 2014) by orienting toward circularity and rehabilitation, so as to *re*produce the natural conditions of production and avoid predation. They are more embedded in local knowledge and experience (see Pardo de Santayana & Macía 2015). The point here is not that these systems are 'the solution' to global environmental decline, but that they are needed as a *base* from which to further develop sustainable or 'circular' agrarian economies.

a Ethiopian farmer communities taking action to restore their eroded environment

Recent estimates are that the extent of degraded land in Ethiopia is ca. 25% of the total, affecting nearly a third of the population—some 28-30 million people in the northern and central highlands, intensively cultivated for

93 Some World Bank-funded schemes have gone awfully wrong; see Hallman & Olivera (2015) for one example.

1,500-1,900 years and largely deforested. The Ethiopian government has taken action by addressing the problems in the PSNPs (Productive Safety Net Programme, World Bank-funded) since 2005, and it recently joined the 'African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative' (AFR100, launched at COP21 in Paris in 2015). Another example of donor-stimulated land rehabilitation is the *Sustainable Land Management Programme* (SLMP), an initiative in place since 2008 and financed by the German GIZ. It is active in various regions and has shown hopeful results: some 250,000 ha. was rehabilitated by terracing hillsides, and new systems of intercropping were introduced.[94] There is also the MERET programme (Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions; see WFP 2012). These are good but still limited initiatives not solidly integrated into mainstream national policy, and while the government approaches local people, it often gives them little 'ownership' or autonomy. Local initiatives from the bottom up work better, and these were started in several regions of Ethiopia, likely inspired by the example of indigenous terracing by the southern Konso people, who developed this over the past ages. Smallholder farmers in the 1990s in several places started to terrace their lands, restore the soil, reduce overgrazing by fencing communal plots, and plant trees. Examples are found in Oromiya, Amhara, and Tigray regional states. Here there are some remarkable cases of rehabilitation and of environmental consciousness that were instrumental in reversing a downward trend and showed notable community resilience[95]—so much so that people after successful land rehabilitation say they are no longer leaving the community. A famous initiative is that of the community of AbrehaWeAtsbeha (Watson 2015). In Tigray alone, a total of 1 million ha was 'rehabilitated' (see also Vidal 2014 and Gromko 2016).

This people in southern Ethiopia have an intensive agrarian complex, based on local food crops like taro, enset (*Ensete ventricosum*), and a whole range of garden and forest crops. They also keep livestock for a variety of purposes, including fertilizing the fields with manure. Holdings are small and family-owned but very productive (Getachew 2014). The Gedeo have a finely balanced system that respects an inner systemic quality or equilibrium and one that is actively maintained. An argument could be made for an integrated 'ritual ecology' approach to explain their production system, along the lines of Rappaport's fa-

94 On an SLM programme supported by the World Bank and implemented by GIZ, see: 'Regreening Ethiopia's highlands', www.youtube.com/watch?v=nak-UUZnvPI. Also on an Irish project in Tigray: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEfYy5zFXI4.

95 One is in Tigray; see Mark Dodd, Ethiopia Rising (2015), trailer at: www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=2c3fd41a-9487-49a0-8695-92d701c2b683&feature=cards&src_vid=Jbw85rcKr_c&v=Kp4BbO6_4DU.Zi. See also Keeley (2013).

mous study (1984) of the Tsembaga in Papua New Guinea, showing the prime importance of 'culture' in ritually organizing and reproducing local livelihoods. Although many Gedeo left their traditional religion for Evangelical Christianity, they mostly keep their agro-ecological practices in place.

Figure 11.3
Newly terraced slopes in northern Ethiopia (2015)

Figure 11.4
Soil rehabilitation in Bale, southern Ethiopia: renewed growth of trees and shrubs in once denuded hill areas (courtesy of *The Guardian*, 30 October 2014)

b Ethno-cultural systems: Embedded sustainability

In the south the environment was perhaps not as degraded as in the north (except where plough agriculture was practised), and more agricultural variety and resilience was maintained. One well-known example are the Gedeo. Interesting about the Gedeo is that they achieved a fruitful combination of market-integrated cash economy, producing a highly prized coffee variety for the (inter)national market, with a traditional ecology-based subsistence economy. Their area is also a prime example of a 'biocultural heritage territory' (see IIED 2014, 2016), which due to well-adapted methods shows sophisticated land, energy, and crop use for a densely populated region (ca. 1,400 people/sq km). A couple of years ago the government considered land redistribution to make farming more 'rational', 'equal', and 'market oriented'. This would have meant the destruction of the agro-ecology-based production system. But they ultimately refrained from implementing it (Getachew 2014: 226)—a wise decision respecting the intricate local agro-ecology.[96]

Also the Gamo people in south-central Ethiopia (see Lesur & Planel 2016) have a system of cultivation (e.g. maize, sorghum, t'eff, cotton, and bananas in the lowlands, and wheat, barley, potatoes, enset, beans, and peas in the highlands) that 'integrates' environmental management in ritual ways (via the *woga* rule system) and maintains biodiversity and crop varieties (e.g. 100 enset varieties, 12 wheat varieties, and 60 barley varieties). The system is embedded in a philosophy of humans as an integral part of nature—not an 'opposite' to exploit it only. Their cosmology codifies 'resources', or rather the natural order, as encompassing humans as one 'species' among others and imbues nature with 'spiritual forces'. This is a familiar cultural feature, which has worked well. Nevertheless, its 'cognitive assumption' of the presence and causality of spiritual forces is being eroded by emerging forms of Evangelical Christianity and scientific narratives. Also, this is not new. Remarkably, many non-Christian Gamo now consciously (re)formulate their cosmological views in a more down-to-earth 'ecological' narrative, whereby respect for nature and its forces is defined as positive and environmentally friendly without necessarily accepting the traditional notions of 'actually existing spirits', etc. There is unfortunately an unresolved tension between so-called traditional Gamo and those Gamo who adopted Christianity, the latter tending to bypass the tradition of the—ecologically favourable—taboo system and the respect for natural forces as well as for population regulation. While Christianity as an overarching discourse has also 'empowered' Gamo in certain contexts (see Freeman 2012), Christian Gamo evaluate the ontological status of the behavioural rules and taboos on crops

96 One of the Gedeo staple crops, enset, is also not suitable for large plantation-like exploitation and must be embedded in community and family system cultivation. It is also a prime famine-buffer crop.

and land or about limiting the number of children very differently, as these are not 'God-given' rules. This is one example of a new theological perception that blurs the realistic appraisal of social and environmental challenges that was contained in 'traditional' culture.[97]

While the Gedeo were able to ward off threats to their production system, in Gamo the battle is still ongoing and the outcome uncertain. If lost, the consequences can be predicted: less productivity, species and biodiversity loss, higher population growth, more unemployment, and more outmigration. It seems clear that the cultural context has to be taken into account when interpreting economic life and trying to enhance development.

c Two more cases

From fieldwork in south-west Ethiopia I briefly mention two other cases of community-based agro-ecology: the Me'en cultivators and the Suri agro-pastoralists. The Me'en are shifting cultivators and have a productive though technologically simple agrarian system. They maintain a rich subsistence economy, and famines in the area were unknown. For approximately the last eight years they have successfully developed sesame as a cash crop (next to coffee). It is privately farmed and privately sold, but to a monopolistic trader cartel controlled by non-Me'en middlemen, who give them a relatively low price. The Me'en farmers retain their shifting cultivation system for subsistence purposes (with shifting field rotation) and livestock keeping, but tend to cultivate the sesame on permanent plots. Land-use planning is important. While the Me'en country is not yet affected by land scarcity, this will occur within a decade, due to (a) large-scale influx of government-related domestic and foreign investors (e.g. a large sugarcane plantation in the lowland) and resettlers from the north introducing plough agriculture; and (b) rapid population growth, an unforeseen result of religious (Protestant Evangelical) faith expansion and a certain loss of knowledge on indigenous birth control practices and female health. As in the Gamo case, the commercial success of a number of farmers and the successful continuity of local farming will be undermined by these external factors.

The Suri agro-pastoralists combine agriculture (sorghum, peas, beans, maize) in higher altitude areas with extensive livestock herding in the semi-arid plains, hunting and gathering, and alluvial gold panning. They have a well-developed system of mobile land use and classification (see Olibui & LaTosky 2015 on the related Mursi people) and preserved the savannah landscape and pastures with periodic burning of bush and selective cutting of trees. Suri

97 See *A Thousand Suns* (2009) – a Global Oneness film on bio-diversity and the Gamo highlands (www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pU0fkwL8yA).

never cut down and uproot trees but leave them in and along the fields for re-growth. Bush and forest patches, especially those along rivers or streams, were left standing because of the many medicinal, ritual, and food plants found there. A serious problem since 2008 is that huge sugarcane plantations are being constructed by the state Sugar Corporation[98] which threaten all this: pastures, bush areas, and cultivation sites. Suri had no say in the sugar venture and deplore the loss of livelihood space and biodiversity. They signalled to the government on the long-term damage likely to be done to the land—erosion, species loss, water scarcity, and impoverishment of soil quality—but to no avail; their environmental knowledge was deemed irrelevant and bypassed. Questions arise here as to why in northern regions of Ethiopia (see above) anti-erosion and land rehabilitation are stimulated, while in the south the scenario of large-scale mono-crop cultivation and subversion of local agro-ecology-based livelihoods is pursued. Both these rural economies of Me'en and Suri are in principle resilient and deserve investment, not neglect. They showed potential for innovative behaviour *without* state support (Me'en: cash crop development; Suri: gold exploitation and quality cattle herding), and this could be utilized for further, locally embedded development.

Government reform of the agrarian sector: Paradox and promise

Ethiopian government policy for the rural sector is paradoxical: on the one hand, support for the large-scale commercial exploitation of the land via mono-crop plantations (often in areas not fit for long-term cultivation of the species chosen, like jatropha, sugarcane, or cotton); and on the other hand, support for local community-based regeneration of eroded lands and respect of agro-ecology-based systems, as we saw above in the examples from northern Ethiopia. The latter case is one of revaluing community-based smallholder farming, which in some policy plans (like the GTPs) was designated as 'backward'.

The promise of Sustainable Land Management (SLM), land rehabilitation, and respecting 'traditional' agro-ecological complexes is great. At the same time, the social and human costs of large-scale land enterprises in Ethiopia so far have been high, with many people displaced and made poor (and hundreds of casualties and much property destruction, e.g. in waves of protest during 2015-16). Conflicts between government and local populations also emerged, as well as between ethnic groups. The effect of large-scale land enterprises on local food security, employment, and the environment has not been favourable either (Maru 2016).

98 Some 175,000 ha was originally planned for the plantations, with expansion to up to 300,000 ha for other private or semi-state enterprises.

A more hybrid strategy, combining investment in local agrarian systems and ecologies while giving space to individual entrepreneurs, as well as developing selected commercial agricultural enterprises in appropriate human and ecological settings, would do more to achieve durable growth and make people 'stakeholders'. The various successful land rehabilitation initiatives mentioned above contribute to this; the indiscriminate, top-down construction of mega-mono-crop plantations does not.

Being caught in the imported, modernist discourse and policies toward massive factory-like commercial farming, the structure and ecological basis of the rural producers' sector in Ethiopia is precarious. Environmental limits are not being respected by the large-scale enterprises, and the ecological conditions for social and economic reproduction outside those large enterprises seem threatened. But the 'traditional' smallholder sector has a backbone function in national food production. It is a moot point whether the intricate and fine-tuned agro-ecology of the Gedeo or the Gamo will be allowed to exist in future, despite their highly developed cultivation systems and near-optimal environmental adaptation. If these 'sustainable' systems of dense population and intensive cultivation—with food-secure production—are changed by new policy initiatives, then the end of Ethiopian rural society and productivity is near. The country's food insecurity will increase dramatically and the well-being of its citizens seriously decline. All the more reason to adhere to earlier decisions of the Ethiopian government taken here and there (e.g. in Gedeo) to continue and respect locally evolved agrarian systems. This enhances sustainability of the rural economy in novel forms. The government and its various institutions and donor partnerships supporting agrarian development have accumulated remarkable bodies of knowledge, and there is a strong commitment toward positive change. The approach of respecting locally embedded development trajectories of communities that intimately know their agro-ecology is productive and would win even more were it extended to investment in *agro-pastoral* societies—for example, in the south and south-west. Integrating new 'outgrower' schemes in local agrarian production would be another option.

In short, to avoid the looming environmental crunch, we should, as Rockström (2010) said, 'let the environment guide our development'. Ethiopian initiatives as briefly described here carry potential and need to become mainstream.

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12

Connecting rare birds and people in Burkina Faso

Observations from the field

Michiel van den Bergh[99]

Introduction

In the years 2011-13, I carried out fieldwork for my PhD research on the socio-cultural, socio-economic, and institutional aspects of conservation projects in Burkina Faso. This research was possible thanks to a collaboration between Vogelbescherming Nederland (i.e. BirdLife International[100] in the Netherlands) and the African Studies Centre Leiden[101] (including, most notably, the institute's director, Ton Dietz). The study was conducted as part of the integrated development and conservation project 'Living on the Edge', which was developed and implemented by Vogelbescherming Nederland and BirdLife International in Sahelian West Africa during the period 2011-15. This ambitious initiative aimed at improving the living conditions in the Sahel for both birds and people, by working with the local population to conserve and restore the natural environment and enhance livelihoods through a more sustainable use of natural resources. Local conservation groups (LCGs) were responsible for the project's local execution and management strategy.

My fieldwork included two such LCGs in Burkina Faso, namely Sourou LCG and Higa LCG (see Figure 12.1). For comparison purposes, and to place the Living on the Edge project in a broader context, similar interventions

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99 World Wide Fund for Nature, The Netherlands. Email: michielvdbergh@gmail.com. Copyright photos in this chapter: Michiel van den Bergh.

100 BirdLife is a global partnership of 120 national, non-governmental conservation organizations with a focus on birds. It is the world's largest partnership of conservation organizations and strives to conserve birds, their habitats, and global biodiversity, working with people toward sustainability in the use of natural resources (BirdLife 2000, 2015).

101 The African Studies Centre Leiden is the only multidisciplinary academic knowledge institute in the Netherlands devoted entirely to the study of Africa. It has an extensive library that is open to the general public. The ASCL is an inter-faculty institute of Leiden University.

were also studied. In addition, the local population and the development actors active in the two LCG areas were also included in my study, as well as development actors with similar activities in other areas in the country. Furthermore, ecological aspects, including changes in land use and land cover, and their (potential) impact on African-Palearctic (A-P) migrant birds are also discussed in the thesis (thankfully, Ton Dietz insisted on including these ecological aspects in the research). This connects this research with integrated conservation and development concepts.

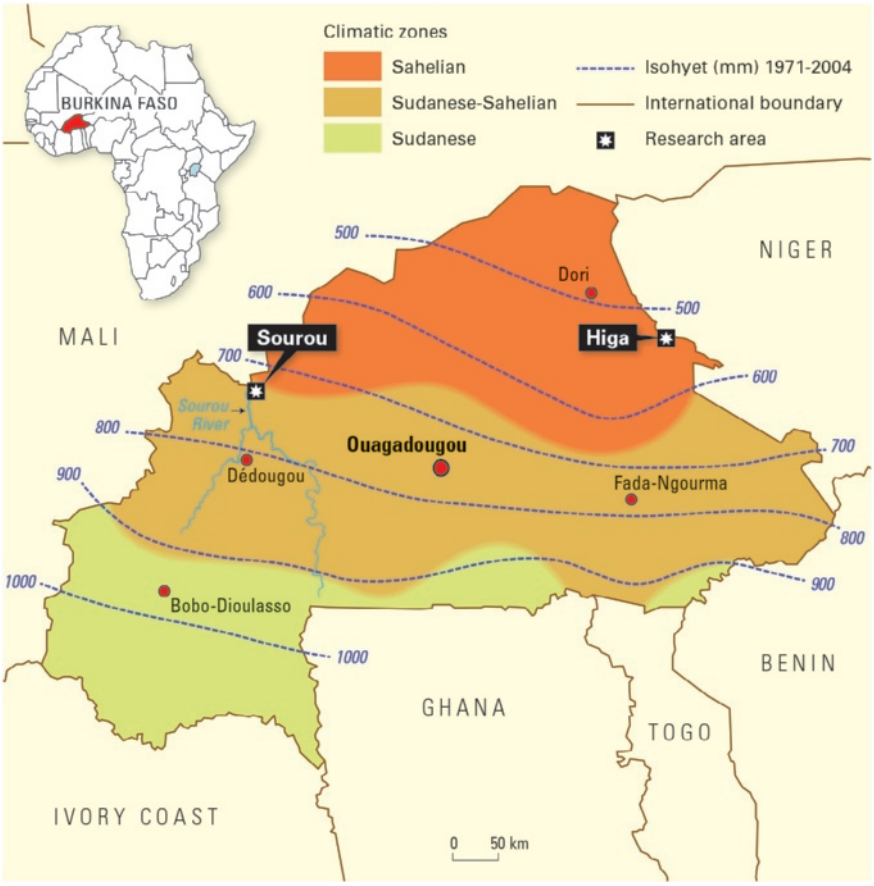

Figure 12.1
Sourou and Higa research areas and Burkina Faso's climatic zones
Source: Adapted from *Atlas de l'Afrique* 2005

Although a broad range of research methods and sources were used for the study, field research in the two LCGs was the study's fundamental data source, in particular interviews with the local population, which focused

especially on the people's perceptions regarding the research topics. In addition, development actors were also an important study group because of their integrated (bird) conservation and sustainable development efforts. Lastly, the Participatory Assessment of Development (PADev, a participatory and holistic methodology for evaluating development interventions that has been developed by Ton Dietz; see Figure 12.2) was used, and PADev-inspired focus workshops were held. The focus in these workshops was on the PADev 'assessment of actors' exercise, which was used to discover participants' perceptions of interventions and the actors working in the area (Dietz & the PADev Team 2013).

Figure 12.2
Field research in Burkina Faso. Besides being valuable to discuss my interviews in the field with my supervisor (Ton Dietz: right), it was a great pleasure to share our passion for Africa, and Burkina Faso in particular

In my dissertation, I describe the local inhabitants' perception of (migrant) birds and the environment in detail. The following quote may best summarize my findings regarding these perceptions:

> Although environmental issues are not always among people's main worries in this region, the environment is seen as being highly important to their livelihoods, and also for their coping strategies and their socio-cultural values. Birds are often considered an integral part of the environment and play numerous roles in people's lives, sometimes directly related to their livelihoods. Birds are seen by some inhabitants as an indicator of environmental health and are therefore useful in addressing conservation issues. Many believe that bird populations are being threatened and declining, and various (human-induced) causes have been suggested, some of which overlap with those found in the literature on A-P migrant birds threats, such as deforestation and the exploitation of birds. (van den Bergh 2016: 115).

Bird observations

During my stays in Burkina Faso, I had the opportunity to make frequent bird observations (i.e. between July and September 2011; between December 2011 and March 2012; in February/March 2013; between February and April 2014; and again in April 2015). Areas included the extensive wetlands of the Sourou River Basin (primarily in Di and Lanfiera departments) and the predominantly dry Sahelian landscape of Lac Higa (mainly in Tankougounadié Department), as well as urban Ouagadougou. On many days in the research areas, the first and/or last hour(s) of the day where used for bird-watching. In addition, a 4-day trip was made to the south-west of the country, including Lac Tengrela, La Guinguette, and Cascades de Karfiguela, around the end of 2011, as well as a 3-day trip to the W National Park in south-east Burkina Faso, around the beginning of 2014. During all bird-watching trips I made use of a spotting scope (Swarovski ATS 65 HD: 25-50 zoom) and a binocular (Swarovski EL: 8x42). Daily notes were made of observed bird species and interesting observations, on paper or in an Excel file. Photos and sound recordings were made of some of the more interesting or exciting sightings.
During these bird-watching trips I obtained several remarkable bird records for Burkina Faso. For instance, I discovered and described two new bird species for the country and obtained the first fully documented records of three other species (van den Bergh 2013, 2012). Also, observations related to the status in Burkina Faso of four A-P migrant species were published (van den Bergh 2013). In the present article, I describe several other interesting and

unpublished observations and connect them with the local inhabitants' perceptions of birds as described in my thesis (van den Bergh 2016).

Birds and bird observations in Burkina Faso and the research areas

Well over 500 birds species have been recorded in Burkina Faso (Lungren et al. 2001; Portier et al. 2002). Although this is perhaps somewhat limited compared with some of the other (highly diverse) African countries, it is still a considerable number considering the fact that the country has no rainforest or coast and is poorly explored by ornithologists. The country has a broad range of habitats, ranging from desert-like habitats in the far north to small pockets of semi-rainforest habitats in the south-west, which all host their own specific set of matching bird species (Figures 12.3a-t). Moreover, the country is visited by many A-P migrant species.

The African continent is a winter ground for no less than a quarter of the more than 500 bird species breeding in Europe. Especially the continent's northern savannahs serve as a wintering ground for migrant birds, including the Sahel region. The Sahel region is indeed an important area for migrant Palearctic birds, either for those species that spend their winter there, or for those species wintering further south on the continent that use this region as a staging area (Jones 1995; Zwarts et al. 2009). Many A-P migrant species were seen during my fieldwork in Burkina Faso's Sahel region, such as Western Bonelli's Warblers, Woodchat Shrikes, Common Sandpipers, and Western Yellow Wagtails (Figures 12.3a-d). In wetland areas, including along the shores of the Sourou River and Lake Higa, A-P migrant species were at least as common during some visits in the dry season as African migrant and non-migrant species. Burkina Faso has a number of wetlands that are of significant importance for water birds, both resident and migrant species. A few of these wetlands receive congregations of at least 20,000 water birds annually. All of these sites are found in the country's Sahel region, and one among them is Sourou. In fact, the site is known to hold what may be the largest concentration of wildfowl (*Anatidae*) in Burkina Faso (Lungren et al. 2001; Portier et al. 2002).















From the top down and from left to right: Western Bonelli's Warbler (*Phylloscopus bonelli),* Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator),* Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos), Western Yellow Wagtail (Motacilla flava),* Sahel Paradise-whydah (*Vidua orientalis),* Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles exustus),* Yellow-crowned Gonolek (*Laniarius barbarus),* Abyssinian Roller (*Coracias abyssinicus),* Lavender Waxbill (*Estrilda coerulescens),* Red-billed Hornbill (*Tockus erythrorhynchus),* Red-throated Bee-eater (*Merops bulocki),* Yellow-billed Shrike (*Corvinella corvina),* Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis),* Spur-winged Lapwing (*Vanellus spinosus),* Long-tailed Cormorant (*Microcarbo africanus),* Lesser Jacana (*Microparra capensis),* Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis),* African Pygmy-goose (*Nettapus auritus),* Little Bee-eater (*Merops pusillus), and* Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus).*

Figure 12.3a-t
Burkina Faso is home to a wide array of birds species

Observations of rare birds

During my fieldwork I made several interesting observations, of which some were published in the journals *Malimbus* and *African Bird Club Bulletin,* including the first records of Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*) and Blackstart (*Cercomela melanura*) for the country and the first fully documented records of Great Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*), Quail-plover (*Ortyxelos meiffreni*), and Little Crake (*Porzana parva*). Observations related to the status in Burkina Faso of Great Snipe (*Gallinago media*), Blackstart (*Cercome-*

la melanura), Green-headed Sunbird (*Cyanomitra verticalis*), and Iberian Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus ibericus*) are also described. Other interesting observations that have not been published before include the lack of sightings of some species (bustards, vultures, and eagles) and the sightings of some rare birds (i.e. Eleanora's Falcon and two Wagtail (sub)species). These observations are described below.

Bustards, vultures and eagles

During almost three months of fieldwork in Burkina Faso, which included frequent short birding trips in several remote areas, I recorded a worryingly low number of bustards, vultures, and eagles. For instance, only one bustard (Savile's Bustard), one species of vulture (Hooded Vulture, present in moderate numbers; see Figure 12.4), and four species of eagles (a handful of Booted, Wahlberg's, Short-toed Snake, and Beaudouin's Snake Eagles; see Figure 12.5) were seen during this period. Unfortunately, this recent observation, or rather the lack of observations, marks a continuation of the previously established negative population trends (Thiollay 2006a, 2006b). In particular, large vultures suffered a dramatic decline (98%) outside protected areas from 1970 to 2000, including in Burkina Faso. Similar declines were noted for eagles and bustards. Overhunting and overgrazing and degradation of acacia woodlands are thought to be the main causes for the declines in bustard populations. The vultures and eagles are facing a range of specific threats, the most significant for vultures in particular being poisoning and the trade in traditional medicines (Thiollay 2006a, 2006b; Ogada et al. 2016).

Figure 12.4
Hooded Vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

This vulture is listed as 'Critically Endangered' by BirdLife International, as the population is experiencing an extremely rapid decline with an estimated 83% decline (range 64-93%) over three generations (53 years) (www.iucnredlist.org/details/22695185/0).

Figure 12.5
Beaudouin's Snake Eagle (*Circaetus beaudouini*) in Sourou, Burkina Faso

The Beaudouin's Snake Eagle has a small population, which has suffered rapid declines, and the species is therefore classified as 'Vulnerable' by BirdLife International (www.iucnredlist.org/details/22732272/0).

*Eleanora's Falcon (*Falco eleonorae*)*

In the late afternoon of 25 January 2012, an adult pale morph was seen circling near Tankougounadié, located near the Burkina Faso–Niger border. Unfortunately, I was unable to photograph the bird. For this reason, and because I had no previous experience with this species and because of the very 'peculiar' date of this observation (in January all Eleanora's Falcons should be in their winter area in or near Madagascar), I do not consider this record as definite (although the dark underwing coverts were seen!). According to Borrow and Demey (2004), there is only one record of this falcon in West Africa (Mauritania), but satellite tracking shows that juveniles range widely throughout Africa and probably have been overlooked in the past (Sinclair & Ryan 2010). Indeed, the recent satellite tracking (2003-05) of 13 birds showed that at least two Eleanora's Falcons visited Burkina Faso, one during spring migration and one during autumn migration (Gschweng et al. 2008).

*White-throated Wagtail (*Motacilla (flava) cinereocapilla*) and Yellow-crowned Wagtail (*Motacilla (flava) flavissima*)*

Both Sinclair and Ryan (2010) and Borrow and Demey (2004) mention and/or depict these two (sub)species, but they do not provide any additional information. A presumed White-throated Wagtail in breeding plumage was seen on the shores of Lac Higa on 22 February 2012, but unfortunately not heard. In the same area, at least one Yellow-crowned Wagtail was seen and photographed during the end of February 2012.

Conclusions

As I describe in my thesis (van den Bergh 2016: 178):

> birds, including those that migrate, are typically valued by the studied local population in many (socio-cultural and socio-economic) ways, and play numerous positive roles in people's lives, sometimes directly related to their livelihoods.

For instance, inhabitants value the critically endangered Hooded Vultures, as these birds indicate where dying or dead livestock is located and people appreciate the ecological role they fulfil by cleaning carcasses. Vultures are protected by national law, and many inhabitants are aware of this. However, the illegal hunting of (at least several other protected) bird species was regularly observed during my fieldwork. Hunting is among the many threats bird species face, and many are threatened with regional extinction in Burkina Faso, including those large species that are well known to the local inhabitants. The inhabitants are often well aware of the decline in these bird populations (van den Bergh 2016).

However, the current status of most West African birds is little known (see e.g. Thiollay 2006b), as is illustrated by the observations described here. Few birdwatchers visit the Sahel (see e.g. Lungren et al. 2001; Portier et al. 2002), and the local inhabitants' knowledge is often restricted to common, conspicuous (noisy, colourful, and/or large), socio-culturally valuable, and/or pest bird species (see e.g. van den Bergh 2016). I therefore encourage foreign birdwatchers to visit the Sahel, including Burkina Faso. Knowledge about the distribution and the status of bird species is much needed for the conservation of threatened species (Thiolly 2006a). By entering their observations in a public database (such as observado.org) and/or publishing on their notable sightings, visiting birdwatchers can contribute to the knowledge of the region's avifauna. Birdwatchers could also stimulate the inhabitants' interest in birds, including by generating income. At the same time, education and

awareness-raising about the importance and aesthetic value of birds, the environment, and conservation (including hunting and environmental legislation) could contribute to local bird-friendly behaviour.

Nonetheless, urgent strict conservation action should be taken to prevent the imminent extinction of—in particular large—bird species such as vultures, bustards, and eagles. Hunting law enforcement and protected areas play a prominent role in the conservation of these species (Thiolly 2006a). This should go alongside efforts to promote sustainable land-use practices that contribute to habitat restoration and conservation as well as better livelihoods for local people (van den Bergh 2016). Increasing knowledge of the country's avifauna could help direct the implementation of appropriate protected areas, law enforcement, and sustainable land-use practices. In that way, the Sahel can once again become a safe haven for a wide variety of rare birds and people.

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PART III
African arenas

13

Beyond 'two Africas' in African and Berber literary studies

Daniela Merolla

Studies on North Africa and African studies developed internationally on relatively parallel tracks: the first were usually included within the scope of research on the Arab world and the Middle East, while the 'rest' of Africa was approached and studied as a world comparatively homogeneous and different from North Africa. Such a north/south division still shapes current studies, as shown, for example, in the substantial number of papers that focus on Sub-Saharan Africa at the European Conferences on African Studies of the AEGIS (Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies) and at the annual meetings of the African Studies Association based in the USA. An anecdote that contributed to my reflection on the 'two Africas' is linked to the scientific policy of the African Studies Centre (Leiden) (ASC) in the 2000s. I intended to organize a conference on North Africa, but it was suggested that I not submit it to the ASC because its regional focus was 'beyond the scope' of the centre. This policy similarly emerges from the publication lists of the ASC. North Africa appears only once, and countries such as Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia do not appear at all. However, the awareness of the problematic divide of Africa has now begun to sustain the dialogue among fields that have remained institutionally distant until recently. When I organized the workshop 'African Studies and the Epistemological Reflections on "Two Africas"' together with Mirjam de Bruijn at Leiden University in 2013,[102] the ASC was represented by Ton Dietz. As organizers of the workshop, Mirjam and I were happy to hear that Ton warmly agreed upon a scientific policy going beyond the north/south divide of Africa.

This article[103] aims at presenting the criticism of divisive conceptions in African studies and the reflections from a field that has a marginal position in both African research and Middle Eastern research: Berber/Amazigh literary

102 Leiden University, 20 September 2013.

103 I would like to thank Valeria Poli for the translation of the article (Merolla 2013) which constituted the basis for the present text.

studies.[104] Amazigh is a language spoken in North Africa in numerous local variants.[105]

Figure 13.1
1439 portolan chart of Gabriel de Vallseca

Critical reflections on 'Two Africas'

Transcontinental movements of people are ancient phenomena in Africa between north and south, east and west, and vice versa. Traders and soldiers,

104 In the past, 'Amazigh' was a term used by activists, while 'Berber' was the academic denomination. Amazigh is currently used officially in the Maghreb and has also been appropriated in studies. The term 'Berber' will be used throughout this article to indicate the historical continuity of the field of study.

105 The number of speakers is between 30% to 40% of the Moroccan population (Rif, Middle and High Atlas, Sous). In Algeria, between 14% to 25% of the population speak local forms of Amazigh (Kabylia, Aurès, Mzab). There are an estimated two million speakers within the Tuaregs who live in a wide Saharan and Sub-Saharan area across Algeria, Libya, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria. In Tunisia, there are small pockets of Berber speakers on the Isle of Djerbaa and in the south (Chenini, Douz, Tozeur), while larger communities live in Libya (an estimated 3% of the Libyan population). The range of estimates indicates that censuses, when taken at all, have not inquired about language use, and any existing sources are old or unreliable. See also Greenberg (1950); Bougchiche (1997); Chaker (2003); Lewis (2009).

slaves and pilgrims, travellers and migrants marched while bringing along goods and knowledge. They established routes that were partly disrupted by colonial borders and have now been reopened in the current acceleration of global migration. As indicated by Winegar and Pieprzak (2009: 8) with reference to the work of artist Ursula Biemann,[106] ancient trans-Saharan routes are now followed by migrants who traverse the desert and arrive in Morocco and Libya searching for work and a new life and often for further passage to the north—that is, to Europe. The contacts between the inhabited zones of the Sahara (oases, steppes, and woodlands) and the Sahel-Saharan regions have been intense as well, as shown by studies on networks and connectivity in southern Morocco, southern Algeria, and in the Tuareg area.[107] The links between Nubia, Egypt, and the Sudan have been similarly re-appreciated in recent studies.[108]

The awareness of cultural continuities of North, West, and East Africa and the function of the desert as a contact zone is not new. The idea that the Sahara could function as a division wall has been criticized by African writers such as the Algerian Kateb Yacine, the Sudanese Tayeb Salih, and the Cameroonian Werewere Liking, who were keen to reflect on intra-African links.[109] Similarly, as indicated by Winegar and Pieprzak (2009), the criticism of conceptual divides has been raised from the world of visual arts, films, and music. Important exhibitions of African arts were held in Bamako, Dakar, Douala, Johannesburg, Fès, and Venice, among other locations. These exhibitions and festivals invited artists, musicians, and film makers from the whole of Africa to participate and enter into dialogue with each other about their work.

In reference to the studies, William Zartman discussed the function of the Sahara as a connecting area instead of as a divisive one in the 1960s.[110] In the same period, Cheikh Anta Diop published *Antériorité des civilisations nègres: mythe ou vérité historique?* Although Diop's work has been criticized from a methodological perspective because of his use of the concepts of 'race' and 'black phenotype', it maintains the undeniable merit of having raised the issue of the racialized division of Africa. Such a division was determined by the ideology of European superiority and by certain self-representations of the North African post-colonial states. Cheik Anta Diop's work reconnects

106 Winegar & Pieprzak (2009: 4, 8).

107 Scheele (2016); Jeppie & Diagne (2008).

108 De Simone (2014).

109 See Kateb Yacine's *Le polygone étoilé*, Tayeb Salih's *Season of migration to the North*, Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Paradise*, and Werewere Liking's *Un Tuareg s'est marié à une Pygmée* in Tissières (2002).

110 Théodore Monod in the 1930s and Fernand Braudel in the 1940s already wrote of the connecting functions of caravans in the Sahara. See Lydon (2015: 3-4).

North Africa to the 'rest' of Africa by criticizing the obliteration of Black Nubian pharaohs from ancient Egyptian civilization. Moreover, relocating the birth of Mediterranean civilizations in Egyptian and Sudanese Africa, he debunks the acquisition of ancient Egypt into the genealogy of European history. His 'Afrocentric' perspective partially converged into the cultural and political movements connected to Pan-Africanism. The latter proposed solidarity between all Africans (and their diasporas) as an instrument to counter the political and ideological hegemony of colonial and post-colonial Europe and the United States. However, the concept of a cultural and historical divide between North Africa and the 'rest' of the continent persisted. For example, the poet and first president of Senegal as well as founder of the Negritude literary movement, Léopold Sédar Senghor, called for African unity across the Sahara but identified Africa and Africanity with being black.[111] The metaphor of 'Black Africa' led to internal differentiation and, in some cases, to a Pan-Africanism limited to Sub-Saharan Africa.

As discussed in the beginning, the notion of Africa as 'Black Africa' has also persisted in academic studies. Such an idea is engrained in the epistemological approach that moulds the separation of the 'two Africas', contributing to the divides among African studies, Middle Eastern studies, and Mediterranean studies in academic institutes and museums. The winds of change have begun to blow in the new century. Socio-historical processes and related disciplinary motivations of the African north/south divide have been criticized in the activities of the Saharan Studies Association since 2007 and in the publications of researchers such as Hélène Tissier (2002), Ghislaine Lydon (2005, 2009, 2015), Jessica Winegar and Katarzyna Pieprzak (2009), Mohamed Hassan Mohamed (2010), Ziad Bentahar (2011), James McDougall and Judith Scheele (2012), Stéphanie Pouessel (2012), and Judith Scheele (2016).

One of the most pungent and methodologically grounded critiques of the 'two Africas' and of the rhetorical figure of 'Black Africa' as 'real Africa' (Scheele 2016) has been offered by the historian Paul Tiyambe Zeleza (2006). As summarized below, Zeleza analysed the separation of Africa into North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa as an idea created on the classification of the peoples and their geographical locations through a stereotyping biological and essentialist approach associated with race theories:

> The conflation of Africa with 'sub-Saharan Africa,' 'Africa South of the Sahara' or 'Black Africa' […] ultimately offers us a racialized view of Africa, Africa as biology, as the 'black' continent. (Zeleza 2006: 15)

111 Senghor saw Africanity and Arabicity as separate identities that should enter into dialogue without merging. See Katchka (2009: 44).

As Zeleza writes (ibid.), the making of the 'two Africas' has occurred through long historical processes; however, it is with slavery in the colonial period that this epistemological construct takes on the form and content still inferred today.

The great partition, the so-called Scramble for Africa, carried out after the Berlin Conference in 1884-85, paved the way for the enormous colonial domains created under the rule of France, stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Guinea,[112] and of Britain, stretching almost uninterrupted from Egypt to South Africa. The colonial territorial extension, however, did not signify a unifying approach to Africa. The British colonization 'orientalized' Egypt, separating it from Africa and integrating it into a 'Near Orient' (currently referred to as the Middle East) consisting of British dominions that, in different forms, extended from Egypt to former Persia (present-day Iran). Similarly, the French colonization 'orientalized' Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia in competition with the British Near East and separated them from 'Black Africa'.[113] Conversely, the connections between the north and south regions of the Sahara were established exclusively through the mediation of French colonialism and its 'Francophone' world, which will also affect contemporary research as will be discussed below.

The concomitant construction of Africa and the 'Orient' as objects of knowledge and dominion has involved an entire host of epistemological effects. According to Zeleza (2006: 15), a first effect in African studies is the 'biologization' (and racialization) of Africa due to 'blackness', which involves the assumption that cultural continuity and homogeneity characterize Sub-Sa-

112 French colonial policy tended to expand from Western Africa to the east of the continent, which, nevertheless, failed to materialize mainly due to the concomitant English expansion. From a linguistic perspective, the Congo under Belgian rule is included in the French-speaking area.

113 According to Edward Said (1979), the 'Orientalist' construction was accomplished through a series of clichés and oppositions which can be traced in travel narratives, novels, and paintings, as well as in scientific discourse. It is defined by Said (ibid. 233) as a variety of social Darwinism, according to which 'the modern Orientals were degraded remnants of a former greatness; the ancient, or 'classical', civilizations of the Orient were perceivable through the disorders of present decadence but only (a) because a white specialist [...] could do the sifting and reconstructing and (b) because a vocabulary of sweeping generalities (the Semites, the Aryans, the Orientals) referred not to a set of fictions but rather to a whole array of seemingly objective and agreed-upon distinctions'. Later criticism of Said's work has emphasized that Orientalism, nonetheless, holds the merit of having gathered and issued an enormous collection of archaeological, linguistic, literary, and ethnographic data and analyses that not only provide wide-ranging subject matter but also high-profile studies, despite the fact that the reading of such material is complex and arduous due to the interpretation process that constructs its 'object', as Said indicated. For examples in Berber studies, see Merolla (2006: 42-51); Boukous (2001); Bounfour (1994).

haran Africa.[114] It can also be stated that a further effect of this assumption is that Africa is imagined as a 'black world' that is neatly separated from the 'ancient greatness' of the 'Orient'. Accordingly, historical connections between the regions north and south of the Sahara are disregarded.

Denied connections include historical and cultural continuities as well as the massive trade that had connected northern Africa with western Africa (Mali and Niger, in particular) and with eastern Africa (Sudan and Tanzania). This 'erasure' is largely due to the omission of what Zeleza (ibid. 17) calls the 'Islamic Library', that is, the knowledge accrued through both intellectual and economic exchanges that thrived around the immense centres of Islamic culture in the Sub-Saharan area of current Mali and Niger. There is a further point to be considered according to Zeleza: the African belonging in both Christianity and Islam, which are customarily presented as foreign and antagonistic to local religions, whereas history shows that 'Christianity and Islam were implanted in certain parts of Africa almost at their inceptions and Africans made significant doctrinal contributions to both religions' (ibid. 20). Another important effect of the biologization of Africa is the erasure of its past history, which particularly concerns the Berber-/Amazigh-speaking populations:

> the characterization of North Africa as exclusively Arab erases the history of the peoples and cultures that existed in the region long before the coming of the Arabs and Islam and the subsequent creation of complex creolized cultures. (ibid. 16).

For instance, the scholar Martin Bernal conceived a 'Black Athena'—following somehow in the footsteps of Cheikh Anta Diop—to advance the critique of the oblivion of the African role in the rise of the ancient civilizations that thrived around the Mediterranean Sea.[115] Such a definition, however, once again identifies the role played by the African component in Greek culture by reducing it to the 'black' adjective. This has subsequently provided a reason to the Berber studies scholar Vermondo Brugnatelli to record an 'epistemological void' in North Africa[116] because colour appears crucial to the definition of Africa and leaves no opportunity to other components, particularly the Berber one, which is local, Mediterranean, and African all at the same time.

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114 'Unless culture is coded in skin colour, the homogeneity or heterogeneity of cultural practices in Africa […] should not be assumed a priori […]; the Hausa of West Africa had more in common with their neighbours to the North than with the Zulu of South Africa' (Zeleza 2006: 16).

115 See also van Binsbergen (1996-97).

116 Brugnatelli (2009-2010: 1-6).

The critique of the separation between a north and a south in Africa offers a perspective through which also the relationships between African studies and Berber studies can be reviewed. The following sections of this article attempt to track down some elements of the connections and disjunctions of these fields of study today as far as literary studies are concerned.

Figure 13.2
Part of the 1375 Catalan Atlas by Abraham Cresques

African and Berber literary studies

From the perspective of African literary studies, we should consider the pivotal work of Denise Paulme in the 1970s, which included African examples and North African tales (Kabyle Berber), and of a few scholars who specialized in Saharan studies (Calame-Griaule 1977, 1982, 2002; Bernus & Calame-Griaule 1981).[117] By and large, however, research primarily developed on separate or parallel tracks (see the bibliography published by Görög-Karady 1992). Ziad Bentahar (2011) shows that the interpretative model based on the 'two Africas' has been strengthened by a set of international political factors and edi-

117 In the field of African history, see the works of Paulo Fernando de Moraes Farias on Saharan connections (de Moraes Farias 1967, 1974, 1999, 2006, 2008).

torial policies linked to the legacy of the division between 'Francophone' and 'Anglophone' studies. For the English-speaking world, the separation of the studies between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa roughly corresponded to the attention given to the new African literature published in English, while North African literature remains the domain of what is written in Arabic or French. In the case of French studies, the situation is more complex. A tendency to overcome the north/south divide is found in literary studies that include Francophone authors from North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa (Bentahar 2011: 8). This can be linked to the fact that, as previously mentioned, the north/south division of Africa as well as its reunification under the label of French rule and 'Francophone world' was an essential component of the colonial policy. Bentahar writes that the north/south divide continues to permeate French African studies because the latter do not recognize Arabic as an 'African' language. If the non-African origin of Arabic motivates this exclusion, it denies the appropriation and 'Africanization' of Arabic over the centuries and in the immense geographic area stretching from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean beyond the Middle East (ibid. 9). This approach can be traced back to the desire to create an autonomous disciplinary field for African studies and to the long process of construction of European identity in opposition to the Arab-Islamic world that, during the colonial period, was combined with the downplaying of the Arab cultural impact in Africa. It should be added that the tendencies retraced by Bentahar, combined with the negation or marginalization of the connectivity between Sub-Saharan Africa and northern Africa, have involved the continuous emphasis of the cultural and religious links of North Africa and the Middle East and the exacerbation of the opposition as well as of the union of Arab and Berber speakers and of their languages and literatures.[118]

In the century-long French colonization of Africa, Berbers have come to occupy a particularly ambiguous position.[119] Following the indications provided by Hélène Claudot-Hawad and Paul Pandolfi,[120] it can be ascertained that an ensemble of studies and literary texts have contributed to creating the 'myth' of the Tuaregs of the Sahara as a population different and opposed to the black inhabitants of the Sub-Saharan oases.[121] The Tuaregs were considered as the noble 'whites' ruling over the 'black' vassals of the oases. The

118 Lydon (2015: 13).

119 See the studies by Ageron (1972); Lacoste-Dujardin (1984); Lucas & Vatin (1975).

120 Claudot-Hawad (1990, 1993); Pandolfi (2001). See also: Camel (1996); Henry (1996); Vallet (1990).

121 Pandolfi (2001) mentions researchers such as Duveyrier (1864), Stefanini (1926), Gautier (1935), and writers such as Georges de Labruyère, Pierre Benoit, and Jules Verne (see *L'invasion de la mer* 1903). See also Foucauld (1888: 88, 140, 264) and Lhote (1955).

French representation of a 'White Africa' that was separated and opposed to the 'Black Africa' south of the Sahara supported the establishment of settlement colonies in North Africa both politically and ideologically.[122] These representations have recently re-emerged in newspapers and magazines because of the uprising of the Tuaregs in northern Mali in January 2012 and the ephemeral creation of Azawad, an independent state not recognized by the international community.[123]

It is important to clarify that the French 'myth' of the Tuaregs reconstructed the sociological division between pastoralists and sedentary farmers, according to a division of 'colour' that denied forms of alliance and collaboration that existed among different language groups. Again, an effect is that, in such a representation, the Sahara became an area of separation, and not the area of trade and communication interchange that it had always been, between a barbarian but heroic (or 'anarchic and unreliable' in negative portrayals) north and a 'black' and more 'primitive' south, along the lines of the social Darwinism prevalent until the first decades of the 20th century. In the literary field, an example of these colonial models and their latent persistence can be found in the interpretations of the literary forms that epitomize love, whereby *romantic* love is a prerogative of European narratives, *sensual* love is associated with Arabic-Berber tales, and *functional* (social-reproduction) love is associated with tales from 'Black Africa.'[124]

It should be remembered that the Tuaregs were also opposed to the Arabs, following the dictates of a *divide and rule* policy in which the Berbers were represented as either more or less 'developed' than the Arabs or, in any case, as being less Islamized than Arab populations, which made establishing a division line possible. The colonial discourse toward Berbers was indeed ambivalent. On the one hand, Berbers were imagined as the Roman civilization's heirs, who only aspired to be reintegrated into Western civilization

122 Lydon (2015: 9-11).

123 On Azawad, see Zounmenou (2013); Lecoq (2010, 2015).

124 Finck (1899: 116): '[Romantic love] is a modern sentiment less than a thousand years old and not to be found among savages, barbarians, or Orientals. To them, [...] it is inconceivable that a woman should serve any other than sensual and utilitarian purposes.' Alta (1961: 131-132): 'The closest approach to this [European tales of romance] are the historic tales of the Hausa and Fulbe, which do depict the bravery of the dashing hero [...] but scarcely [his mistress's] purity or loyalty […] There is sufficient evidence even in the stories to show that tenderness and affection do exist between a man and a woman. However, the deeper and more enduring relationships are shown to be those between a parent and child or between siblings.' The influence of such a division was perceptible in later texts of well-known scholars; see for example in Calame-Griaule (2002: 34-35): 'Dans la littérature traditionnelle d'Afrique noire, il est rarement fait allusion aux sentiments individuels […] Par contre, [quand] l'influence méditerranéenne et même orientale est évidente, les sentiments sont exprimés clairement.' Romantic/passionate love is expressed in poetic genres in several African languages (Okpewho 1992: 143-146).

by French colonization (see Masqueray 1885: 261-265; Frémeaux 1984: 29-46).[125] On the other hand, Berber societies were stigmatized as being more retrograde than the Arab ones.[126] The stigmatization of Berbers gained political credibility after the insurrection of Kabylia (North Algeria) in 1870 but could not erase the first attitude toward Berbers as '*bons sauvages*'. The differences of approach, however, were not substantial; both attitudes were instrumental to the construction of French Algeria. One attitude planned on dividing Arabs and Berbers by prospecting the possibility of assimilating the latter within 'White Africa',[127] while the other attitude intended to oppose Berbers and Arabs without fancying the assimilation of the Berbers (Hanoteau 1867; Basset 1920; see Lucas & Vatin 1975).

Whereas the negation of connectivity prompted the French divisive colonial politics of 'Arabs', 'Berbers' and 'Blacks', post-colonial nationalist policies emphasized the associations between North Africa and the Middle East and negated the requests for cultural recognition of Berber activists. In the 20th century post-colonial approach, the unifying hyphen in the definition '*arabo-berbère*' became an unavoidable requirement in African, (Maghrebian) Arab, and Berber studies, signalling both their anticolonial discourse and their disregard for the affilations with the 'south' and the local ('African') component of the creolization of the Maghreb.[128]

Moving to Berber studies, it can be noted that most of the research has looked to the 'east' and 'north', somehow disregarding the possible connections to the 'south'. When the bibliography of Berber research published by Bougchiche (1997) is studied, it can be determined that in-depth comparisons with African literatures is only sporadically undertaken in the field of Tuareg research and is based on literary genres from Mali and Niger.[129] This

125 Anthropological differentiation between Arabs and Berbers was initially constructed around elements such as the blonde hair and blue eyes of the Kabyles (for example, see Masqueray 1882: 333). Sociological elements of differentiation were seen in their democratic village organization and in their women's condition. Kabyle Berber women were appreciated since they worked in the gardens outside the houses and did not wear a veil. These practices would demonstrate that Berber women enjoyed a higher status than Arab women (Sabatier 1883; Masqueray 1886, 1914). See the discussion on the representation of Berber women in Lacoste-Dujardin (1984).

126 Also in this case, a major example was found in the Kabyle Berber woman's condition, one that was presented as particularly backwards since women were disinherited and they could be married off before puberty and 'sold' to their husbands, according to Hanoteau (1867); Coulon (1930).

127 On the 'Kabyle myth', see Ageron (1972: 267-292) and Lydon (2015: 9-11). Criticism of the presumed philo- Berber cultural policy of France is discussed in Chaker (1989: 83-91).

128 Merolla (2006: 54).

129 See the already mentioned studies by Calame-Griaule. In Berber linguistics, see for example Tilmatine (1996).

is linked to the current consequences of the historical context of the studies and of the north/south 'great division' discussed above. It should be considered that Berber studies remained a domain largely investigated by French researchers until the 1950s.[130] Even after independence, research published in French played a central role in the field of Berber studies. A process of internationalization and 'maghrebization' of the studies (Chaker 1998) is perceptible after the year 2000, when the effects of the new national policies in Algeria and Morocco (and currently in Tunisia and Libya as well) began to appear after the establishment of institutes committed to the study of the Amazigh and the opening of Amazigh courses of studies.[131] This process of internationalization and maghrebization, however, has not yet led to a new interest in the comparison of African studies.

A specific case that I have investigated (Merolla 2013, 2014) is that of the Berber studies in Italy which have developed somewhat differently from international research. African, Arab, and Berber studies in Italy have been conducted under the aegis of 'Afro-Asian' studies and unifying academic institutions. Such institutional and ideological connections were established in the early colonial period and later under fascism when a school of 'Orientalists' (see Baldinetti 1997; Soravia 2004) included research on North and Sub-Saharan languages alike, which reflected the Italian colonial interests and the invasion of Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Libya.[132] It is thus not surprising that, in such a framework, African and Berber studies appeared in the same journals and conferences. The long-term influence of such constructions is perceptible in the post-colonial time as well. Although there is no 'ontological' separation between north and south of the Sahara in Italian studies,

130 As indicated by Chaker (1982: 83): 'The research remains, until independence, almost a French monopoly [...] Apart from the work of Italian and Spanish researchers on the Berber varieties spoken in the areas under Spanish or Italian domination (Libya, Rif, Ifni), almost the entire production of this period is written in French and a good part of it is edited in Algiers.' [my translation].

131 In Algeria, the HCA (Haut Commissariat à l'Amazighité) was instituted in 1995. In 2002, the Amazigh language was recognized as a 'national language' and, in 2016, as a 'national and official language'. In Morocco, the pilot project of alphabetization in Amazigh has been launched by the Moroccan Royal Institute for Amazighity, and the Amazigh language gained official status in the new Moroccan constitution of 2011. Nevertheless, Amazigh is not yet fully integrated into mass education, and contradictory policies affect government recognition of multilingualism. Recent demonstrations in the Moroccan Rif in favour of economic, democratic, and language rights have been met by military force.

132 However, the differentiation between North Africa and the 'rest' of Africa along the lines of the Cultural Evolution theory is also found in Italian studies. In the context of the Italian pro-Arab policy (in opposition to the British influence in the area), the African world—once again, 'Black Africa'—was considered inferior to Islam, which, in contrast, had to be politically and culturally supported. See, for instance, Beguinot (1936).

the strength of colonial constructs can be still evidenced; the concomitant presence of articles on North and Sub-Saharan Africa has neither required nor involved any need to establish a connection between the two areas that are drawn together without a real dialogue as historical and cultural exchanges are not usually envisaged (Merolla 2013: 77, 81).

The tendency to work together but on parallel tracks can also be found in the publications that have begun to overcome the north/south 'great division' within academic institutions and research (Baumgardt & Bounfour 2000, 2004; Lafkioui & Brugnatelli 2008; Lafkioui & Merolla 2008; De Féral et al. 2014). However, an approach that analyses the relationships between the north and the south of the Sahara in their local contexts and details not only has its own epistemological validity; it also discloses new research paths on the multiple realities of contemporary Africa (which, in my view, includes North Africa), such as in the case of the pioneering work of Paulme (1976). Such an evolving situation is shown, for example, by the comparison between Berber studies and (other) African studies in Merolla (2005, 2013), Kossmann (2010), Lafkioui (2013), and Souag (2013, 2015).

Figure 13.3
Sahara, route from Ouargla to Ghardaia, Algeria (Photo Daniela Merolla)

Perceptions and constructions of 'Africans' and 'Berbers'

A final point is that the colonial divide of 'two Africas' does not imply that such a construct is a conjecture with no factual basis or utterly imposed from the outside. There is also correspondence—and a reuse for local purposes—with internal perceptions and constructs, which has subsequently re-processed colonial imagination. The French 'orientalization' of the Maghreb has built up from and integrated the historical domination by Turkish regencies along the coast of present-day Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia since the 16th century. As to the ideas about 'white' and 'black' Africa in Muslim writings, Lydon (2015: 5-8) provides an impressive overview including the works of famous authors such as Ibn Khaldun and Leo Africanus (al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi). She convincingly writes that 'the self-identification of North Africans and Middle Easterners as "white" clearly has a long history' (Lydon 2015: 8). This history intertwines with the continuous demand for slaves from eastern Muslim regions, which created slaving practices in North Africa involving the Arab conquerors as well as the local Berber populations, the latter being massively enslaved until the 8th century when several Berber confederations became enslavers (Savage 1992). Pouessel (2012: 77) remarks that, in the Maghreb, subordination is marked as 'black' and (citing Valensi 1986) that a person is perceived as black when he/she is subordinate; thus blackness is socially ascribed.

The correspondence of internal and external constructs similarly applies to the constitution of post-colonial North African states as Arab (and Muslim), which has not only entailed the erasure of the Berber component but also, until recently, the oblivion of historical connections between Morocco, the Timbuktu area, and present-day Mali, as well as the enduring marginalization of the Nubian influence from Egyptian civilization and culture. Conversely, contemporary Berber artists' decisions to connect to Africa as an identity referent is associated with their quest for autonomy and their will to overcome the marginalization they have experienced in North African states.[133]

> In the Maghreb, the term 'Africanity' is akin to the valorization of an identity that is alternative to proposed or imposed cultural identities, [it is] a movement of disconnection from Arabism and sometimes from Islam, by stressing the belonging to 'Africa'. (Pouessel 2012: 14) [my translation]

133 Cynthia Beker (2009: 72): 'Amazigh painters […] use colonial memory but use it as the basis of a transnational movement that allows activists to confront the pan-Arab Islamic nationalism propagated by their governments and to create a counter-narrative that promotes their Amazigh identity and their connection to the African continent.'

The discourse on 'Black Africa' must similarly take into account the various contestations and movements arising in Africa, in the diasporas, and in the United States, in particular, which have reused the metaphor of 'Black Africa' for their own strategies and purposes—as in the case of the Negritude artistic movement (France/Senegal), the political movement named 'Black Consciousness' (South Africa), and the 'Black is beautiful' cultural and artistic movement (United States). Such movements have played an enormous role in redeeming and celebrating 'blackness' in opposition to the connotations labelled upon it by racist and colonial approaches. It is, however, equally necessary to acknowledge that these movements have likewise emphasized the unity of Africans by defining and 'essentializing' their identity in terms of colour.[134]

Differences in historical processes are reflected in the self-perception and identity of various African people; consequently, North Africa can be differentiated and identified as a specific socio-cultural area in academic studies. However, a fundamental concern is inevitably raised when the differentiation becomes radical and metaphysical and based on distinctions in colour and cultural terms that are carried to extremes, absolutized, and reputed to be innate—thus ahistorical—and when, at the same time, continuities and exchanges among the various African linguistic, artistic, and social components are marginalized.[135]

Conclusions

In the way that research on the 'two Africas' developed, we recognize socio-historical processes that emphasized the unity of Africans by defining and 'essentializing' their identity in terms of colour. Building from recent critical works, we have seen that it is fruitful to investigate specific cases of the north/south division of African studies and to reflect on the specific conditions of such links and on the eventual new dialogues that have been recently established. Berber/Amazigh studies offer a valuable case for reflecting on the 'divided' construction of the field of research regarding the separation between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. Although Berber

134 Without going into the debate on Pan-Africanism, Afrocentrism, Black Nationalism, and the 'Black Atlantic' in texts of authors such as Keti Molefi Asante, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Manthia Diawara, and Paul Gilroy, the search for political unity and a common heritage resulted in building 'an idea of Africa' that critics define as fictitious, while its supporters define it as a form of 'strategic essentialism'. See Ronald (1993).

135 See the critical concerns expressed at the conference 'North Africa and the Pan-African Movement: Retrospect and Prospect' (North Africa Region), 27-28 September 2003, Cairo, Egypt, organized by CODESRIA (Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa).

studies have tended to look to the east and to deny the south, recent publications have started to include forms of comparison with African languages, literary themes, media, and social processes.

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14

Imagining Africa

An uphill struggle

Harrie Leyten

For almost two centuries, museums of ethnography have enjoyed a prominent place in Europe's cultural landscape. Throughout this period, they have had a reputation for presenting peoples living in remote parts of the world to the home crowds. The museums pride themselves on their displays of curious objects and religious practices, so different from what their visitors were used to. But how truthful were these displays? How objective, or—may we say—how biased were their images of Africa? Creating images of Africa was indeed their main goal, but a critical evaluation of their methods of display is warranted.

The nineteenth century

In the 19th century, when the differentiation in academic disciplines took place, many universities in Europe established museums of ethnography for research purposes, but the anthropologists attached to these museums did not go to Africa for fieldwork (they have been nicknamed 'armchair anthropologists'). On the contrary, they collected the required materials (reports, stories, objects) from missionaries, merchants, and others who returned from Africa. The Ethnological Society of London (predecessor of the Anthropological Society), established in the 1840s, issued a list of questions on tribal customs to travellers and officials so they could contribute to the systematic study of mankind (Lienhardt 1969: 5). The main objective of museums was not to present a factual image of Africa, but to find data, observations, and arguments which showed that the story of mankind was one of a linear evolution, from primitive to advanced, from uncivilized to civilized. Societies in Africa (and elsewhere) were studied not to understand them better in their own right, but to find arguments to support the theories of evolution. Africans were seen as 'contemporary ancestors', low on the ladder of evolution,

while the anthropologists themselves had reached its top. This was called a theory of social progress. The philosopher G.W.T. Hegel discussed Africans in his lectures in 1830 in this manner:

> The Negro represents natural man in all his wild and untamed nature. If you want to treat and understand him rightly, you must abstract all elements of respect and morality and sensitivity […] there is nothing remotely humanized in the Negro's character […] Nothing confirms his judgement more than the report of the missionaries (Debrunner 1959: 301).

Curators of university museums of ethnography, almost always attached to these universities, collected objects which supported their scholarly interest in evolution. The British Army General Pitt Rivers was intrigued by the study of linear evolution of forms in weapons with the same function, such as spears and bows and arrows. During his military sojourns overseas, he collected thousands of weapons to prove his point of view. At the opening of his exhibition in London in 1874, he spoke of the principle of 'sequence': 'the succession of ideas by which the minds of men in a primitive condition of culture have progressed from the simple to the complex' (Chapman 1991: 2) In 1883 he donated his collection to the university of Oxford, which made it into a museum, bearing his name.

University museums in the 19th century with a focus on Africa appear to have been satisfied with the information about African cultures, religious rites, and objects that reached them through the accounts of travellers, merchants, soldiers, and others with experience in Africa. They contributed little to a better understanding of African cultures and indigenous African religions, which were consistently viewed negatively. The images of Africa presented to Europeans in the 19th century spoke of fetishism, animism, idolatry, and lack of civilization (Leyten 2015: 82).

The colonial period

Between 1885 (the Conference of Berlin, where Africa was partitioned between European nations) and the 1920s, the 'scramble for Africa' was materialized. Colonialism was imposed on Africa.

But colonial powers believed (or claimed) that they had a '*mission civilisatrice*'. Even when they used force, they spoke of a process of pacification. In order to show to people at home the virtues of colonialism, they established museums, showing material culture of the 'native population' as well as the good work the government was doing in fields of schooling, health care, and the general well-being of the indigenous people, in the assumption that the

latter would continue to live in desperate circumstances without the European interference. David Livingstone, missionary and discoverer, instructed his assistant on the Zambezi expedition in 1867 as follows:

> We come among them as members of a superior race and servants of a Government that desires to elevate the more degraded portions of the human family. We are adherents of a benign holy religion and may by consistent conduct and wise patient efforts become the harbingers of peace to a hitherto distracted and trodden-down race (Jordan 1968: 25).

When the submission of African 'tribes' was not immediately successful, and the 'tribes' continued to resist the 'rule of law', the authorities appointed anthropologists to study the natives and report back to the authorities so that appropriate action could be undertaken. This move was welcomed by anthropologists, who—unlike their predecessors—were taking a genuine interest in the 'other'. Following initiatives by Malinowski, who had done fieldwork among the Tobriand Islanders, they were happy to accept requests from colonial authorities, as the latter provided funds to support fieldwork.

Evans-Pritchard—the British anthropologist who later established the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford—became a government anthropologist among the Nuer of South Sudan in the 1930s. He worked among them for a year under difficult circumstances, as the Nuer, who were feared for their belligerent nature, distrusted him and opposed every form of interference by foreigners. Yet, he came to the conclusion:

> The Nuer are undoubtedly a primitive people by the usual standards of reckoning, but their religious thought is remarkably sensitive, refined and intelligent. It is also highly complex (Evans-Pritchard 1956: 311).

Evans-Pritchard was among the first generation of anthropologists who developed an image of an African society which differed altogether from that of the 19th century and set a standard for future work. Many anthropologists were interested in the way African societies and communities organized themselves and how the different responsibilities within the community, such as the relationship between the sexes, the relationship between man and the spiritual world and the ancestors, the use of power and authority, were taken care of. This approach was called functionalism.

Museums of ethnography acquired most of their collections by purchase or gifts from merchants, soldiers, missionaries, ethnographers, and others who returned home from a stay in Africa. This manner of obtaining collections was haphazard and depended on the personal taste of the collectors. It

resulted in incomplete museum collections without their original religious or social context or significance. For instance, when Europeans who had witnessed a masquerade tried to purchase the masks, they were rarely interested in the costumes, made of leaves or raffia; they were considered unattractive, most likely infested with bugs, and expected to fall apart or rot away. It is only now that researchers come to the conclusion that the entire entity (facial cover as well as costume) constitutes the 'mask' and that in many cases the costume is considered by the community to be more important (van Beek & Leyten, in press).

A major handicap for museums are objects which have been decontextualized, which means they had been removed from their original shrines, palaces, family homes, and the events in which they featured. They have been taken out of their context and consequently have lost their meaning, which they derived precisely from this context. For instance, the context of an *nkisi* figure in a Yombe ritual context in Congo involves the setting, the *nganga* (priest of the shrine), songs, dances, behavioural restrictions, special enclosures and prepared spaces, and the prescribed rituals. The efficacy of the *nkisi* (healing a sick person, solving a feud between factions or villages) works during ritual, and ritual, in turn, works only if all the conditions are fulfilled (MacGaffey 1993: 50). It is hard to believe that museums of ethnography are able to persuade their visitors that a solitary *nkisi* figure represents the original context.

Certain collections in European museums of ethnography have been acquired through auctions after they had been looted during military operations. An example are the world-famous bronzes from the Kingdom of Benin in Nigeria, now in museums in London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Leiden, and others. They were looted during a British Punitive Expedition in 1899. The royal palace had been burned, the Oba (king) of Benin sent into exile. No one took the trouble of enquiring about the hundreds of bronze plaques that adorned the palace walls: their meaning, their age, their context. In 1906, when the German discoverer Leo Frobenius visited the Nigerian city of Ile Ife (where, according to the Yoruba, God created the world), he saw the bronze heads and figures in the palace. He was most impressed by their beauty and the skills with which they had been made. However, he could not accept that these objects had been cast by Africans, but instead assumed that they had been produced by the descendants of ancient Greek artists:

> I was moved to silent melancholy at the thought that this assembly of degenerate and feebleminded posterity should be the legitimate guardians of so much loveliness.[136]

136 Wole Soyinka, quoting Frobenius in his Nobel Lecture, 8 December 1986.

With the large numbers of objects arriving in museums of ethnography during the first half of the 20th century, curators were unable to display all of them. The selection of objects to be displayed in the galleries was arbitrary. Moreover, the information which was available for many of the objects was scant. This resulted in equally scant, incomplete captions, such as 'Ancestor figure, Baule, Ivory Coast' (Susan Vogel found evidence that the Baule never make effigies of ancestors), 'Mother and child figure, Luba, Congo' (describing what every visitor could see, but not indicating what the Luba said it meant).

Many a museum of ethnography during this period contributed little to a better understanding of African cultures and failed to correct the negative images which still stuck to everything African.

The 19th century also saw the arrival in Africa of European missionaries of many different churches, eager to convert the 'poor pagans' to Christianity. Convinced of their superiority, not only as members of the white race (the influence of evolutionary thinking) but also as messengers of the good tidings of the Bible and of the mandate 'to go and teach and baptize all nations', they were determined to draw Africans away from their superstitious beliefs and practices into the Christian churches.

> … any religion (*a fortiori* Christianity) that lays claim to the Truth and Universality is necessarily committed to expansion and propaganda. It is impossible for this religion to view other religions as anything else than a sad aberration. It must feel the urge and the duty to replace these religions. Christianity cannot view itself as one religion on a par with so many other religions, but as the only one intended by God (Groot Seminarie Hoeven 1924: 8).

A number of missionaries are known to have taken an interest in African culture and religions. Father Bittremieux among the Yombe (Congo), Father Knops among the Senufo (Ivory Coast), and Father Brouwer among the Ewe (Ghana) are some of them (Leyten 2015). Yet, these missionaries remained loyal to their professional mandate. They appropriated rituals, religious practices, and objects which they encountered among Africans instead of accepting the fact that (for Africans) they had a deep spiritual meaning. Missionaries attributed an opposite meaning to them by portraying them as instruments of the devil.

An example. The Ibo live in south-eastern Nigeria and were an acephalous society in pre-colonial times. When British armies conquered the area and learned that the Ibo had no kings, warrant kings were installed. This caused confusion among the Ibo. Missionaries discovered that the Ibo (in line with

them being acephalous) had no supreme God. When missionaries learned that the Ibo had a notion which they called *chi* and which (they believed) permeated the entire world (every human being has his/her *chi; chi* constitutes interdependence between human beings, ancestors, age-mates, and married people), the missionaries appropriated the Ibo concept of *chi* and equated it with the Christian concept God. The next step was to assume that the Ibo acknowledged the existence of a pantheon in which the many 'small gods' could find a niche. Another central notion in Ibo religion and culture is the concept of *ike,* which can be translated by 'power', or 'something that gives a person the power to achieve something in life, such as success, money, or a career'. When an Ibo achieves something in life, he attributes it to his *chi.* He will objectify his achievement in a statue, named *ikenga,* in which the figure of a male adult can be seen, seated as a token of his authority and carrying the emblems of his power (in former days, a cutlass or machete in the right hand and the severed head of an opponent in the left). After this *ikenga* had been ritually placed in the owner's shrine, it was believed that the figure would empower the man again and again. Missionaries were quick to call this figure a 'god of war and fortune', the name which has been commonly used in much of the Ibo literature since the beginning of the 20th century (Leyten 2015: 172-176). Rev. G.T. Basden was a British missionary of the Church of England who worked among the Ibo for some 35 years. In the preface of his first book (Basden 1921: 14), he wrote:

> The black man himself does not know his own mind. He does the most extraordinary things and cannot explain why he does them. He is not controlled by logic; he is the victim of circumstance, and his policy is largely one of drift.

An Anglican missionary, Basden grew up in Victorian England and could not envisage a people without central authority, not only in politics but also in religious matters. He could not envisage a people without a Creator-God. He could therefore write uncritically:

> There is a distinct recognition [among the Ibo] of a Supreme Being—beneficent in character—who is above every other spirit, good or evil.

Basden—and with him most other anthropologists who studied Ibo culture—misunderstood the notion of *chi* and the concept of *Chuku* (i.e. *Chi uku,* lit. the great *Chi*), which the Ibo themselves used to describe that all-pervading power in the universe, and translated it as 'Supreme God' and 'Creator-God'.

> It is implicit in the logical structure of these terms that chi-ukwu, or chuku, is a sub-category of chi rather than the more general class within which chi may be categorized (Henderson 1972: 107-108).

In order to gather financial and non-material support for their *mission work* (building churches and schools, training and upkeep of hundreds and hundreds of missionaries) missionary congregations in some European countries organized missionary weeks in Catholic towns and villages, with sermons by missionaries in church services, visits to schools to recruit boys to become missionaries, and missionary exhibitions in church halls, where experienced missionaries told about their work, surrounded by objects from daily life, and statues and masks from 'pagan' religions (see Figure 14.1).

Figure 14.1
Father Leo Brouwer SMA addressing visitors to a missionary exhibition around 1950. He holds an Ibo *ikenga* figure. The photograph on the left is by Father Knops and shows a Senufo '*feticheur*'.

Missionary exhibitions were in many respects like exhibitions in other museums of ethnography. Generally speaking, the same categories of objects were on display. They differed, however, in their motives for collecting objects and particularly in their presentation. They had, generally speaking, no university-trained curators but appointed one or more missionaries who had shown a special interest in African religious practices and had a lively manner of story-telling. Their motives for collecting and displaying were twofold: first, the objects served to show the (mostly Catholic) visitors how 'pagan', 'su-

perstitious', and 'idolatrous' the people were among whom the missionaries were working. Secondly, the exhibitions served to illuminate the good work of these missionaries, collect money to support them, and call on young boys to join the missionary congregations. In modern terminology, these activities would be called crowd-funding.

These missionary exhibitions (which were organized well into the 1960s) confirmed rather than criticized the negative images with which Africa had been associated for so long. The efforts to Christianize Africa have been successful in the sense that a majority of Africans call themselves Christian, and that ritual practices and religious beliefs of the past have all but disappeared.

The post-colonial period

The post-colonial period started around 1950 when the first African nations gained political independence.

Anthropologists searched for a new view of their study of African cultures. Instead of focusing on the functioning of societies, they shifted their attention to 'meaning'. Studying culture as an open, active, and dynamic entity meant that symbols and symbolism within a given society were viewed in a dialectic perspective. The new anthropology carried several names: interpretative, semantic, semiotic, hermeneutic, and other names.

Mary Douglas searched for the sense in the apparently irrational beliefs of people. She considered dirt as a symbol, as it involves reflection on the relation between order and disorder, form and formlessness, life and death. Dirt, then, becomes a master symbol or root metaphor (Douglas 1966).

Evans-Pritchard heard the Nuer of Sudan, among whom he conducted his fieldwork, speak repeatedly about *Kwoth.* He sensed that this word would be the key to understanding their religion and their philosophy. He translated the word by Spirit (with a capital letter), distinguishing it from the Christian notion of God. The Nuer could not describe the meaning of *Kwoth,* other than by contrasting it with, among other things, the creation, the world. The concept *Kwoth* is interpreted by the Nuer in many ways and makes Nuer religion both monotheistic and polytheistic. To the Nuer, these interpretations are not incompatible. 'They are rather different ways of thinking of the numinous at different levels of experience' (Evans-Pritchard 1956: 316). When a group of persons are able to make and use symbols—in this sense of the word—it implies that they are able to attach a meaning to something where that meaning did not exist before. Victor Turner showed that symbols mean something, but they also are something: they are real. The Ndembu of Congo, where Turner conducted fieldwork, speak of their symbols as *ku-solala,* a word that does not

mean 'representing', but 'revealing' something or 'making visible' a truth or a power (Turner 1967: 18).

Unlike anthropologists in the 19th and early years of the 20th century, these researchers have contributed greatly to a better understanding of African cultures and religions, not least by distinguishing the 'emic' account (the insiders' view, the native point of view) and the 'etic' account (the outsider's view; in this case, the anthropologist's view). According to this approach, cultural expressions of a people can be understood but never fully; when they are communicated transculturally, this can be done but always with a loss of meaning (van Beek & Blakely 1994: 3).

However, these innovative views on African cultures and religions have scarcely reached the European masses. They have appeared in scholarly books and articles but have been unable to undo existing prejudices among Europeans.

How have museums of ethnography reacted to the fundamental changes which took place in Africa in the post-colonial period? Have they joined the anthropological attempts to develop new methods of presenting Africa? Have their collections played an innovative role in countering existing biases? Let us take a look at the recent developments in the Dutch museums of ethnography. In the 1950s there were 11 of them: some with colonial connections (Delft, Rotterdam, Tropenmuseum), others with missionary roots (Berg en Dal, Cadier en Keer, Tilburg, Steyl-Tegelen), again others linked to universities (Leiden, Breda, Nijmegen, Groningen). Missionary congregations went into severe decline in the 1960s: seminaries closed; missionary exhibitions were discontinued; the number of missionaries dwindled dramatically. The museums at Tilburg and Cadier en Keer shut down. Universities were unable to maintain their museums and closed them down. Museums with colonial roots did not fare better: they had lost their relevance and became redundant; they had become remnants of the past. There was resentment about the use of words such as 'primitive' and 'tribal'. In the 1970s the Rotterdam museum hoped to reverse the tide by liaising with political action groups in the city. The project was not successful. Later, under new management, it decided to go commercial and was about to sell its world-famous Africa collection. The Tropenmuseum tried to re-invent itself and closed itself to the public for five years, after which period it presented itself with an entirely new approach. Its focus was no longer on collections but on the human being in the process of change and development in Africa (and other southern continents). The refurbished Africa gallery paid attention to education, health care, economic development (a replica of a Nigerian market), history, agriculture, and fishing. It was modelled on the ideals of development cooperation (Faber 2011). As the Africa curator, I was determined to fight stereotypes and present a

more positive image of Africa. In 1989 I curated the exhibition 'White on Black', a critical analysis of existing stereotypes of whites on blacks. The poster showed two men (one white, the other black) gazing at each other, while being faced with their caricatures (Figure 14.2).

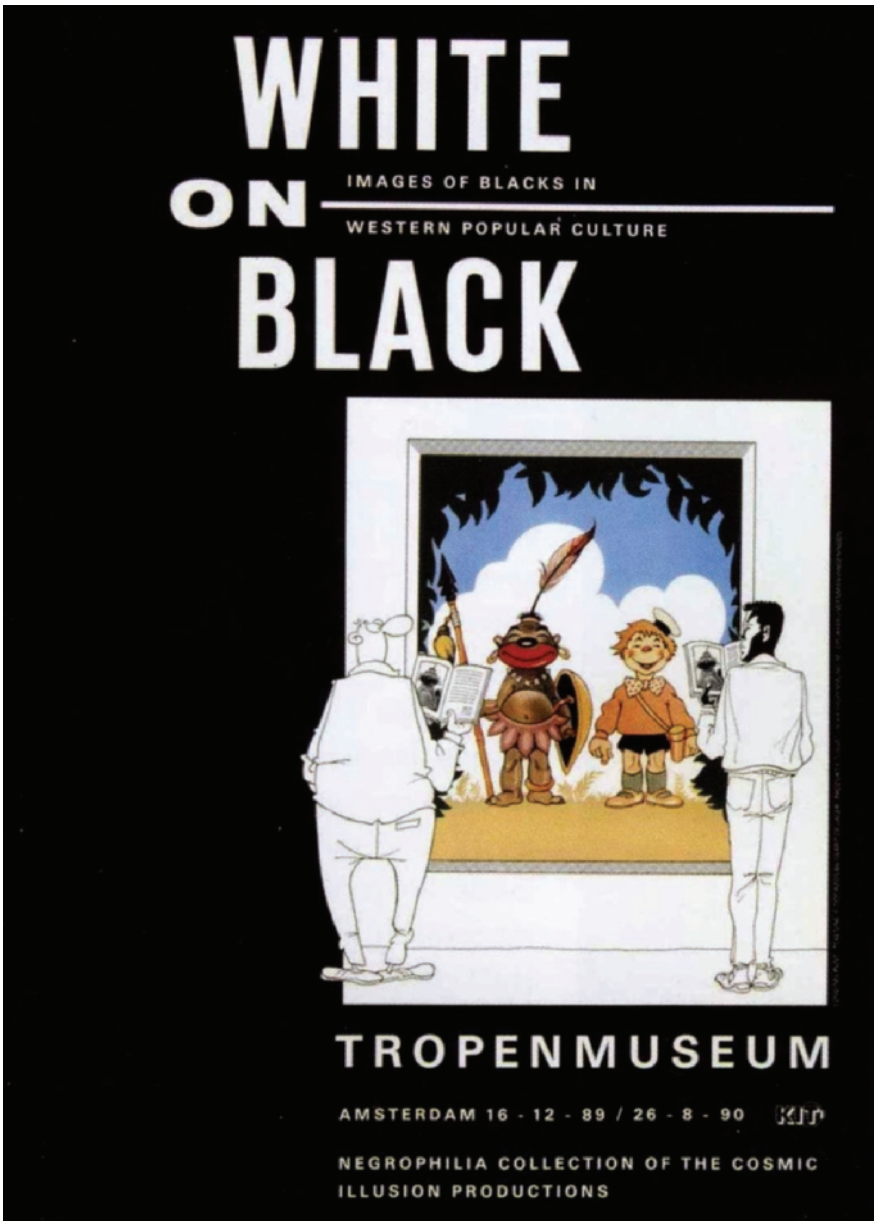

Figure 14.2
Tropenmuseum 'White on Black' exhibition poster

The Tropenmuseum changed its course again in the 1990s, as the economic model was no longer desirable. In the new millennium, three leading museums have fused (the Rotterdam museum will probably join).

Dutch museums of ethnography have not been able to re-invent themselves effectively. They have been unable to find an answer to the changes which took place in Africa at all levels. During this period, the museums have realized that a large number of the African objects in their collections belonged to a culture which does not exist any longer; or, if it does, it exists in a different form. By presenting these objects as representing Africa as it is, the museum gives again an incorrect and, to a certain extent, a biased (call it 'sentimental') image of Africa.

Is there a future for the museums of Africa? One answer has been given by the director of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford: 'Let us begin with a provocation: the ethnographic museum is dead' (Harris & O'Hanlon 2013).

With the impact of ethnographic museums on Dutch public opinion dwindling, the challenge for the African Studies Centre Leiden to promote the cause of Africa is becoming stronger and stronger. Professor Ton Dietz, departing director of the ASC, a renowned scholar of African affairs, has—through his inspiring personality and leadership—also done much to create a more positive image of Africa in this country, which has been an uphill struggle so far.

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15

From roads for form to roads for war
Toward a history of roads in colonial Zambia, 1890-1920

Jan-Bart Gewald

It was more by chance than through design that the territories that would make up the colony of Northern Rhodesia, present-day Zambia, came to be established by an Order-in-Council in 1891.[137] However, in keeping with international law that determined that colonial powers had to 'develop' the territories under their formal control, once established, the colony had to be filled with a modicum of institutional infrastructure.[138] To this end a concerted programme of road-building was initiated in a territory in which wheeled vehicles, let alone motor vehicles, did not exist. Indeed, it would take another ten years before the first motor vehicle passed through the territory, and another 20 years before motor vehicles became fairly common.

In Northern Rhodesia roads came to be built not so much as things that facilitated communication, but as instruments of subjection and control. Thus in Northern Rhodesia the first roads suitable for wheeled traffic were built as a function of enforced taxation. Furthermore, the subsequent roads that led (a) from the railhead at Broken Hill to the German East African border, and (b) from the railhead at Fungurume to the headwaters of the Congo River were built as instruments of war in what was known as the Great War between 1914 and 1918 and were abandoned immediately upon the cessation of hostilities.

137 Andrew Roberts put it very eloquently when he wrote that Northern Rhodesia was: … simply an awkwardly shaped piece of debris resulting from Rhodes's failure to obtain Katanga. The [British South Africa] Company now found itself committed to ruling what amounted to not one but two huge and sprawling territories: one in the west, with communications running south, and the other in the east, with communications running further east, to Nyasaland. Andrew Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1976, p. 175.

138 The so-called principle of 'Effective Occupancy', as determined at the Berlin Conference in 1884.

Figure 15.1
Map of Zambia

Fifty years after the outbreak of World War I, Northern Rhodesia ceased to be a British colony and became the independent Republic of Zambia. From its very inception, Zambia featured prominently in the foreign affairs of the Netherlands, and thousands of Dutch farmers, horticulturalists, extension workers, medical doctors, development workers, experts, and academics visited and worked in the country.[139] Just over ten years after Zambia's independence, three young students from what was at that stage a university

139 A.L. Hoek, *From idealism to realism: A social history of the Dutch in Zambia 1965-2013*, Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2014.

in the midst of a 'Cultural Revolution' were among the many who visited Zambia from the Netherlands.[140] Two of these students, Ton Dietz and Annemieke van Haastrecht, were a couple, who married in the year after their return from Zambia and went on to publish on their experiences in Zambia.[141] Informed by *dependencia* theory and anxious to conduct their work 'in a (somewhat) radical setting', Ton and his colleagues hoped to investigate the impact of large capitalist investments in a rural environment.[142] To this end the intrepid academics travelled to two large-scale industrial projects in the Kafue-Mazabuka area in Zambia, the Kafue Estate and Nakambala Sugar Estate. Between March and August 1975, while the Zambian economy continued its decline, the three conducted their research, and after a jointly written thesis the young academics graduated in February 1976. Although Ton would not return to Zambia as an academic, it was the site of his first real fieldwork, and his interest in the country persisted throughout his academic career, as can be seen in the MA and PhD theses dealing with Zambia which he supervised.[143]

Taxation and the building of roads

The introduction of taxation in some parts of the colony in 1901, and the labour collected in lieu of cash tax payments, enabled administrators of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) to build the first roads in the territory. In the years prior to World War I, BSAC administrators consistently sought to transform Zambia into something that was in keeping with an imagined ideal type. Native and District Commissioners, rather ineffectively, sought to enforce their worldview on all aspects of everyday life in Northern Rhodesia.[144] Under their command they attempted to centralize and amalgamate villages, appoint and dismiss chiefs and headmen, enact and enforce the col-

140 'Ton-Dietz ... who studied at Nijmegen during the years of its cultural revolution (1969-1976)', www.connecting-africa.net/query_1.php?rid=PR1238887 [Accessed 17 February 2017].

141 Scheffer, H.R. (Rudolf), A.J. (Ton) Dietz & J.M.(Annemieke) van Haastrecht (1977). Local effects of two large-scale industrial projects in the Kafue-Mazabuka area in Zambia: The Kafue Estate and Nakambala Sugar Estate. *Nijmeegse Geografische Cahiers* 8. Nijmegen: GPI, KUN, 164 pp. & Dietz, Ton, Annemieke van Haastrecht & Rudolf Scheffer (2008). 'Revisiting peripheral capitalism in Zambia'. In: P. Hebinck, S. Slootweg & L. Smith (eds), *Tales of development. People, power and space*, pp. 61-78. Assen: Van Gorcum.

142 Dietz, van Haastrecht & Scheffer, Revisiting peripheral capitalism in Zambia, p. 61.

143 S. Hardus *China in Africa: Consequences for traditional donor aid. A case study of the possible influence of Chinese economic aid on traditional donor conditionality in Zambia,* MA Thesis, University of Amsterdam 2009 & M. Leenstra, *Beyond the façade: Instrumentalisation of the Zambian health sector*, PhD Thesis, Leiden University 2012.

144 The failure to effect an effective ban of slash-and-burn agriculture (*chitemene*) prior to WWI is a clear case in point.

lection of taxes, prohibit forms of agriculture and hunting, order and regulate the building of roads and paths, and generally convert the economies, societies, landscapes, and ecological environment of Northern Rhodesia into something that was in keeping with their modernizing view of the world. Central to this modernizing endeavour was a system of taxation, which came to be applied throughout the territory.[145]

Although taxation was introduced in some districts of Northern Rhodesia in 1901, the bulk of the population had no cash with which to pay the taxes levied by the BSAC administration.[146] In lieu of cash, people were permitted to pay with their labour power, which the administration put to use in an extensive programme of road-building. The young administrator, Frank Melland, who arrived in the country from Nyasaland via Mozambique in 1901, described the roads being built by 'tax defaulters', as well as the heavy-handed manner in which those unable to pay their taxes were dealt with:

> Prisoners having finished cattle Kraal and other works, started on roads round the Boma [administrative centre]. In the evening we developed a most successful role [sic] of Cookson's photos …, also a snap of 200 taxmen; prisoners being chikoti'd [whipped].[147]

Describing the roads being built by 'taxmen' under the supervision of his fellow administrator, De Jong, Melland noted that 'his 300 men's work is excellent. I really think the best road I've seen since Lorenzo Marques.'[148] Melland was initially stationed in Mpika, and the *Boma's* District Notebook contains detailed descriptions and photographs of the roads built in lieu of tax.[149] The District Notebook (see Figures 15.2 and 15.3) describes the road being built toward the far-off town of Kasama:

> Towards Kasama 23 miles a 6 ft road raised, passes through a good deal of Dambo. 1903 Carried on to the Chambezi but was not raised beyond the section completed in 1902. Except actually in the dambos. A great many bridges

145 For a discussion of similar processes elsewhere, see J. Scott, *Seeing like a state*, New Haven, 1998.

146 Many observers and historians have argued that the BSAC administration introduced taxation precisely because it wanted to ensure the availability of wage labour. F. Macpherson, *Anatomy of a conquest: The British occupation of Zambia, 1884-1924,* Harlow, 1981, pp. 105-147.

147 Rhodes House, Oxford, MSS. Afr. R. 192 (1) Frank H. Melland 1901, Diary from the day of sailing for northern Rhodesia May 15th 1901.

148 Rhodes House, Oxford, MSS. Afr. R. 192 (1) Frank H. Melland 1901, Diary from the day of sailing for northern Rhodesia May 15th 1901.

149 National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), KSD 4/1 Vol. 1, Mpika District Note Book, 1901. Folio 35.

necessary all along the route to the Chambezi. A single span wooden bridge was put over the Manshia. 1904 Road all re-hoed and bridges repaired: Manshia Bridge swept away start rebuilt [sic] Road continued to Lukalashi. 1905 Roads re-hoed and repaired. 1906 Roads re-hoed and repaired.[150]

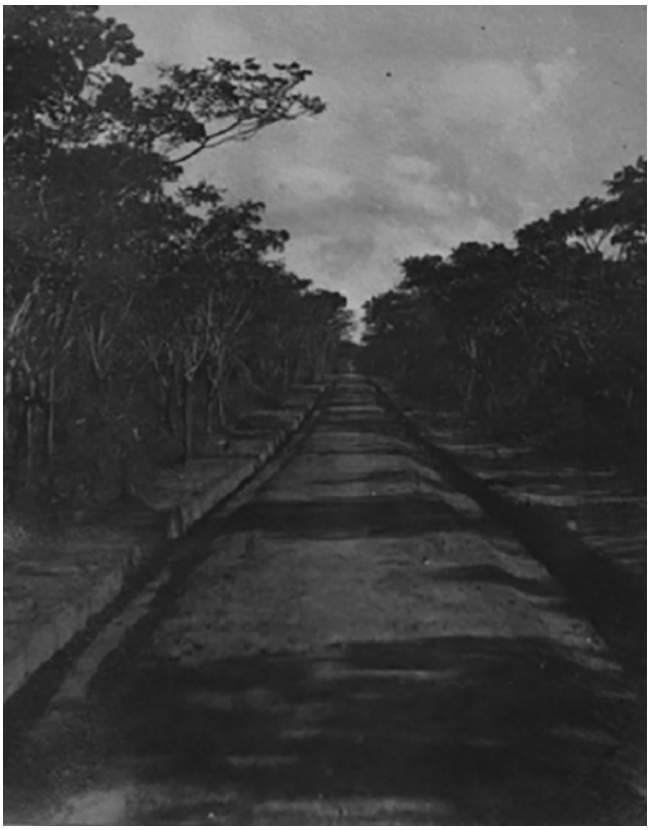
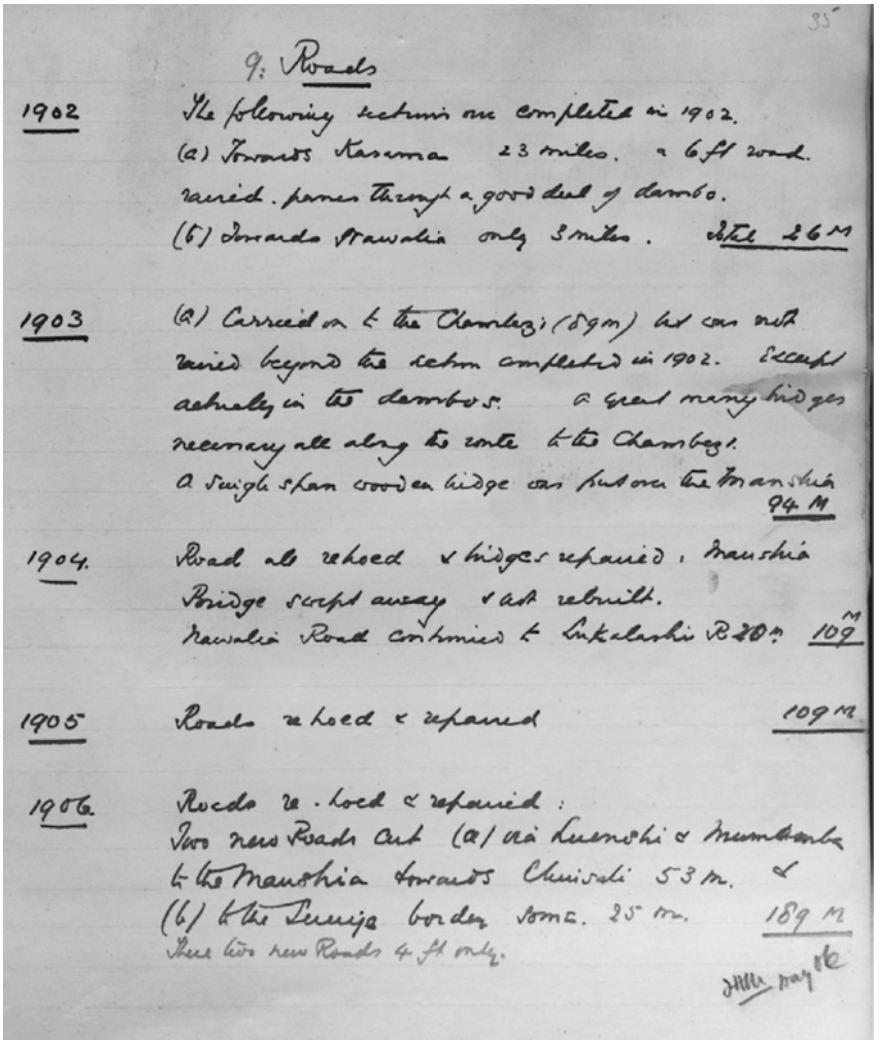


Figure 15.2
Road to Kasama from Mpika 1902[151]

150 KSD 4/1 Vol. 1, Mpika District Note Book, 1901. Folio 35.
151 NAZ, KSD 4/1 Vol. 1, Mpika District Note Book, 1901. Folio 35.



35

9. Roads

1902 The following sections are completed in 1902.
(a) Towards Kasama 23 miles. a 6 ft road.
varied. passes through a good deal of dambo.
(b) Towards Mawalia only 3 miles. Total 26 M

1903 (a) Carried on to the Chambezi (89 m) but was not
varied beyond the section completed in 1902. Except
actually in the dambos. a great many bridges
necessary all along the route to the Chambezi.
a single span wooden bridge was put over the Mansha
94 M

1904. Road also relaid & bridges repaired. Mansha
Bridge swept away & not rebuilt.
Mawalia Road continued to Lukalashi R 20 m. 109 M

1905 Roads relaid & repaired 109 M

1906 Roads re-laid & repaired:
Two new Roads cut (a) via Luenshi & Mumbanda
to the Mansha towards Chinsali 53 m. &
(b) to the Senga border some. 25 m. 189 M
These two new Roads 4 ft only.

Figure 15.3
District Notebook Mpika detailing road-building[152]

Events in Mpika, where tax labour was used for the building of roads, were mirrored in other districts where taxation had been imposed.[153]

The actual quality of the roads established and drawn onto the map of Northern Rhodesia were put to the test in 1908, when the German explorer, Paul Graetz, ventured on an expedition that took him right across Northern Rho-

152 NAZ, KSD 4/1 Vol. 1, Mpika District Note Book, 1901. Folio 35.
153 NAZ, District Notebook Isoka, Vol. 2, p. 263.

desia. In April of 1908, Frank Melland noted in the Mpika Station's District Notebook that the 'automobile expedition Graetz' had passed by the settlement.[154] Paul Graetz, otherwise known as 'Bwana Tucka Tucka', introduced the motor-car to colonial Zambia in 1908, when he became the first person to drive across the African continent in 1907-1909.[155] Graetz's continuing popularity is such that re-runs of his trip with replicas of his vehicle are organized by tour operators, and whole websites are devoted to Graetz and his exploits.[156] Although a reading of his travelogue indicates that Graetz had his fair share of 'traveller experiences', what is omitted from these texts is the simple fact that the expedition would not have been possible without African labour. Graetz's trip from Dar es Salaam in German East Africa through to Swakopmund in German South West Africa was possible only through the extensive use of African labour for road- and bridge-building, as well as the portage of petrol by labourers recruited to prepare the way and establish fuel dumps along Graetz's intended line of travel.[157]

Roads, insofar as they existed in Northern Rhodesia prior to World War I, were at best a haphazard affair. Perfectly graded and stamped down in the immediate vicinity of the administrative Bomas, practically none existed beyond the immediate reach of the incipient administration. At 12 days' walk away from the nearest line of rail, the young official Theodore Williams described the road that led from Kansanshi to the line of rail as

> ... just a broad path through the trees, with the enormous ruts a traction engine makes—no macadamized roads in this country. We had a bike with us, & I'd have used it a good deal in places—but generally let Matthew push it.[158]

Prior to World War I, the BSAC administration simply did not have the means, let alone the capacity, to develop roads in the territory under its control. The events of World War I as it unfolded in Central Africa put an end to that.

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154 NAZ, KSD 4/1 Vol. 1, Mpika District Note Book, 1901. Mpika Station, South Awemba Division, N.E. Rhodesia, District Note Book, Folio 4.

155 Paul Graetz, *Im Auto Quer Durch Afrika,* Berlin, 1910.

156 www.bwana.de/spezialreisen/expeditionen/paul-graetz-tour.html [Accessed 17 February 2017]. Following his trip across the African continent, Graetz went on to make a name for himself in airships operating in the Dutch East Indies.

157 NAZ, KSD 4/1 Vol. 1, Mpika District Note Book, 1901. Entry for April 1908.

158 Rhodes House, Oxford, MSS. Afr. S. 776-781. Williams (Theodore R.) Administrative Officer, Northern Rhodesia: Diaries, 1912-21. 3 vols.; letters home, 1912-24. 3 Volumes. Letters Volume 1: 1912-1914 Letter addressed to Mrs. F.R. Williams, Charlton, Constant Spring P.O. Jamaica, via England, Kansanshi, Friday Jan 17 1913, My dear Father.

World War I: The necessity of roads

> The difficulties were that between the nearest point on the Railway and the northern border, where the Rhodesian Column was concentrated for its advance into German East Africa there were 600 miles of country covered with tsetse fly, in which no domestic animals could live and therefore no sustained ox, horse, mule or donkey transport was possible. Because of this no roads had been made suitable for wheeled traffic and motor traffic was not possible until such roads had been made. We were therefore at first limited to native carrier transport.[159]

The issues of transport and communication in war, and thus the building of roads, became particularly relevant in the context of World War I in Northern Rhodesia. The frontline on the border between the belligerents, Northern Rhodesia and German East Africa, provided enormous logistical difficulties for British forces. No less than 1,000 km from the nearest railhead at Broken Hill, the frontline could only be reached on foot through tsetse fly-infested country, as draft animals could not be used without killing them through infection with trypanosiamiasis. In addition, no roads suitable for wheeled transport had been built. This meant that in the first instance British forces were totally reliant on carriers for their transport needs.

From late 1915 onwards, British forces were commanded by Major-General Sir Edward Northey, whose first and most pressing problems of command related to transport.[160] Northey was informed that 'in this country, except on a few bits of road south of the Frontier, all transport had to be done by Carriers, who consume as much as they carry in one month.'[161] Administrator Wallace, who had sought to ensure the effective supply of goods and materials to the front by carriers, worked out the capacity per distance of carriers:

> The average rate of travel for carriers … is about 15 miles per day. The net load carried is 60 lbs to which has to be added cooking pots blanket etc. Their rations are 2½ lbs of meal per day. A carrier would therefore eat the full

159 National Archives, Kew, NA, CAB 45/14, East Africa Campaign Great War: Accounts of activities on and around the Northern Rhodesia Border. A certain Edwards writing to Major Stack 15/11/34, 'This is a manuscript copy of the substance of a lecture given by the writer Sir Laurence Wallace KCMG who was administrator during the Great War of Northern Rhodesia.'

160 For further information on Northey, see G.W. Hatchell, O.B.E., 'The British occupation of the south-western area of Tanganyika territory, 1914-1918', in *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 1958, Number 51, pp. 131-155.

161 NA, WO 95/5329, East Africa Brig Gen E. Northey's War Diary 4 Dec 1915 – 8 Apr 1916, 7 January 1916.

> weight of his load in 24 days, that is on a 12 days journey outward (180 miles) and 12 days return.[162]

Clearly the transporting of goods to the front 600 miles away could not be effectively done by carriers. Indeed, Wallace calculated that should he wish to ensure the supply of 1 ton per day at the front 600 miles from the railhead, he would need no less than 71,000 carriers.[163] At the time, there was a taxable population of approximately 120,000 in Northern Rhodesia, of whom approximately 80,000 could be recruited. However, 'it was found that if more than one third of these away at a time cultivation suffered, with a consequent loss of the food we so much wanted.'[164]

Anxious to find a solution to these pressing problems, the colonial administrators sought to put their faith in technological innovations. However, in the short term, the technology that appeared to hold so much promise could function only with the application of substantial amounts of African labour and was, economically speaking, far more expensive and inefficient than the labour power that it had sought to replace. In the end, petrol-driven motor-cars and steam-driven traction engines, although they may have stood at the forefront of technology, failed in the context of Northern Rhodesia in 1914-1918.

Anxious to be able to continue to wage the war, British authorities sought out other forms of transport that in the first instance did not appear to depend on extensive amounts of human labour. Thus, when General Northey assumed command of British forces operating out of Northern Rhodesia in late 1915, he sought to engineer a shift in supply from carriers to motor transport where possible:

> I am now arranging for carriers to enable mobile forces to get forward and for the making of roads for motor traffic for forward and lateral communication.[165]

Motor vehicles appeared to offer the solution to Northey's wishes. Instead of a string of porters each carrying a maximum of 60 lbs on their shoulders for an absolute maximum of 15 miles a day, the Model T easily transported ten-

162 NA, CAB 45/14, East Africa Campaign Great War: Accounts of activities on and around the Northern Rhodesia Border. Folio 2.
163 NA, CAB 45/14, East Africa Campaign Great War: Accounts of activities on and around the Northern Rhodesia Border. Folio 3.
164 NA, CAB 45/14, East Africa Campaign Great War: Accounts of activities on and around the Northern Rhodesia Border. Folio 4.
165 NA, WO 95/5329, East Africa Brig Gen E. Northey's War Diary 4 Dec 1915 – 8 Apr 1916.

fold the amount of a porter and for far more than 15 miles a day.[166] Yet for this to succeed, roads would be necessary and would have to be built.
In the course of 1916 a road was cut and bridges built from the railhead at Broken Hill to two points on the border. Up to 17 motor-cars were obtained via South Africa and converted into lorries able to carry 700 lbs plus a driver and his kit.[167]

> The road was an earth track, generally fairly good except for 80 miles of sand. Corrugation of this part was found to be useless as it shook the motors to pieces and in the end wheel tracks in the sand were filled with soft stone and the cars ran on two slightly sunken ribbons of Macadam thus formed and it is extraordinary how well they kept them.[168]

Once British forces had begun their full-scale invasion of German East Africa and had begun utilizing food supplies available in GEA, the motor transport route in Northern Rhodesia was suspended. Administrator Wallace reported:

> The motor traffic on the road has been suspended, the most useful cars having been sent to General Northey in GEA; the rest (principally wrecks) are stored and being repaired at Kashitu.
> …
> As there is not much probability of the motor road being used again I have not felt justified in keeping a great number of men on its maintenance …[169]

Essentially, in terms of cost efficiency, the introduction of the motor vehicle in Northern Rhodesia was far from a success, and there was initially nothing to indicate the later dominance of the motor-car and motor-lorry in the territory's transport sector. As long as thousands of carriers could be dragooned into carrying goods at economic costs that lay substantially below those of

166 Stephen Rockel wrote to me in 1988 with the following: 'I like the story told with astonishment by a colonial official in Tanganyika about porters and a lorry in the Kilimanjaro region. Some time in the late 1920s he recruited unwilling Chagga porters to go on tour with him, only to find that they all chipped in to hire a lorry to transport his loads. This made more economic sense to them—they could make more money if they stayed behind rather than wandering around the countryside for a pittance.'
167 NA, CAB 45/14, East Africa Campaign Great War: Accounts of activities on and around the Northern Rhodesia Border. Folio 1.
168 NA, CAB 45/14, East Africa Campaign Great War: Accounts of activities on and around the Northern Rhodesia Border. A certain Edwards writing to Major Stack 15/11/34, 'This is a manuscript copy of the substance of a lecture given by the writer Sir Laurence Wallace KCMG who was administrator during the Great War of Northern Rhodesia.'
169 NAZ, BS3, A2/3/4, L.A. Wallace, Administrator, 12/2/17, to Secretary BSAC, London.

motorized transport, the administration would continue to rely on human transport. The motor-car may have been at the very forefront of cutting-edge technology; but in terms of financial considerations, cars were simply too expensive to justify their continued use.

Steaming through the jungle

At the beginning of World War I, Imperial Germany dominated Lake Tanganyika with a series of steam launches and a large warship, the *Graf Götzen.* Anxious to terminate German control of the lake, innovative plans were drawn up by the British to transport two petrol-driven gunboats overland from Cape Town to the headwaters of the Congo River and on to Lake Tanganyika 4,000 km to the north. These boats, part of the 'Tanganyika Naval Expedition' led by Commander Spicer-Simson, destroyed German naval presence on Lake Tanganyika and provided the British with a welcome victory in the face of stalemated carnage on the Western Front and humiliating defeat at Gallipoli. The Tanganyika Naval Expedition had all the makings of a *Boy's Own Adventure*,[170] and the expedition formed the basis for countless romanticized novels and films, the most famous being C.S. Forester's *The African Queen*, which was later transformed into an award-winning film starring Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn.[171]

By and large, contemporary portrayals of the Tanganyika Naval Expedition are based on *The Phantom Flotilla* by Peter Shankland, which served as the prime source for the subsequent portrayal of Spicer-Simson and the expedition, of which Giles Foden's rendition in *Mimi and Totou Go Forth* is the most extreme and exotic. These stand in surprising contrast to more contemporary documents such as the *National Geographic* and *Northern Rhodesia Journal*, which contain reminiscences of contemporary participants in the expedition, and all the more so in contrast to the extremely efficient lieutenant-commander presented in the pages of C.S. Forester's *The African Queen*.[172] Although these portrayals make ample mention of the heroic exploits of men and machines, very little attention has been paid to the actual

170 Jeffrey Richards, 'Boy's Own Empire: Feature Films and Imperialism in the 1930s'. In: John M. Mackenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and popular culture* (Manchester, 1986).

171 The making of the film *The African Queen* (1951) starring Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart in late colonial Belgian Congo in turn formed the basis for another film, *White Hunter Black Heart* (1990), starring Clint Eastwood.

172 C.S. Forester, *The African Queen*, London 1935. *H.M.S Matilda* and *H.M.S Amelia*, '… those motor-boats had cost in blood and sweat and treasure more than destroyers might have done, for they had been sent out from England, and had been brought with incredible effort overland through jungle, by rail and by river, to the harbour in which they lay [Port Albert, Belgian Congo]'. p. 177, 1986 Penguin edition.

road that needed to be built through the jungle, swamps, mountains, and hills of the Manyika Plateau in southern Congo.

To ensure the safe transport of the motor-launches to the Lualaba River and within striking distance of Lake Tanganyika, a road had to be built from the railhead in Fungurume to the Lualaba River at Sankisia. In early July 1915 the expedition, under the command of Commander Spicer-Simson, arrived in Cape Town. Less than two weeks later the expedition arrived in Elizabethville in the Belgian Congo and detrained at Fungurume, the end of the line of rail from Cape Town to the Katangese Copperbelt. Prior to the arrival of the expedition in Congo, men had been sent on ahead to reconnoitre a route for the expedition from Fungurume to Bukama. Apart from falling out with one another, these men brought back conflicting reports as to the feasibility of the undertaking. Lieutenant Hope, one of the men sent on ahead to reconnoitre and develop the road, had contracted Italian labour contractors to build a road capable of carrying the expedition's steam-traction engines, trailers, and boats. He returned reports to Spicer-Simson, the commander of the expedition, that did not bode well:

> Monsieur Frashoti [Italian road-contractor] … affirms that he would never try to bring a Traction engine over this route. He has been thirty years in this Katanga and cut the original carriers road we are following. His advice is to depend on boys [sic] and oxen over the worst part, using tractions when possible.[173]

Spicer-Simson dismissed the claims of the Italians, writing in his report to the Admiralty that Mr. Barducci 'is believed to be a German agent'.[174] Shortly after, Spicer-Simson also dismissed Hope, arguing that Hope was particularly fond of whisky and that he had not done what he should have done to ensure that the road was passable. Thus Spicer-Simson wrote:

> I have the honour to report that Lieutenant Douglas Hope is to all intents and purposes defying my authority. On 9 August I sent this officer with Lieutenant Tyrer to take charge of the road-building on the North side of the Manika Plateau. He passed along the road and reported many difficulties but did not remain on the road nor did he take charge of the road-building

173 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Hope, Sankisia 19th August 1915, to Commander Simson.

174 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, M'wenda Makoshi, 30th August 1915, report of proceedings No. 3.

> beyond writing a letter to one or two of the Contractors giving them certain obvious instructions.[175]

All in all, the road that was to have been built to transport the expedition to the headwaters of the Congo had not been built.

In addition to the fact that the envisaged road had to all intents and purposes not been built, once the two steam-traction engines detrained at Fungurume, they proved to be incapable of drawing both stores and boats at the same time. In addition, the cradles originally designed for the boats began to break up. Thus the decision was taken to transfer the boats onto the goods trailers and to allow for the goods to be transported by porters.[176] As Frank Magee, who accompanied Lee and Spicer-Simson, noted in his later report on the expedition:

> In the meantime stores were being sent ahead by native carriers, each boy [sic] carrying on his head a load weighing about 60 pounds. Provisions, ammunition, and petrol for the motor-boats were all transported in this fashion, our string of native carriers extending in a single file for miles.[177]

In the absence of a properly constructed road, the expedition had to be literally manhandled overland from Fungurume to Sankisia. Through relying on thousands of African porters and labourers, the expedition eventually reached the headwaters of the Congo. As Commander Spicer-Simson noted bitterly in one of his monthly reports to the Admiralty in London:

> As to the road itself, Mr. Lee, who suggested this road to their lordships in May last, informed them that the road was already in existence, and that it would only require to be widened, have some of the sharp curves eased, and that some of the bridges would have to be strengthened.
>
> The statement is misleading for the road, as it existed before my arrival, was nothing more than a cleared track not more than 6 feet wide. This track had been built some few years before, and as in all tropical countries is bound to occur it was rapidly becoming thick bush except for the narrow footpath used by the natives. I am informed that it is at least two years since any wheeled traffic passed over it.

175 NA, DO 119/919, War Tangnyika Motor Boat Expedition, Conduct of Lt. Hope RNVR.
176 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, M'wenda Makoshi, 30th August 1915, report of proceedings No. 3.
177 Frank J. Magee, 'Transporting a Navy through the Jungles of Africa in War Time', in *The National Geographic Magazine*, October 1922, 335.

> Further, the road was built with a view to economy, and therefore when a large tree was met with, or an ant heap, it was left standing and the road taken around it. The bridges which existed were only foot bridges, the ox-wagons being able to go up or down a gradient of 1 in 1 and being able to ford a stream. Not one of the bridges could be utilised and nearly two hundred had to be built, some of course being only a few feet long, but others reaching as much as 100 feet. There were also many short sharp dips in the road of such formation that the boats, with their great length, would have rested across the two rises, thus bridging the dip. These dips had therefore to be filled up or a way found round them. In spite of the greatest care the sterns of the cradles have on one or two occasions touched the ground, and it has been necessary to dig a hollow to allow them to pass.[178]

In the event, thousands of labourers were recruited to build the road and to manhandle the expedition along the overland route from the railway head at Fungurume to Sankisia, which serviced the river-boat harbour on the Lualuba at Bukama.[179]

To build the road and manhandle the expedition, enormous amounts of labour had to be recruited. To this end, numerous often conflicting contracts were drawn up with a wide variety of road contractors and labour contractors. Commander Lee, the erstwhile hunter who had initially dreamt up the scheme, made an initial contract with Mr. Lock, 'a Transport Contractor, to improve the road, supply labour and transport between Nguba and Sankisha.'[180] At the same time, Sub. Lieutenant Dudley had meanwhile arranged with Mr. Davison, another Transport Contractor, to supply labour and to improve the road from the southern end. In the event, Lock eventually took over Davison's contract, with Lock undertaking the road-building and Davison 'the bridging of streams and hollows.'[181] As it progressed, the road was built and improved upon at a phenomenal rate of about 4 miles (10 km) per day.[182] Spicer-Simson, as overall commander of the expedition, commented on the difficulties involved in ensuring the successful construction of the road:

178 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, Sankisia, 30th September 1915, report of proceedings No. 4, August 31st to September 28th.
179 Given that the route covered between Fungurume and Sankisia was about 200 km, this works out to at least one labourer every 250 m along the whole route.
180 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, Elizabethville, 29 July 1915, to Commandant General Rhodesia.
181 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, Fungurume, 14th August 1915, report of proceedings No. 2, July 20th to August 14th.
182 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, Elizabethville, 29 July 1915, to Commandant General Rhodesia.

> Mr Lock, has apparently, had difficulty in obtaining labour. I gave him orders to put 300 men on to the southern end of the road on or about 1st August. Up till now not a single man has appeared and Mr Davison has supplied me with 115 men with which labour the bad road has been built.
>
> Mr Lock's contract, which was made by Lieutenant Commander Lee before my arrival, appears to me, now that I have got a little local knowledge, to be costing some £50 per diem more than is necessary, I shall therefore cancel his contract as soon as I can get into touch with him and will endeavour to come to a better arrangement with Mr. Davison, who is prepared to put 600 men on to the road at a week's notice.[183]

The contracts that had originally been made with Lock and Davison were rescinded, but given the fact that new contracts became necessary for the portage of goods, neither Lock nor Davison lost out, as new contracts for portage were drawn up with the two labour recruiters.[184] It has been noted above that the earlier advice, based on the reports of two Italian labour contractors, submitted by Hope in August 1915 regarding the inappropriate nature of the traction engines in favour of porters and oxen, had been dismissed.[185] Their comments turned out to be correct, and the struggle for the lucrative labour contracts began in earnest. Barducci and Lock both claimed to have been approached and bound by contract to supply labour to the expedition. The Italian labour contractors Barducci and Frashoti had dealt with Lee prior to his departure from the Congo, and for his part Hope had continued these dealings. As Hope noted in his report, the dealings between Lee and Barducci 'were somewhat complicated, but took place prior to the signing of Lock's contract in Bukama'.[186] Lee received quotes of 1.80-2.00 francs per labourer per day from Barducci, and from Barducci's sub-contractor Frashoti 2.50 francs per labourer per day. Lee came to an agreement with Frashoti, with labourers starting to work on 21 July. In the ensuing conflict, Barducci demanded that payment be made for no less than 460 labourers. In addition, Frashoti had recruited 340 labourers.[187]

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183 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, Fungurume, 14th August 1915, report of proceedings No. 2, July 20th to August 14th.

184 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, M'wenda Makoshi, 30th August 1915, report of proceedings No. 3.

185 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Hope, Sankisia 19th August 1915, to Commander Simson.

186 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Hope, Sankisia 19th August 1915, to Commander Simson.

187 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Hope, Sankisia 19th August 1915, to Commander Simson.

The detailed mile by mile, day by day reports of Spicer-Simson illustrate very clearly how difficult the passage from Fungurume to Sankisia actually was. More than once men and machines were put to the test, and although Simson littered his reports with reports on roads that had been re-cut or re-surfaced, in the end it was always African labourers who saved the day. Simson's entry for 23 September 1915, for example, is nothing out of the ordinary:

> Road still soft, but improving, and better progress made. Descended the last of the foot hills of the Plateau 150 natives carrying water between Kikoma and engines. Heavy thunderstorm on Plateau and foot hills in afternoon, but only light rain experienced by the Expedition. Camped at Kikoma at about 5.30 p.m. at 4.9 miles. Captain Mouritzen of the Congo Hydrographic Service arrived from Bukama to consult with me as to the voyage down the Lualaba.[188]

Thus, eventually, the expedition reached the headwaters of the Congo on a road that was literally built as the expedition moved forward.

The road as a route with limited resources

The roads built for the purposes of war fell into almost immediate disuse upon the cessation of hostilities, but the long-term impact of the movement of thousands upon thousands of hungry people along the road in the thinly populated lands of Central Africa had a disastrous impact upon local communities. Colonial administrators in Northern Rhodesia were well aware of the disruptive impact of the enormous movement and recruitment of labour along the roads to the front for war purposes. Assistant Native Commissioner Theodore Williams described how, already within the first year of the war in 1915, food resources were becoming scarce, as well as the disruptive influence of columns of war porters on food security:

> As regards Commissariat I had been able to get a few eggs and 3 fowls so far but have had to live largely out of tins. This road has been so worn since the war that things are hard to get now—though the carriers seem to be able to get a meal all right.[189]

On paper, with honest intentions, administrators sought to alleviate the disruption in ways that they believed were correct and acceptable. But, as so

188 NA, ADM 123/142, African Lakes Operations, Africa Station War Records, Spicer-Simson, Sankisia, 30th September 1915, report of proceedings No. 4, August 31st to September 28th.
189 Rhodes House Oxford, MSS. Afr. S. 776-781 May 12, 1915, My dear Father.

often, the road to disruption, ruin, and revolt was paved with the good intentions of administrators. The mass recruitment of thousands upon thousands of carriers for the war effort depleted the countryside of able-bodied people and led to a collapse in food production. The incessant demands for food along the road depleted the already over-stretched food reserves, and the movement of thousands of ever-hungry carriers like locusts across the countryside finally completely destroyed alongside the road all food reserves and devastated the landscape.

To survive, Africans became dependent upon foodstuffs transported from the line of rail in exchange for their labour power as carriers. In effect, this set in motion a vicious circle in which people, in exchange for food, had to work and were of necessity away from their homes and thus unable to prepare gardens and so forth which could have ensured their continued self-sufficiency in food production.

Weakened by four years of war, incessant work, and insufficient food, the people of Northern Rhodesia were an easy prey for the influenza pandemic when it struck the territory in late 1918 and early 1919.[190] Deserting and discharged, carriers and porters carried the disease far and wide across the territory, bringing life to a standstill and appearing to herald the end of time. The role of the newly established military road, which led from Broken Hill to the frontline, in spreading the disease is not to be under-estimated. Reports from the Mkushi sub-district explicitly mention the significance of Broken Hill as a centre from which influenza spread:

> Influenza appeared at Mkushi early in November. … Natives fleeing from the scourge when it first came to Broken Hill died by the roadside … eight strangers who died on the road were buried. The disease was brought straight from the railway by the mailman….[191]

In all, by the end of World War I, the military road that had been built across 1,000 km of bush was abandoned. Far from opening up the country to development and communication, as one might have expected, the military road had brought famine and ruin to those unfortunate enough to live within 25 km of the road.

190 For a standard work on the influenza epidemic in Zambia, see Mwelwa Musambachime, 'The influenza epidemic of 1918-1919 in Northern Rhodesia', in *Zambia Journal of History*, 1993/94, Nos. 6/7, 59.

191 NAZ, LMA, F6/1, Annual Report, Mkushi Sub-District, 1918-1919.

Conclusion

Observers dealing with Northern Rhodesia may comment on the concerted road-building programme that occurred in parts of the territory after 1901 as examples of the development brought by Pax Britannica to the peoples of Central Africa. However, in doing so, they conveniently gloss over the unfree nature of the labour employed to build the roads under duress in lieu of taxation. It must not be forgotten that in Northern Rhodesia the first roads suitable for wheeled traffic were built as a function of enforced taxation. Similarly, the two further road-building programmes that led to the construction of roads used in World War I were built as instruments of war and were abandoned immediately upon the cessation of hostilities. In Northern Rhodesia, roads came to be built, between 1900 and 1920, not so much as things that facilitated communication and economic development, but as instruments of war, subjection, and control.

16

Colonial memoirs

Jan Hoorweg

In the late 1990s, I was stationed in Malindi, Kenya, in charge of CERS, the Coast Environment Research Station. I had Ton Dietz to thank for this appointment and I am still grateful to him for the opportunity. At the time, Ton directed the joint programme of the University of Amsterdam and Moi University in Eldoret. The Coast Station was part of the programme even though it was located at a distance of 900 km from the main campus. I had long wanted to live in a provincial town in East Africa and Malindi was indeed an enjoyable place—a tourist town on the coast of the Indian Ocean, modest in size but with plenty of amenities and a pleasant climate.

As CERS coordinator, I was responsible for the office we had rented, for assisting students doing their fieldwork, for organizing workshops on coastal issues, and for contacts with other research centres in the Coast Province. I also had the responsibility for a piece of land, 40 ha large, at the mouth of the Sabaki River, a few miles north of Malindi. The landscape consisted of a river bank with mangroves, sand dunes, and inland scrub vegetation with, here and there, straggling trees including coconut palms. The idea was to conserve this land as a kind of nature reserve with a great diversity of plants but, if possible, to try and develop it commercially as well. One suggestion was to start a herd of goats because they are hardy animals, multiply rapidly, and eat anything. I rejected this idea because of the indiscriminate grazing behaviour of goats to the detriment of the desired biodiversity. Instead, I decided to plant casuarina trees for their timber, and we duly purchased and planted a batch of seedlings. Sadly, the awesome El-Niño of 1997 washed part of our land away including half of the trees we had planted.

The land also harboured different kinds of wildlife. Samuel, the farmhand, had once been taken by a crocodile but had somehow managed to free himself. He did not like to talk about this experience, but it left him with an understandable respect for large animals. On one occasion, a hippo with a baby had taken up residence in one of the inlets of the river, and Samuel explicitly instructed me not to go near the animal—who was in a bad mood, as hippos

often are. On another occasion, he proudly showed me an adult python he had killed that very morning. Asked why, he ventured the snake was poisonous, which is a widely held belief about pythons. I did not have the courage to remark that killing animals was not quite in line with the conservation objectives of the School of Environmental Studies. Instead, I quietly arranged with my colleague from the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in Mombasa for him to be enrolled in a course given to KWS wardens, from which he claimed to have learned a lot.

The land was favoured not only by animals, but also by the local people. Perhaps the first to mention is the herdsman with his cows, who regularly trespassed to water his animals at the Sabaki River. To the great irritation of Samuel. More seriously, our land at one time was invaded by a large group of squatters, who gave several reasons for their occupation. Firstly, their ancestors were buried there, but that was not considered a serious argument even by the squatters themselves. Secondly, they feared, although the land was now owned by the university, if not developed it would be passed on to private individuals who might sell it for a high price to developers. Admittedly, not such a far-fetched scenario. All I could do was ask the District Officer (DO) for assistance, and he posted a few policemen on the plot and miraculously the squatters disbanded. Miraculously, because there were other cases not far away where squatters had occupied land for decades. Nevertheless, the School of Environmental Studies hastened their plans to put up a laboratory building on the site, which afforded me the opportunity to learn all about public tenders and building contractors.

Another invasion was by illegal wine tappers. Coconut palms (like other types of palm trees) can be tapped for palm wine by making an incision in the bark of the tree, but in such a way that the tree bleeds gently and can go on producing for years. However, there are also illegal wine tappers who spot palms on uninhabited land, and they bleed the trees aggressively for larger production but with the result that the trees die in a few weeks' time. One such group had spotted trees on our site, had set up camp, and had already attacked several trees before I was informed. These tappers had a reputation as rogue characters and people were usually afraid to address them. Not me. Perhaps naively, I considered it my duty to get rid of them, certainly in the light of the earlier invasion of squatters. Rebson, my office assistant, had warned me I had to be very careful because, in all likelihood, they would be drunk and might even threaten me or worse. Still, I managed to convey the message that I did not want them on the site, but they could finish the trees they had attacked already and which could not be saved anyway, but not to start on any new trees and then please leave. And leave they did, after a week, much to my relief.

One of the attractive sides of Malindi was the colourful mix of people living in the town. Firstly, the majority of residents were local Mijikenda, but there were also many Africans from up-country who had found employment there. The Swahili and Arab communities also need mention; their roots trace back to the time of the Zanzibar Sultanate, together with many Asians who first started arriving when the Uganda Railway was being constructed. Another group was the English pensioners, many of whom had worked most of their life in Kenya. Among them, there were a number of ex-civil servants who had served in colonial times; some had even attempted to write down their recollections, and at least one of them had his memoirs issued by an international publisher. To understand the gist and context of colonial memoirs, we need first a short description of the Colonial Service and what it stood for.

Colonial Service

The British Colonial Service was established in the course of the 19th century. A standard text on the history of the service has been written by Kirk-Greene (2000), himself a former DO in Nigeria, who later joined the academic staff of Oxford University. The Colonial Service consisted, firstly, of the Colonial Administrative Service (Governors, Provincial Commissioners, District Commissioners, and DOs, in that order). However, it also comprised professionals, such as medical staff, educational personnel, forestry officers, veterinarians, police officers, and so on. Gann and Duignan (1978), in their monograph on British Africa during the period 1870-1914, devote chapters to respectively Colonial Governors, DOs, and African Assistants (who played a role particularly in West Africa in the early years), but also a separate chapter to the various technical personnel. By 1914, the combined total of technical staff in the British African Colonies already surpassed the number of district administrators (ibid. 292). Still, DOs formed the backbone of the colonial administration, certainly in the early years. They combined the roles of administrator, magistrate, and government representative, and occasionally they were technical officer as well. They built roads, collected taxes, maintained law and order, visited outlying locations on *safari* (field trips), and were the ones in direct contact with the local people.

Recruitment procedures of the Colonial Service varied. Headquarters in London recruited DOs from among university graduates. But few matched the candidate who asked Winston Churchill, then Under-Secretary for the Colonies, for a personal interview and was subsequently hired in 1908 (Dundas 1955). Recruitment could also happen locally among army officers or others with tropical experience. For example, before World War I, staff who had been in the employ of the Imperial British East Africa Company were taken

over when the company went under. Similarly, after World War I, veteran army officers who had seen service in Africa were also locally approached and recruited. (The same happened after World War II.) Remuneration was apparently attractive: one candidate in 1913 compared his starting salary to that of a scholar with a 'Double First', and conditions of service were still considered agreeable in the 1950s. However, salary levels differed by colony regardless of rank. Pitiful were Governors-in-name appointed to a small island, who sometimes received such a low salary they had great difficulty in making ends meet.

Already before the onset of World War I, it was realized there was a need for training to prepare the candidates for their upcoming duties. The first formal training of future DOs was organized at the Imperial Institute; in total, the course took three months. In the early 1930s, the training was expanded to a full year and given at Oxford University, Cambridge, and the London School of Economics as a sort of postgraduate training. After the war, the training was reorganized again, now under the name of the Devonshire Course. Apart from academic subjects such as anthropology, economy, and history, the course also included the necessary familiarization with office routines and instruction in local language and law. The exams in the two latter subjects had to be taken later, after the candidate had served in the field; these exams were much feared and they could indeed be career-breakers.

Daily routines depended on the size of the station and whether one or more officers were present. If alone on a remote station, which was often the case, half the time might be spent on station duty, meaning administrative chores, correspondence, and court sessions. The other half of the time they were visiting remote parts of their district on *safari*—in the early years, on foot or on horseback with the porters setting the daily pace. The advent of motorized transport greatly increased mobility, and a Land Rover became a much-treasured asset.

In the early years, living conditions were generally modest, often wattle-and-daub houses without electricity, running water, or sewage drains, and no nearby towns with shops. Every two to three years, the DO was entitled to home leave of a few months, but, once back in the UK, many of them found themselves rather alienated from British society and soon wanted to return to their stations—unless they had embarked on a romantic relationship and had decided to get married, which then had to be arranged hastily. In fact, senior officers actively discouraged junior officers from marrying, which changed only after World War II when more DOs took their wives with them to outstations.

Colonial memoirs

English literature knows a rich tradition of personal memoirs with records of events or history from personal knowledge or from special sources. 'Colonial memoirs' are a sub-category relating experiences during the times of colonial administration, which often give lively and interesting accounts of the tropics and confrontations between traditional societies and Western expectations.[192] Colonial memoirs have now become an academic specialism. In this respect, a pivotal role was played by the early decision in 1929 of the Rhodes House Library to start collecting published and unpublished colonial materials (Pinfold 2005). BBC Radio played an important role as well with the programme *Tales from the Dark Continent,* with candid interviews about experiences in the African colonies. An anthology in book form followed (Allen 1979). The Radcliffe Press also deserves mention, with its impressive series of more than 50 memoirs and biographies published since 1993.

More colonial memoirs seem to have appeared in the English language than in French or German. The reasons are manifold: firstly, there was the size of the British Empire and the large number of colonial officers on the ground, but equally important must have been the generally positive reputation of the Colonial Service.[193] And, of course, the simple fact that the potential English readership was much larger.

Colonial memoirs are best arranged according to time period and the profession or position of the author. The following time periods can roughly be distinguished: (*a*) the period before World War I as a time of exploration and pacification; (*b*) the middle period between World War I and World War II as a time of development and consolidation; and (*c*) the period after 1945 as a time of consolidation but with the increasing awareness of the oncoming de-colonization (Allen 1979). As for the profession of the author or his/her position in colonial society, there were many occupations possible outside the colonial administration, as already mentioned. Early accounts often consist of ethnographic descriptions of the local populations but with few or no personal impressions, such as, for example, Eliot (1905), H.M. Commissioner in Kenya from 1901 until 1904.[194] During the early period, the DOs were thin on the ground, but many of them achieved senior positions later and left us their accounts (Jackson 1930). Many others are listed in the ex-

192 A colonial memoir is not to be confused with accounts of expeditions by explorers, such as Burton and Stanley, because they did not take up residence for any length of time. Travelogues of renowned writers, such as Waugh and Gide, also do not qualify as colonial memoirs for the same reason.

193 A popularity that was enhanced by the series of 'Sanders' novels by Edgar Wallace on the life of DOs in West Africa—twelve novels that were published between 1911 and 1928.

194 His brother also served in the Colonial Service, but he wrote memoirs on a more personal note (Eliot 1938).

haustive review of the life and living circumstances of DOs by Kirk-Greene (2006), based on the memoirs and written contributions of more than 500 DOs who had served in Africa. But the professional and technical staff also wrote about their experiences in different sectors, such as agriculture, health, education, police, livestock, forestry, even locust control. Mention must also be made of the wives of the colonial officers—for example, Alys Reece, who decided to accompany her DO husband in 1936 to live in Marsabit in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya, then considered totally unsuitable for women (Reece 1963). Some renowned white settlers also contributed occasional manuscripts (Cranworth 1939).

Rift Valley, Kenya

At some point in their career, DOs often developed strong ties with one or more of the districts where they were stationed. Actually, this was no different in the case of the generations of academic researchers who followed later (but not very much later). Personally, I have strong ties with the Indian Ocean Coast of Kenya. In the case of Ton, his favourite area is West Pokot, ever since he did the fieldwork for his PhD thesis *Pastoralists in Dire Straits* (1987). West Pokot is situated in the middle of the Rift Valley Province, with neighbouring districts of Elgeyo-Marakwat and Baringo, which also form part of this story. The area offers spectacular nature, including the Elgeyo Escarpment, the Kerio Valley, and the Tugen Hills. The earliest mention of the area is by Thomson (1885), during his expedition through Masai Land. Early descriptions of the Kalenjin living in these districts were given by Beech (1911) on the Suk (the Maasai name for the Pokot) and Massam (1927) on the cliff dwellers of the Elgeyo Escarpment. Both writers had served as DOs in, respectively, Baringo and Marakwet. Their monographs have a strong focus on ethnography, customs, and language, following the trend already noted. Personal memoirs followed much later by other DOs, and I have selected three memoirs at roughly 20-year intervals, the latest ending in 1959. The DOs were stationed respectively in Kabarnet in the Tugen Hills, Tambach on top of the Elgeyo Escarpment, and Sigor in the Pokot plains, roughly at distances of 100 km from each other.

Before 1920

The first memoir is by Henry Seaton, who arrived in Kenya in 1914. *Lion in the Morning* was published in 1963. Seaton was hired as Assistant District Commissioner, fresh from university, but before being sent overseas had to attend the lectures at the Imperial Institute in London. The course being a recent innovation, it was also attended by staff already serving in the field,

usually during times of home leave. The course was divided into two periods of six weeks each, the first period covering the colonial system of accounts, tropical hygiene, and the law of criminal procedure. The second period offered Mohammedan law, tropical agriculture, and survey methods.

In April 1914, Seaton was on his way to East Africa. On arrival in Mombasa, he was sent by the Chief Justice on to the Town Magistrate in Nakuru. This up-country town was regarded as the very centre of the European settler community, which the author describes cynically as follows: 'Every settler was the lord of a manor, no matter whether his holding were great or small—his homesteads built of stone or mud' (p. 14). Newly appointed administrators, of course, still had poor command of the local language and had little administrative experience. The problem of language, in the case of Seaton, was solved with the help of a Swahili interpreter, who had been trained in Zanzibar by the Bishop himself and who spoke fluent, melodious English. (The interpreter also ran a licenced beer shop as well as a brothel in the town.) For office duties, he could, thankfully, rely on one of the Goanese administrators, who rightly had the reputation of being not only efficient, but highly motivated as well.

Life abruptly changed with the outbreak of World War I in August 1914, which soon resulted in hostilities between Kenya and Tanganyika, the latter then still a German colony. An emergency meeting of local settlers was organized in Nakuru, with tempers running high and where our novice DO was shouted down for being a bloody liar. Thankfully, Lord Delamare, in person, came to his help. Administrative officers were not allowed to join the armed forces. Instead, Seaton was soon transferred to a remote outpost. From November 1914 until late 1919, he was stationed in Jubaland (which then was still part of Kenya) and Ukambani. He returned to the Rift Valley in 1919 to be stationed in Kabarnet, a one-man station, 50 miles from the District Office in Eldama Ravine. The station had been built five years earlier and comprised barracks and a prison. The local population, the Kamasia (now Tugen) living in the Kerio Valley, cultivated maize, but they loved their livestock more, even though there was little pasture around and infestation by tsetse fly was rife. Otherwise, the author describes some of the exotic aspects of native life, such as witchcraft cases, a rhino slaughter, the fishing methods in Lake Baringo, and the case of one *askari* who ran amok and made a deliberate attempt to kill our DO.

DOs in Kenya often found themselves caught between the native population, on the one hand, and the white settlers on the other hand; they were not much appreciated by either. The loyalty of the white settlers 'to the Crown was absolute, but [their] attitude towards Government was a mixture of resentment and contempt' (p. 14). Newly arrived government officials were,

after all, 'a dangerous, unknown quantity […] [and] but a bird of passage […] [with] no stake in the country' (p. 15). On the other hand, the Kamasia regarded the presence of the white man, generally, as an evil, if only because the annual tax rates had increased from 3 sh. to 8 sh. during the past five years, much to the discontent of the local chiefs. Surprisingly, when the Indian rupee was introduced as standard currency they accepted the change from silver coins to paper notes without demurring, even though coins were solid and could be buried in the ground and paper money was easily burned if huts caught fire. Seaton was surprised about the lack of protest until he learned the elders had interpreted the currency measures as a sign of the coming departure of the British, who—understandably—must be making every effort to carry all their valuables with them.

Between the Wars, 1920-1940

Richard Hennings started out as DO in Kabarnet in 1935; later, he was stationed in neighbouring West Pokot and Elgeyo-Marakwet. His memoir *African Morning*, about his time in this part of Rift Valley, was published in 1951—illustrated with black-and-white photographs. In his own words, Hennings was mainly concerned with taxes, law and order, and the ongoing construction of the road connecting Tambach and Kabarnet, At the time, the District Commissioner in Tambach could only reach Kabarnet, some 20 miles across, by means of a detour of 150 miles through Eldama Ravine. So far, the roads department had not been able to construct an all-weather road along the steep Elgeyo Escarpment, but now was the time. It was left to Hennings to prepare an access road from Kabarnet to the bridge across the Kerio River.

The daily routine consisted of station duties, administrative work, correspondence, and court sessions. Remote as Kabarnet may have been, there was quite a mix of people. The subordinate staff came from all corners of East Africa. At one point, the station administrator was a Goan, the prison overseer was a Muslim from the Comoros, and the sergeant in charge of the police constables was a Somali from Wajir—not to mention a nearby settlement of Sudanese ex-soldiers and two Indian grocers.

As much as half the time could be spent on *safari*, even though motorized transport was now available. Main activities during these fieldtrips were tax collection, native courts, and *barazas* (public meetings). The collection of taxes had a reverse side—namely, the many requests for tax exemption by elderly men, who had to be heard individually and who invariably took every effort to show how poor they were, starting with the clothes they were wearing. Law and order took the form of court sessions and active pursuit of felons. Court sessions mostly had to deal with cases of runaway wives and

bride price, stock theft, and the occasional murder. Murder cases varied from drinking brawls to outright robberies. In the case of the first, and when there were enough witnesses to support the testimony of the defendant, he was usually sentenced lightly. But the author also describes a case where four local youths had murdered a Somali storekeeper for his money; they dispersed across the region but were arrested one-by-one, taken to court, and sentenced to hang.

Hennings gives an ironic account of his speeches to elders during *barazas* about rural development:

> pay your taxes in good time, store most of your grain crop, don't use it all for making beer, don't destroy your woods and trees, for they help to conserve the rain and keep the springs running; look after your fields, put stones and trash along the contours to prevent the soil being washed away, and give up cultivating steep slopes […].' (p. 46)

However, he sells himself short, because he did show a genuine interest in the livelihoods of the different ethnic groups and the general economic viability of the region. He points, for example, at the difference between the Elgeyo herdsmen living on top of the escarpments with wide pastures and large numbers of livestock and the small farmers living at the bottom of the Kerio Valley, who manage only a meagre existence and are being looked down on by their fellow pastoralists in the process. Actually, the author touches on development alternatives and ventures that the lifestyle of the pastoralists could only be maintained because of low population density, and he already shows concern about a greatly increased concentration of huts and livestock in the Elgeyo High Country and wonders what to do about it. This was already written in 1951, but even in the late 1960s I still remember the country along the main road to Uganda being very thinly populated. After all, the total population of Kenya was only 10 million then; now it is more than 40 million.

After World War II

John Russell was the son of white settlers, and he was locally recruited after having served in the Kenya Regiment during the Mau Mau insurgency. His memoir *Kenya Beyond the Marich Pass*, with black-and-white photographs, was published in 1994. He was appointed as DO (cadet) and sent for the Devonshire Course in the UK. In 1957, he arrived in Kapenguria, the District Headquarters of West Pokot, where he served until given his own division at Sigor, a distance of 50 km. The division population was an estimated 20,000 people—predominantly pastoralists. By now, the division stations had expanded in size, and the Sigor *boma* (station) comprised a division office,

radio room, police station, a prison with a barrack, the DO's house, and police rondavels. Water still had to be collected daily from the nearby Wei-Wei River in drums, but soon piped water was installed. The police force consisted of 18 constables, including two non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Each evening, the two NCOs and the prison warden would formally report for parade. The only work force available were the prisoners, who collected water and firewood by lorry.

The duties of the DO were, firstly, the daily running of the station, administrative reporting, and acting as magistrate for those cases which carried a sentence of less than three months' detention; otherwise they had to be referred to a higher court. Some years earlier, in 1949, there had been an uprising in Sigor which had been forcefully suppressed by the police. Twenty-nine of the rebel tribesmen and one police constable had been killed. Russell took pains to document the confrontation with the colonial administration, after which military presence was maintained for some years. By now, the division station had a modest health clinic, but the Pokot generally preferred the mission hospital at Ortum, some 20 km away. Actually, Russell is one of the few authors who mentions the mission activities and praises the role of the individual priests and nuns. More than his predecessors, Russell was engaged in development activities and reflects on different development projects. Among his routine activities, he mentions improving rural water supplies and enforcing soil and conservation measures. He personally undertakes attempts to improve the health condition of livestock, the mainstay of the local community and the source of their prosperity. Like me, later in Malindi, he had no love for goats, but together with the livestock officer made efforts to protect pasture from overgrazing by instituting a system of block grazing, which was not popular among the Pokot.

I have to admit that I read many of the colonial memoirs with great pleasure. Why? I can think of at least three reasons: the style of writing, the frequent anecdotes, and the obvious affection for the local people. Firstly, the style of writing is generally carefree, since the authors can use any format they want, which leaves plenty of room for spontaneity. Secondly, most memoirs make an effort to recount humorous episodes the writers have come across. At least they make us laugh. But thirdly, most of the memoir writers show great affinity with the people they write about, and they manage to express their appreciation and concern for the people they have lived among for a longer or shorter time. The three protagonists presented in this chapter are all cases in point, and they share a mutual loyalty with people and country.

After having been stationed in the Rift Valley, and perhaps to prove the suspicious elders wrong, Henry Seaton served a further 15 years in Kenya and

did another three years in the West Indies, before retiring to the UK. Richard Hennings probably served for some time in Laikipia District, but in 1951 he was certainly at the Ministry of Agriculture where, in 1961, we find him in the position of Permanent Secretary. He was still concerned about grazing management in the pastoral areas. After Sigor, John Russell was transferred to Kilifi District; and after this tour, he left the country to take up an appointment in the South Pacific, where he served for 27 years. He retired to Malindi, where I met him. He was a short, stocky man who kept much to himself but who was secretly admired by the members of the British community.

A large number of colonial memoirs relate to East Africa. This is understandable given that, in comparison with elsewhere, it hosted a sizeable settler population. The memoirs presented here are all about Kenya, but they cover quite different time periods, ranging from early colonial times before World War I to shortly before Kenya achieved independence—a time span of roughly 50-60 years but incorporating World War I and World War II, an age that saw profound political and social changes. On the one hand, the memoirs demonstrate the consistency in the duties of the DOs with regard to road building, monthly *safaris*, community *barazas,* and native courts, duties that remained important until the end. On the other hand, there were improvements in accommodations and office routines as well as noticeable changes in transport and communication facilities, but perhaps more important was the growing attention paid to health services and rural development initiatives. Once the different colonies had gained independence, the colonial DOs were soon replaced by Kenyan-born officers; but one might argue that they were also succeeded by an influx of development workers and academic researchers from abroad, who shared many of their concerns for the well-being of the population. I count myself as belonging to this group of early researchers, and occasionally I have tried to write down some of my recollections; but I must admit that my output has been very modest so far. Perhaps as a group we were much more diverse in nationality, training, and expertise than the former officers of the colonial administration, and this might partly explain why we have failed to deliver a consistent body of personal memoirs, notable exceptions aside (e.g. Sapolsky 2001). Now that this early generation of researchers has retired or is on the point of retiring, should we not call on them to draft their memoirs as well and add their observations and experiences to the developments across the African continent? How about it, Ton?

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17

'His name will inseparably be connected to the African Studies Centre'

The legacy and archives of Hans Holleman, second director of the ASC Leiden

Jos Damen

The Javanese region of Tulungagung, the democratization movement in the Netherlands in the 1960s, prolific Africanist Isaac Schapera, and the African Studies Centre (ASC) in Leiden do not seem to have much in common. Yet here they are together in one setting, with Johan Frederik ('Hans') Holleman as the linchpin. The Library of the ASC in Leiden holds ten boxes and seven folders containing personal correspondence (from 1945 onwards), a complete set of field notes from Southern Africa, and manuscripts.[195] Other parts of his archives are in different places in Leiden. The Leiden Museum of Anthropology stores 123 photographs from Kwazulu-Natal, made by Hans Holleman in the period 1938-40. Leiden University Library (UBL) holds five boxes with folders,[196] containing manuscripts, letters and photographs, typescripts, and a children's book.[197] An inventory of this UBL archive was made by Han F. Vermeulen, who also wrote several articles about the legacy of Hans Holleman.[198]

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195 François Janse van Rensburg: *Archival Inventory. Papers of Johan 'Hans' Holleman, Director of the African Studies Centre.* Leiden, 2016. www.ascleiden.nl/sites/default/files/johanfrederikhollemandirectoroftheafricanstudiescentre.pdf

196 University Library Leiden: BPL 3438

197 The children's book *Klos Hulle* is of course not the most interesting gem in the Holleman archives of UBL, but it is connected to a nice story. All Dutch queens seem to have an odd connection to the ASC, and Beatrix is no exception. Hans Holleman wrote this children's book in 1939, and it was published in Cape Town. The mother of J.F. Holleman, Dutch Adriana ('Adje') Geytenbeek, liked this book so much that she sent a copy to the Dutch Royal family, then living in Canada because the Netherlands was occupied by the Germans. A typewritten thank-you-note was sent to South Africa in return (signed 'Trix') by then Princess Beatrix. (H.F. Vermeulen: *Adatrecht en Volkenkunde*. Leiden, 2001-02, p. 10)

198 A.o. Franz Von Benda-Beckmann & Han Vermeulen: 'Adat Law and Legal Anthropology. In Memoriam: Johan Frederik (Hans) Holleman (18 December 1915-28 August 2001); with a bibliography', *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law,* 2001, vol. 46, pp. 103-114.

The Holleman family

Hans Holleman and his father Frederik David ('Frits') Holleman need to be seen in connection—the more so because their archives are divided in six parts, both in Leiden and The Hague.[199] Father Frits was born in Potchefstroom (Transvaal) in 1887. He was a jurist and ethnologist and studied in Leiden with Prof. C. van Vollenhoven (thesis 1911). He worked in the Dutch Indies as an administrator, was a law professor (*adatrecht*) in Leiden from 1934 to 1939, and worked in Stellenbosch from 1939, where he died in 1958. The life of his son Hans Holleman is in a way more diverse and interesting, also because Hans's personality is a more complex one. His life is worth a full biography, and all material is available in the archives—his complete fieldwork notes, letters from his interesting contacts, material about his role in South African society in the 1940s and 1950s, his reports to the South African government, and documents about his time in Leiden.

Hans Holleman was born in Java, Tulungagung region, on 18 December 1915. He went to high school in Amsterdam and Batavia (Jakarta) and studied law (1935-37) and ethnography (1938-40) at Stellenbosch University. He spent a number of months on fieldwork in Zululand and had two photo exhibitions on Zulu life in Stellenbosch (1938 and 1940). He also published a novel in Afrikaans (*Gety*) in 1938, under the pseudonym Holmer Johanssen (Figure 17.1). (The novel is a *roman à clef* on the cultural life in Stellenbosch.) This literary debut is remembered as 'exemplary of the influence of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* in Afrikaans. From a musicological perspective the novel is important because of the way it connects the cultural life of Cape Town in the 1930s with music'[200] (see Figure 17.2).

He became a South African citizen in 1940 and worked for the Union Civil Service in Riversdal. In 1941 he married Marie Sem, with whom he had six children. In 1945 he began working under Isaac Schapera at the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in Lusaka, as a Beit Research Fellow. His fieldwork with the Mashona in Southern Rhodesia culminated in a PhD at the University of Cape Town in 1950. After working in Salisbury and Bulawayo, he became director of the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Natal in

199 Frits Holleman's archives are partly held at Leiden University Library. The file UBL BPL 3437, only a few centimeters away from the archives of his son, holds papers, correspondence, a diary, and some photographs. Other papers of F.D. Holleman are held in the Dutch National Archives in The Hague and at the ASC in Leiden; see François Janse van Rensburg: *Archival inventory. Papers of Frederik 'Frits' David Holleman, Professor at Stellenbosch University*. Leiden, 2016 www.ascleiden.nl/sites/default/files/frederikdavidhollemanprofessoratstellenboschuniversity.pdf

200 Stephanus Muller: 'Musiekgeskiedenis en fiksie: Hans Holleman en Arnold van Wyk in Holmer Johanssen se roman *Gety*'. In: *LitNet Akademies*, jaargang 5, no. 1 (2008).

Durban from 1957 to 1962, where he published the interesting book *African Interlude* (1958).

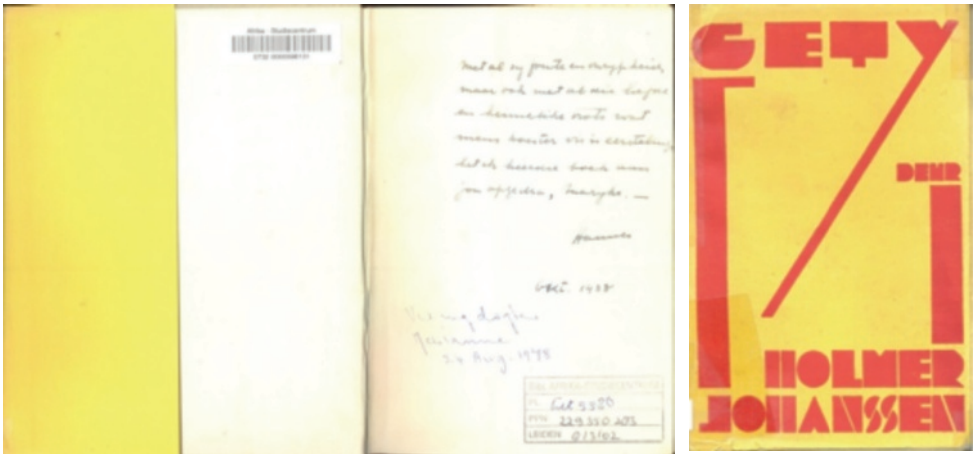

Figure 17.1
Holleman's novel *Gety* (1938), under the pseudonym Holmer Johanssen, with a personal dedication to his wife and daughter (Collection ASC Leiden)

Figure 17.2
Guido Perold, Arnold van Wyk, and Hans Holleman (Stellenbosch, 1936) (Collection J.S. Gericke Library, Stellenbosch)

Hans Holleman in Leiden

Holleman then received an offer for a dual position in Leiden: director of the ACS and professor at Leiden University. The directorship seemed attractive: the board of the ASC wanted to expand and professionalize the centre, and as a professor (of Sociology and Culture of Africa) he would succeed the not very successful (later Ghanaian prime minister) Kofi Busia, who had left his position in Leiden after barely two years. Holleman was to become the second director of the ASC—perhaps even the first one, as the official first director (Prof. P.J. Idenburg) was in fact the caretaker of a very small institute, mainly consisting of a library and documentation centre with a few researchers at Rapenburg 8 in Leiden (Figure 17.3).

Figure 17.3
P.J. Idenburg and Hans Holleman (ASC Leiden, 1963)

Holleman starting working in January 1963 and presented his views in a formal document (*Nota betreffende de ontwikkeling van het Afrika-Studiecentrum*) in August of the same year. In this programmatic report he in fact advocated an interdisciplinary approach to African studies. He first pointed to the two main objectives of the ASC: (*a*) promote and undertake scientific research on Africa, and (*b*) promote the dissemination of knowledge and understanding of Africa. Next, he selected five fields of study: (*a*) social factors and acculturation;

(*b*) economy and demography; (*c*) politics and law; (*d*) spiritual development; and (*e*) indigenous people and modernity. In practice, Holleman stimulated research on education in Rungwe, Tanzania (with ASC researchers Jan Konter, Nel van Hekken, Jan Sterkenburg, Jan Kaayk, and Bonno Thoden van Velzen) and research on customary law in West Africa (with ASC researchers Rionne Ketting, Emile Rouveroy, Els Baerends, and Jenny Goldschmidt). Holleman started enthusiastically. He became a Dutch citizen in 1964, and everything indicated a new and fresh beginning. However, the directorship did not work out well. Times were turbulent, with Dutch universities under pressure from students and faculty asking for more influence.

Holleman was unwilling and unable to cope with the demands for democratic centralism, and his long summer leaves to South Africa (three months in 1965, four months in 1966) and his long sick-leave in 1968 indicate his growing need for a break away from the ASC. His authoritarian style as director was met with growing resistance from large parts of the staff. Holleman resigned as director of the ASC in August 1969, while retaining his professorship in Leiden. In this capacity he wrote several books on Africa: *Chief, Council and Commissioner. Some Problems of Government in Rhodesia* (1969), *White Mine Workers in Northern Rhodesia 1959-60* (1973, with Simon Biesheuvel), *Issues in African Law* (1974), and *Leiden in Africa* (1977, with Adam Kuper, Hans van den Breemer and Isa Baud). His early retirement as a professor, partly due to health reasons, came in 1979. The Leiden chair of *adat* law, once held by Cornelis van Vollenhoven and by Holleman's father Frits, came to an end with Holleman's valedictory lecture in May 1980. A year later, he published the book *Van Vollenhoven on Indonesian Adat Law*, a 300-page text which he translated and edited. Johan Frederik Holleman died in Alphen a/d Rijn on 28 August 2001.

Holleman's directorship: Failure or success?

Most people writing about the history of the ASC tend to point at the negative aspects of Holleman's directorship: his authoritarian style, his 'difficult' personality, and his old-fashioned way of governing a scientific institute. However, to do him justice, the positive aspects of his directorship should also be mentioned:

1. The main reason for thinking more positively about Holleman's time in Leiden is the way he professionalized the ASC. He did this in two ways. First, fieldwork became an integral and prominent part of research, and researchers were thus made aware of the reality of life in Africa. Second, he also brought interdisciplinarity to African studies, long before the term was to become fashionable. As Africanist Albert Trouwborst remarked:

'The big man in the history of the ASC is Holleman, nonetheless. An uncomfortable gentleman, interesting man, high scientific level. He is the one who has really put the centre on the path of scientific research.'[201]

2 Holleman led the promised expansion of the ASC onto the right track, by hiring new and young staff members. Within a few years, the ASC grew to an institute of 13 researchers (without teaching obligations), a well-equipped library, new publishing facilities, and a more professional journal (*Kroniek van Afrika*).

3 Holleman brought his network to Leiden, and Leiden to his network. If one looks at the *Annual Reports* in the 1960s, at lectures and seminars given in Leiden at the time, and at the correspondence in the Holleman archives in Leiden, it is easy to see the effect of the contacts with Holleman's teachers and friends such as Isaac Schapera, Max Gluckman, Monica Wilson, and Elizabeth Colson.

Scientific director or manager?

In a way, the Holleman case makes one thing clear: a good researcher is not automatically a good manager of a scientific institute. Holleman's successor, Gerrit Grootenhuis, did not publish any significant book in his long career, but he listened carefully to the signs of the times, let the researchers at the ASC do what they thought was necessary, and facilitated their needs. He was to become the director of the ASC for a period of over 20 years, from 1969 to 1990.

The ASC *Annual Report* 1969 is hypocritical about Holleman's resignation: 'the institute owes him [Holleman] a lot: his name will inseparably be connected to the ASC.' Even more revealing is the policy plan of the ASC, dated June 1969 (*Nota betreffende het beleid van het Afrika-Studiecentrum*), which bears both Holleman's and Grootenhuis's names but is clearly written by the latter. The report looks inwards and talks more about internal organization and salaries than about goals and set-up of research. The telling Annex 2, signed by most researchers, states that 'all policy decisions need to be agreed on by the staff meeting'.

Within a year, the road ahead was clearly pointed out. The *Annual Report* 1969 stated: 'The Governing Body and the Council of Assistance […] decided not to appoint a new scientific director. Instead they handed over control to G.W. Grootenhuis (MA) who thereby became general secretary cum director' (p. 2). The ASC thus entered a new period, in which the researchers

201 Max de Bok: *Leer mij Afrika kennen: Vijftig jaar Afrika-Studiecentrum.* Leiden, 2000, p. 15 [my translation]

in fact gained control. This was in complete accordance with what the new director wanted: 'In line with my views [on scientific leadership], I decided to arrange the organization in such a way that in fact the scientific leadership would be in the hands of others at the ASC.'[202]

Back to the general question: does a research institute need a scientific director or a manager as director? Though managing a research institute is both a *contradictio in terminis* and a mission impossible, the answer is of course clear. The director of a research institute needs to have a solid scientific background; otherwise he or she will not be able to show the scientific road ahead, which also means setting priorities. At the same time, managerial skills such as the ability to make quick decisions and facilitate professionals, as well as political and financial insights, are necessary.

202 G.W. Grootenhuis, quoted in Max de Bok: *Leer mij Afrika kennen. Vijftig jaar Afrika-Studiecentrum.* Leiden, 2000, p. 22 [my translation].

18

History, politics and the public perception of Africa

Chibuike Uche

Introduction

During a recent visit to one of the countries in East Africa, a colleague and I had a meeting with the founder of a major European company that has existed in the said country for over 40 years and whose businesses currently employ over 2,000 Africans. This apparently very successful entrepreneur made it clear to us that his long stay in this African country was simply because he found paradise there. He complained, however, that the country had performed far below its potentials. He specifically suggested that if the country was run by Europeans, it would have been a paradise for all, including Africans. According to him, 'the only thing the country has achieved since it attained political independence was to quadruple its population.'

A 'politically correct' way to react to the above assertion will be to promptly label this very successful entrepreneur, a major employer of labour in Africa, a racist. In fact, under the current United Nations rules and regulations governing interracial and intercultural relations, he could be pronounced guilty of serious discrimination against Africans, which many would then label racism. This entrepreneur could therefore run into serious trouble for making the above assertion. Irrespective of whatever evidence he may have to support his opinion, international politics has simply made it illegal for people to make public their real views on such a highly politicized subject matter.

This paper argues that political developments have influenced what can be publicly said about Africa and its leaders without necessarily changing the real perception of the continent by the rest of the world. The result is that there is little correlation between what is publicly said and the actions of third parties with respect to several issues that concern the continent. While the governments of many developed countries publicly claim they are optimistic that the economies of African countries will surge and grow rapidly in

the coming years, their actions contradict such positive public opinions.[203] The reality is that despite the fact that Africa is the largest growing market (population) in the world, its share of world trade, both as an exporter and an importer, remains insignificant (World Trade Organization, 2015). It is perhaps as a consequence of this that most developed countries, and even emerging countries such as India, are increasingly dedicating less time and political resources to their dealings with Africa. International political conventions and rules that discourage the criticism of Africa and Africans, even when based on empirical observation, in actual fact do not in any way help the continent and its people.

Instead, a shift from politics to reality in describing and criticizing Africa and Africans will do much more to help the continent address the diverse causes of its backwardness. Taking into cognizance the level of economic and social development of various African countries will help to encourage African leaders to adopt and operationalize policies that can aid the sustainable economic development of their respective countries. Then and only then they may enjoy the rights and privileges that come with being honourable members of the international community of leaders—and not before. Correlating the international recognition of African leaders with the level of economic development in their respective countries will also help to encourage Africans to demand more from their leaders.

In order to achieve its aim, this contribution is divided into three parts. Space does not allow us to deal with the long history of European views on Africa, even if it is germane to the argument. That 19th century tale of colonization, exploitation, and blatant—even pseudo-scientific—racism is known all too well and has been analysed in depth elsewhere (see Crocker 1936). Since my argument addresses the present, we enter the timeline at World War II to review the dynamics of the public perception of Africa and Africans. The second part analyses the impact of the politicization of the abilities of Africans on the development of Africa, and the third part concludes the chapter.

World War II and the public perception of Africa

Human rights are a newcomer on the world stage, and certainly in the case of Africa; racism does not die easily. The pressure to advance human rights across the world had commenced by the early part of the 20th century. During the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, which led to the establishment of the League of Nations, for instance, the privilege of national self-determination

203 For evidence of such positive views, see for instance Obama (2015) and Jinping (2015).

was extended to several states in Eastern and Central Europe. Africa, however, did not benefit from the change. The whole idea of universal equality essentially started in the United States when President Franklin D. Roosevelt outlined his 'New Deal' vision in his 6 January 1941 speech to Congress (see Soohoo & Stolz 2008). His goal was to promote important humanitarian principles in the United States. Specifically, he argued that all Americans should have the right to the following four freedoms: freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom from fear, and freedom from want (Roosevelt 1941).

The commencement of World War II provided the window for President Roosevelt to extend his New Deal principles to the rest of the world. In August 1941, for instance, Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt met in Placentia Bay in Newfoundland to make common declarations of purpose with respect to the war. This meeting resulted in the promulgation of the Atlantic Charter. This 'was an American effort to ensure that Britain signed on to its liberal democratic war aims' (Ikenberry 1996: 83). It specifically made it clear that the signatories to the Charter must

> respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and [that] they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them. (Roosevelt & Churchill, 1941)

This declaration helped to raise the fighting morale of the resistance elements in the Nazi-occupied countries of Europe. In addition to the above, it also acted as a catalyst to pro-independence nationalists in most colonized countries, many of which were in Africa (Ezera 1964). It was after the signing of the Atlantic Charter that the 'normative principle of self-determination passed into customary international law' (Laing 1992: 209). Colonialism began to lose its legitimacy as an international institution (Jackson & Rosberg 1986).

Although Churchill later insisted that they had had only European states in mind when drafting the Charter, this view was rejected. President Roosevelt, for instance, declared that the Atlantic Charter applied to all humanity (quoted in Ezera 1964). The influence of Roosevelt's 1941 'Four Freedoms' speech in subsequent developments in human rights across the world has been articulated thus:

> The Four Freedoms were the first articulated norms to guide or govern nations in the realm of human rights. These ideals were the catalyst for subsequent developments in international law. In August 1941, President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill issued a declaration known as the

> Atlantic Charter. In January 1942, the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and their allies signed an agreement called the Declaration by United Nations. The Atlantic Charter, along with the Declaration by United Nations, embodied, articulated and universalized the values stated in the Four Freedoms. (Laing 1989: 114)

Subsequently, the 1945 United Nations Charter made it explicit that all nations have the right to self-governance. This set the stage for most African countries to gain political independence. Subsequent UN resolutions hammered the final nail into the coffin of the idea, which was widespread at the time, that a people could be inferior because of their culture or race. The 1965 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (the Racial Convention), for instance, explicitly stated:

> any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and [...] there is no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice, anywhere.

The Convention then went on to define racial discrimination thus:

> any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (United Nations 1965)

Plainly interpreted, the above convention implies that specificities of countries and territories must be respected by all and that no nation has the right to judge others based on their own standards and norms.

It was perhaps as a consequence of the above international political developments, which commenced with the signing of the Atlantic Charter, that the world began to view Africa and Africans in a new light. The march toward political independence heralded new optimism about Africa, both in Africa and in Western nations. In the 1950s, for instance, Kwame Nkrumah of Gold Coast (Ghana) enthusiastically declared that 'this mid-twentieth century is Africa's' (Enwezor 2001). In 1947, a decade before Ghana became independent, he boasted: 'If we get self-government […] we will transform the Gold Coast into a paradise in ten years' (Yergin & Stanislaw 1998). Nkrumah was not alone in his optimism about Africa. In 1960, Patrice Lumumba similarly declared: 'we are going to safeguard our national unity, for it is this unity

that will make the Congo a great nation in the heart of Africa' (see Klein & Licata 2003).

Even in the West, the optimism about the future of Africa was also widespread, and world leaders clearly showed this. On 8 March 1961, for instance, President John F. Kennedy personally received Nkrumah at the airport in Washington under the rain. This was a day after he had given a speech at the United Nations in New York. Later in the year, Vice President Lyndon Johnson extended the same courtesy to the visiting Nigerian Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.[204]

Yet, it did not take long for African leaders to begin to act in ways that helped to erode the newly found respect. Immediately after political independence, for instance, most African countries gradually metamorphosed into one-party states and dictatorships. President Milton Obote, the first post-independence President of Uganda, converted his country into a one-party state shortly before his ouster (Mazrui 1969-70). President Nkrumah of Ghana defended his transformation of Ghana into a one-party state by ingeniously arguing:

> I have established so many industries and institutions and I don't have enough competent people to man them. Many of the people who can do this are in the opposition. That was why later I found the only way out was to have a one-party state so we all belong. (CCTN Africa n.d.).

Once the one-party state was in place, Nkrumah declared himself Life President of Ghana. In 1965, President Felix Houphouet-Boigny's Party in Ivory Coast, the Parti democratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), was declared by its congress to be 'a single party, for a single people, with a single leader' (Toungara 1990). Not surprisingly, President Boigny, who was at various times referred to as Le Sage (the Wise Man), Le Vieux (the Old Man), or Nana (Grandfather), died in office after 33 years as president of his country. Another African 'life president', Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, tried to defend his self-proclaimed status on cultural grounds by arguing that democracy is alien to Africa. 'There was only one African chief and he ruled for life' (see Antwi-Boasiako & Okyere 2009: 144). The fact that he was not born a chief and that he seized power by force was of little consequence in his thinking.

Most African dictators did not stop, however, at declaring themselves president for life. In order to maintain their grip on power, some of them

204 See 8 March 1961 – President John F. Kennedy's Remarks of Welcome to President Nkrumah of Ghana, available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OzMa79TXTM [Accessed 2 January 2017]. See also Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's official visit to USA in July 25-28 1961, available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YT5m9Fn9RBg [Accessed 2 January 2017].

promulgated laws that allowed them to detain perceived enemies indefinitely. Nkrumah, for instance, promulgated the Preventive Detention Act, which allowed him to detain indefinitely any person he perceived as a threat, a law that contradicted the very 'freedoms' that lay at the foundation of African independence. The fact that such a law was passed by a parliament speaks volume about the ruling class in Africa.

Kwame Nkrumah, Obote, and Mobutu were not, however, the only African leaders that either acquired or tried to acquire the powers of a dictator. Others include Jean-Bedel Bokassa (Central Africa Republic), Sekou Toure (Guinea), Francisco Nguema (Equatorial Guinea), Kamuzu Banda (Malawi), Hamani Diori (Niger), Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), and Francois Tombalbaye (Chad). In fact, 'almost all of the African states, which broke away from the colonial yoke established one-party states' (CCTN n.d.). Instead of developing strong institutions, African leaders were busy turning themselves into 'strongmen'. The near absence of strong institutions across Africa helped institutionalize corruption across the continent.[205] This has been explained thus: 'African politics are based on private power, where individual loyalties and fear compliment [*sic*] a system of material incentives in replacing institutions of effective government.' The consequence of the above is that individuals in positions of power, rather than being guided by rules of office, 'are motivated by expediency and the pursuit of personal and factional aggrandizement'. Such leaders are, therefore, often 'courted, cajoled, convinced, and even bribed to agree to circumstances or procedures that are generally institutionalized processes in many industrialized states' (Thachuk 1989).

Put bluntly, it is difficult for economic interests groups and organizations in the continent to legitimately pursue their business without explicitly courting and bribing African leaders. According to Tiny Rowland, the managing director of Lonrho, the largest multinational company that has ever existed in Africa: 'These African leaders … are so corrupt that there's not a single one of them I could not buy' (The Observer [UK] 6 June 1993: 9). It was because of the widespread corruption in the continent that he concluded that 'the success of his activities in Africa depended on contacts at the highest possible level' and that 'ex gratia payments to individuals may be required to oil the wheels of business' (quoted in Uche 2016a: 131). Arguably, one of the most corrupt countries in Africa is its most populous, Nigeria. According to the managing director of Brunel, a Dutch multinational company which recently pulled out of Nigeria, 'it is impossible to do business without breaking the rules' in Nigeria (*DutchNews.NL*, 26 August 2015).

205 For detailed studies on corruption in Africa, see Nye (1967); Werlin (1973); Tanzi (1998); Ellis (2016).

The growing international regulation against corruption in business has done little to change the nature of doing business in Nigeria, which was recently described as 'fantastically corrupt' by former British Prime Minister, David Cameron. Even when home countries of multinational companies have punished such businesses and their officers for bribing Nigerian officials in order to facilitate business deals, their Nigerian collaborators, who have been well documented in court papers and pleadings abroad, have never been brought to book by the Nigerian state (Uche 2016b).

Another factor that helped institutionalize corruption across the continent was the military. The inability of African countries to establish institutions capable of ensuring peaceful transitions of power, coupled with the development of undisciplined and fragmented armed forces, helped open the floodgate to military coups across the continent. Among the African countries that since independence have witnessed coups or attempted coups are the following: Benin (5), Burkina Faso (10), Burundi (6), Central African Republic (5), Chad (5), Congo Brazzaville (4), Democratic Republic of Congo (3), Ghana (6), Guinea Bissau (4), Lesotho (4), Mauritania (6), Niger (4), Nigeria (8), Sierra Leone (5), and Uganda (6).

Coups are now less frequent in Africa, but that is mainly due to international pressures for democratization (Makinda 1996). Even the structure of the emergent democracies in several African countries is brittle and lacunar. In recent times national constitutions have been amended in order to extend the reign of presidents in Uganda, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Angola, and Burundi. We have also witnessed father-to-son transitions to power with presidents in Togo and Gabon. Although incoming African governments consistently accuse their predecessors of being corrupt, most end up being either as corrupt or even more so. Change of governments, violent or otherwise, has therefore done little to curb the corruption in the continent. Irrespective of the type of government in place, corruption remains rampant in most countries in Africa, not in the least because of the abundance of natural resources, and most civil wars and conflict in Africa have essentially been fuelled by the struggle for these resources. This was clearly the case in Nigeria, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, and Angola. Senseless mass killings have also taken place in Burundi and Rwanda.

Concerns about the abilities of Africans have also been influenced by the inability of African countries to systematically deal with adversity. Two obvious examples are the continent's response to the AIDS epidemic in the 1990s and to the more recent Ebola crisis. The AIDS epidemic ravaged several countries in East and Central Africa (see Iliffe 2006). More recently, Ebola killed thousands in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone and led to the near shutdown of their local economies (see WHO Ebola Research Team 2014).

In all these cases, local response proved abysmal, or inefficient at best. It is therefore safe to assert that most of the progress that has been made in curtailing the above epidemics might not have been possible without Western support.

These kinds of multiple crises led *The Economist* to declare Africa 'a hopeless continent' in 2000. The news magazine, which chronicled the widespread diseases, warfare, famine, floods, corruption, and abuse of office in Africa, concluded:

> [no] one can blame Africans for the weather, but most of the continent's shortcomings owe less to acts of God than to acts of man. These acts are not exclusively African—brutality, despotism and corruption exist everywhere—but African societies, for reasons buried in their cultures, seem especially susceptible to them. (*The Economist*, 11 May 2000)

In the midst of the above chaos, there have sometimes been rays of hope. When commodity prices soared in the 2000s, for instance, the economies of several African countries began to improve (*The Economist*, 2 March 2011). Countries with low population and abundant natural resources such as Botswana and Namibia naturally became the most outstanding beneficiaries of the high commodity prices. The standard of living indices of several African countries also improved. With high commodity prices, several African countries recorded trade surpluses with the rest of the world (Moussa 2016). It was these developments that led to the improved perception of Africa in some quarters. One such optimist was Professor Ton Dietz, who used his 2011 inaugural lecture at the University of Leiden to profess his faith in the future of the African continent. The title of his lecture 'Silverlining Africa: From images of doom and gloom to glimmers of hope: From places to avoid to places to enjoy' summarized his optimism about the future of the continent (Dietz 2011).

With the recent collapse of the international prices of commodities, most African economies have run into trouble. They find it difficult to curtail their taste for the foreign goods that they acquired when commodity prices were soaring. The rapidly increasing population of the continent has not helped matters. The result is that the trade deficits of African countries, along with the rest of the world, again started rising (Moussa 2016). In light of the change, it is not surprising that several countries in the continent have witnessed depreciation of their local currencies in recent times. Notable examples are Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, and Zambia; exceptions are the Francophone countries whose currencies are guaranteed by the French Treasury. There are also growing concerns about food security in the continent. Even

during the periods when African countries were being hailed as improving economically, the leaders in several of these countries were busy selling their lands to foreigners. The fact that the size of the African lands is finite and that the populations of these countries have been rising rapidly did little to curb the actions of Africans and their leaders. Based on the actions of African leaders, it is not surprising that the majority of the countries with food security problems in the world today are in Africa (Nnabuko & Uche 2015). Even optimists like Professor Dietz have now revised their position on the future of the continent.

Perception vs convention: Impact on Africa

One consequence of the current United Nation's rules proclaiming the equality of human races and cultures is that it is now very difficult to criticize African leaders without being branded a racist or a neocolonialist. The world has grown very weary of racial slurs, and racism has become the big taboo—the history of South African apartheid and the emancipation of Afro-Americans in the United States have seen to that. African leaders have jumped on that band-wagon, using the blunt instrument of the accusation of racism against any criticism, even when supported by convincing evidence. Thus, what many leaders from the developed world publicly say about Africa can be quite different from what they actually mean: they have been muzzled by the politics of the United Nations. Defining Africa as hopeless, for whatever reason, after the Atlantic Charter of 1941 is no longer possible. Those who have tried to do so have been ridiculed, irrespective of the evidence they provide. In 1969, for instance, Professor Arthur Jensen, an educational psychologist and a professor at the University of Berkeley, became the first high-profile casualty of the international politicization of human ability. This was after he published the findings of his research which had investigated why compensatory and remedial education programmes, begun with such high hopes during the 'war on poverty' in the United States, yielded such disappointing results. Jensen noted that the youngsters in the targeted populations were disproportionately blacks and that historically blacks as a population had exhibited average IQs substantially below those of whites. He then concluded that the programmes were bound to have little success because they were aimed at populations of youngsters with relatively low IQs. He argued that success in school depended to a considerable degree on IQ and that IQ had a large heritable component (Jensen 1969). The foundation for Jensen's controversial study was laid in 1967 when he delivered a lecture at the annual meeting of the California Advisory Council of Educational Research (see Jensen 1967).

Jensen was roundly denounced and condemned. One of his most vocal critiques was Jerry Hirsh, who described the work as a 'disgrace' (Hirsch 1975: 3). During the first few years after Jensen published his controversial article, he 'could appear in no public forum in the United States without triggering something perilously close to a riot' (Herrnstein & Murray 1994). In 1994, Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray added fodder to the Jensen controversy when they published their controversial book which explored the role of intelligence in understanding social problems in America. Their conclusions were similar to Jensen's (Herrnstein & Murray 1994). The controversy surrounding the book was so intense that the American Psychological Association set up a Task Force to investigate the claims in the book. The report of the Task Force agreed that blacks have lower IQs than whites but was unable to explain why. According to the report:

> African American IQ scores have long averaged about 15 points below those of Whites, with correspondingly lower scores on academic achievement tests…. The cause of that differential is not known; it is apparently not due to any simple form of bias in the content or administration of the tests themselves. The Flynn effect shows that environmental factors can produce differences of at least this magnitude, but that effect is mysterious in its own right. Several culturally based explanations of the Black/White IQ differential have been proposed; some are plausible, but so far none has been conclusively supported. There is even less empirical support for a genetic interpretation. In short, no adequate explanation of the differential between the IQ means of Blacks and Whites is presently available. (Neisser et al. 1996: 97).

In 2007 the above controversy was again ignited when James Watson, winner of the 1962 Nobel Prize in Medicine, claimed that scientific evidence in support of the superiority of whites will soon emerge as the 'genes responsible for creating differences in human intelligence could be found within a decade'. According to Watson, there

> is no firm reason to anticipate that the intellectual capacities of peoples geographically separated in their evolution should prove to have evolved identically. Our wanting to reserve equal powers of reason as some universal heritage of humanity will not be enough to make it so. (see Milmo 2007)

Elsewhere, Watson has argued that it is wrong to prioritize politics over science in such important issues (Watson 1997).

Again, these assertions instantly provoked widespread anger and condemnation. Keith Vaz, the then Labour chairman of the UK Home Affairs

Select Committee, asserted: 'It is sad to see a scientist of such achievement making such baseless, unscientific and extremely offensive comments.' He further asserted: 'These comments serve as a reminder of the attitudes which can still exist at the highest professional levels.' Anti-racism campaigners demanded that Watson's remarks be examined in the context of racial hatred laws. Specifically, they argued:

> It is astonishing that a man of such distinction should make comments that seem to perpetuate racism in this way. It amounts to fueling bigotry and we would like it to be looked at for grounds of legal complaint. (Milmo 2007)

The fact that Africa's reputation as the poorest, most backward, most corrupt, and most conflict-prone continent in the world may actually provide some circumstantial evidence in support of the above assertion is swept under the carpet. Of course, there is no need to resort to racial arguments to explain the failing performance, since many other arguments can be adduced; but my point is that the knee-jerk reaction to brand any criticism as racism prevents any serious analysis of the problem.

So Western leaders are cautious about what they say publicly about Africans and their leaders—praising them in public, while judging severely in private. Thanks to Wikileaks, national archives, the body language and actions of world leaders, and microphone accidents, we learned that some world leaders have no respect for most African countries and their leaders. Thanks to a microphone accident, we learned that former Prime Minister Cameron mockingly described Nigeria as a fantastically corrupt country. Surely, no British leader will ever say such a thing in public; similar evidence from archives consistently shows that most African leaders are not taken seriously in the West. The publicly proclaimed optimism about the future of Africa by such leaders has not been matched by actions toward the continent. Internationally, for instance, Africa is increasingly being treated as one country. It is now normal practice that African leaders are invited as a group by specific world powers as part of advancing their relationship with the entire African continent. The United States, China, and Turkey have done so, and a country like India, with its own colonial past, recently invited all African leaders to Delhi for such a summit: the notion of 'Africa rising' seem to be political rhetoric.

Unfortunately, such rhetoric benefits the rulers of Africa to the detriment of their citizens. We need to rethink the current international politics surrounding the whole concept of equality of cultures and people. Since few dispute the fact that Africa is economically and developmentally backward and that culture may be a causative factor in its current undesirable state, it is

in the interest of all that such cultures should be objectively studied. This will definitely help Africa and Africans to forge a viable path forward. After all, understanding a problem is a necessary first step toward finding a remedy. In the meantime, the establishment of a phased and objective procedure that extends recognition to leaders in Africa (and elsewhere) who meet measurable criteria of good governance will be of immense benefit to the African people. At the very least, it will provide the much-needed incentive for African leaders to put their houses in order and pull their people out of poverty. Leaders who plunder their countries and/or are unable to lift their countries out of mass poverty should not be recognized as honourable and equal members of the international community of leaders; doing so removes any incentive for such leaders to aspire to lead their countries out of their economic backwardness. Rather, undeserved membership of international bodies helps give credibility to corrupt and inept African leaders and aid their ability to cling to power at all costs. Appropriately granting international recognition to leaders based on pre-agreed rules and standards will provide an added incentive for such leaders to promote good governance and development in their home countries.

Conclusion

With respect to measured intelligence and aptitude, few experts dispute that there are differences between Blacks and Whites (Snyderman & Rothman 1987). The least controversial explanation for such differences is that it is rooted in culture. A more contentious explanation is that which suggests that the difference is genetic and that Africans are inferior to other races. Since definite scientific proof of this has yet to emerge, it is plausible to conclude, as *The Economist* did in 2010, that the difference is based on culture. Unfortunately, United Nations resolutions have made it a taboo to suggest that diverse human species may differ in intelligence even when culture is the causative factor. This has made it difficult for the objective study of such causative factors to take place with the aim of enhancing efficiency and productivity. The unintended consequence of the politicization of equality of cultures and people is the legitimization of inept and corrupt governments in several African countries by the international community. Unfortunately, the main beneficiaries of the politicization of equalization of cultures are the African leaders who are officially recognized as national leaders and thus granted similar privileges to other national leaders in international settings. Unconditionally granting such privileges to undeserving leaders not only legitimizes their hold on power but also encourages them never to give up power voluntarily. Although there are usually variances between the official

policies and actions of several developed and emerging countries in dealing with impoverished and unstable African countries, it is rarely extended to the ruling class in such countries. Many African leaders therefore relish the privileges of such recognition and shirk the responsibilities that come with their privileged position. Unhindered passage around the world, for instance, is one of the diplomatic privileges African leaders (and their families) normally enjoy. Domestic regulations are usually promulgated to ensure that the state finance such privileges. The same, however, cannot be said of the citizens of such African countries that have to live with the real consequences of their national poverty. Practices that help perpetrate lifelong rulership and inequality between African leaders and their people are sometimes shamelessly defended on cultural grounds (Antwi-Boasiako & Okyere 2009).

So it is obvious that the idea of politicizing and equalizing cultures and races benefits African leaders to the detriment of the majority of Africans. There is thus a need to remove politics from the cultural and racial equality debate. Measurable and objective thresholds should be established for the recognition of leaders in the international community. This will help equalize the international benefits of leaders and citizens in backward countries. It is the wide variance in opportunities and lifestyle between the rulers and the ruled that is responsible for the widespread desperation to remain in the corridors of power in Africa, whatever the cost. The international community is therefore not doing Africa any favours by hobnobbing, under the pretence of being equals as heads of countries, with African leaders who have no interest in raising the economic and living standards of their people.

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19

Some reflections on Africa's changing educational landscape in the current age of global restructuring

Mayke Kaag

In this essay I aim to link Ton's passion for teaching and his commitment to education to a research theme that is also close to his heart—namely, the theme of 'Africa in the World'.

Africa's relations with the so-called emerging powers, the new poles in the current multipolar world, such as China, India, and Brazil, have mostly been analysed in their economic and/or political aspects—and also Ton has mainly covered these elements in his lectures and presentations. However, the emergence of new global players is not only affecting the economic and political domain in Africa but is also influencing its educational landscape. Thus, one can observe Islamic schools funded by Islamic charities from the Gulf countries, Korean educational projects, and Turkish private schools, while there is also an increasing number of African students who get a scholarship to go to study in Malaysia, China, or Brazil. In the following, I will start by reflecting on why this development is important, illustrate my argument by some preliminary findings from my research on Turkish schools in Senegal, and round off by presenting a framework for a research agenda—so as to reassure Ton that after his retirement, both education and Africa's global connections will remain firmly on the agenda.

African engagements: On whose terms? Education as an important research field

Already in our volume *African Engagements: On Whose Terms?* (Dietz et al. 2011), we underlined the importance of developing an African perspective on current processes of global restructuring in which the West has increasingly lost its hegemony, with other emerging and emerged global powers taking the stage. The volume contained chapters on a diversity of topics that are

relevant to Africa's changing position in the world. Education was not included as a theme, but I would like to argue that education is indeed an important research field if one aims to better understand Africa's changing global connections, their impact on the ground, and what this may yield for Africa's future. The first reason is rather straightforward: education is generally considered as a prerequisite for development (World Bank 2011), and I would like to underline that this holds true not only for economic development, but also for political development and democracy, as educated and lettered citizens are better able to hold their rulers to account (Kaag & Zoomers 2014).

Secondly, education is important in that it influences one's worldview. For realizing this, we need only to look at African history: education has been an instrument in the hands of competing powers and a battlefield where representatives of different worldviews have fought each other since colonial times (Duke Bryant 2015; Launay 2016). At independence, many African countries inherited the school system from the colonial powers, which means that, until today, pupils in Francophone West Africa learn a lot about France in terms of history, geography, culture, and literature, and—if they are lucky—pursue their studies in France. The same holds true for Anglophone African countries. In general, it can be safely stated that these educational legacies have contributed to an orientation toward the West. This was understood quite early by Islamic charities from the Gulf countries working in Africa, which often fund educational projects such as schools. In these schools, the children not only learn Arabic; they also learn history from the viewpoint of the Islamic world rather than from that of Europe. Children in such schools get acquainted with another worldview, with no longer the West but the Arab world as the centre (Kaag 2012, 2015)

Thirdly, precisely because of the fact that education influences one's worldview, education also influences linkages between individuals (and societies) and the rest of the world. Let me illustrate this by some examples. The first concerns a Senegalese public intellectual who is currently in his sixties. He had received Qur'anic schooling and pursued his schooling in a *medersa*, studied Arabic, and started to teach Arabic in an Arabo-French school himself. Arabisants (people who have followed the Arabic education system) have difficulties in entering the public service, certainly in his time one of the most important providers of qualified jobs. Luckily, at that time, the first transnational Islamic NGOs from the Gulf countries started to work in West Africa; and after having done some translation work for them, in 1984 he became the first Senegalese director of a transnational Islamic charity (he led the regional office in Dakar). In 1987, he became the regional director of one of the largest Saudi charities and after that worked in Riyadh and Dubai for other Islamic charities, before returning to Senegal. My second example

concerns a Senegalese sociologist who followed the Francophone public education system. In his final university year, he met a Dutch Africanist, who proposed to him to do a PhD in the Netherlands. He gladly accepted this, and now, some twenty years later and a professor at the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, he is still building on his Dutch connections, as he is often asked for consultancies and projects funded by Dutch agencies and to collaborate with Dutch colleagues. My last example concerns the son of one of my Senegalese friends. She sent her 12-year-old son to a Turkish school in Dakar for his secondary education. From day 1 onwards, the boy has learned Turkish, he interacts with Turkish teachers, and goes to Turkey for a summer school. Probably, he will go to Turkey for further studies, and I can imagine that within 10 or 15 years' time, he will have become a Senegalese businessman trading with Turkey.

The foregoing examples can be supplemented by many others. African students, for instance, also increasingly go to China for their education. They learn the language and start getting acquainted with Chinese people and Chinese ways of doing. From this perspective, Africa's changing educational landscape is extremely interesting, also with an eye on Africa's future and its (political and economic) connections to the rest of the world.

The preceding observations have been partly developed on the basis of my research on the work of Islamic charities from the Gulf region in Africa. Attempts to think my findings through from the broader perspective of 'Africa in the World' triggered my interest in the phenomenon of Turkish schools in Africa. During my fieldwork, I occasionally heard people referring to these schools, but once I started to pay attention to them, I realized that it is a rather recent but nevertheless a widespread trend, as I encountered them in every West African country that I visited. In March 2016, I started a research project into these Turkish schools in Senegal, from which I will present some preliminary findings in the following sections.

Turkish schools and the Gülen movement

So-called Turkish schools have popped up in most West African countries (and elsewhere in the world; they are present in some 140 countries, including the Netherlands) over the last one or two decades. These schools are linked to the Gülen movement. Fethullah Gülen is a Turkish Muslim writer who developed a philosophy of education that aims to reconcile religion with science (Dohrn 2013). He distinguishes between teaching and education, education being more than just transferring knowledge. By contrast, his understanding of education is 'the illumination of the mind in science and

knowledge, and the light of the heart in faith and virtue' (Gülen, quoted in Dohrn 2013). The Gülen schools are private, secular schools. While Gülen's inspiration is clearly in Islam, no Islamic education is offered, but a kind of universalistic moral education focused on values. The strategy is not *da'wa* (proselytizing) but setting a good example (Tittensor 2015). These good examples are provided by the teachers, who are followers of Gülen. Their commitment to the educational cause is called *hizmet*, a religiously inspired service to the community.

A large number of the Gülen schools are financially supported by wealthy followers of Gülen, mainly Turkish entrepreneurs. One of the interesting aspects of the Gülen movement is that these entrepreneurs help the global spread of the schools, while the schools also help the soft landing of Turkish entrepreneurs in several African countries (Dorhn 2015).

Turkish schools in Senegal

Senegal's educational landscape was for a long time characterized by the dichotomy between a public school system that was secular, and a diverse range of private schools that for the most part had a religious attachment. The latter category included Catholic and Protestant schools (originating from colonial missions) but importantly also Islamic schools, ranging from traditional *daaras* (Quranic schools) to *medersas* (French-Arab schools) for primary and secondary education. For tertiary education within Senegal, the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar for a long time was the only option. Depending on their educational background, some students were able to go to Europe or to the Middle East for their studies. During the Cold War, a scholarship for studying in the Soviet Union was also an option that was taken by a substantial number of Senegalese students.

This educational landscape has diversified over the last few decades, among other things through the national educational reform of the early 2000s, which put an end to the strictly secular character of public education by the introduction of religion into the curriculum of primary schools in 2002 and the opening of the first public *medersas* in 2003 (Bodian & Villalon 2015). At tertiary level, alongside the establishment of public universities in different parts of the country (such as in Saint-Louis in 1990 and in Ziguinchor in 2007), private universities have also been established. Examples include Dakar American University of Technology and the Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba University in Touba, the latter institution being founded in 2008 by the Senegalese Mouride Sufi order as part of its longer existent Al-Azhar School Network (Babou 2016). In addition, options for studying abroad have diversified, with an increasing number of Senegalese students being able to

pursue their studies in, for instance, Morocco, China, or South Africa. In this increasingly diverse landscape of educational options, the Turkish Gülen schools for primary and secondary have come to stand out as particularly attractive options for some categories of the Senegalese population.

Senegal was one of the first West African countries where the Gülen movement started to establish schools; the one in Dakar dates from 1994. More recently, Gülen schools have opened their doors in Kaolack, Thies, Zichuinchor, and Saint-Louis. The schools in Dakar cover pre-school, primary, and secondary education for boys and girls separately; in the other towns, education so far covers the pre-school and primary level for boys only. The schools offer high-quality education; but as the fees are quite high, they are mainly attracting the aspiring middle class and well-off elites. Scholarships are available for poor children with excellent school results.

When I visited the Collège Yavuz Selim in Dakar in March 2016, I was quite surprised by the outlook of the school, so different from other Senegalese schools and in stark contrast with the neighbourhood where it is situated. As one of the parents stated: 'When you enter the school, it is as if you enter Turkey.' The large building, painted in bright yellow, is very well kept and tidy, with bright posters representing scientific topics on the walls. The main courses are taught by Turkish teachers; other courses can also be taught by Senegalese teachers. Teaching is done through Turkish and English. Every class of pupils has a Turkish tutor who has an important task as a role model and offers an example of moral education. In this way, scientific and moral education go hand in hand. The idea is that these pupils can become the new generation of leaders, who will then have not only an excellent intellectual training but also an excellent moral education (see also Dohrn 2013).

The first alumni of the school in Dakar have already started their professional careers. Some of them have integrated as teachers in the school. When asked about possible collaboration with Turkish entrepreneurs, one of the Turkish teachers told me that some of the alumni have indeed started to work with a group of female Turkish entrepreneurs.

Despite the very good results of the schools, I encountered mixed feelings among the parents. First of all, language barriers and cultural differences are leading to communication problems and irritation, for instance, about the school fees. Despite the fact that these are mentioned on the school's website, there is a lack of clarity about the school fees among the parents. They complain about the fact that the fees have increased over the past few years but that they do not know the reason for this. In addition, it appears that there are many exceptions concerning the fees to pay—for instance, in the case of excellent pupils and pupils from the countryside—and the reasons and rules are unclear to the parents. It is not entirely plain to me whether this is mainly

a language problem or mainly a cultural one, Turkish and Senegalese possibly having a different attitude toward speaking about financial issues.

A clear language issue is involved in the communication between the class tutors and the parents. One of the Turkish class tutors told me that in order to get connected to the home environment of his pupils, he visits them at home to meet the parents. This is related to the educational philosophy of the Gülen movement, which is that education is a broad undertaking that has to start at home and be taken up in school, and finally also in society. However, in view of the fact that the tutor did not speak French or Wolof, I was wondering how he would fulfil this task.

Clear cultural differences do not help the smooth connection between the schools and the Senegalese either: the separate boys' and girls' schools, not shaking hands, and so on, as promoted by the Turkish, do not sit well with many of the parents, who often adhere to one of the Islamic Sufi orders dominant in Senegal. In addition, these—in their view conservative—cultural habits do not fit their aspirations to being modern and economically successful elites.

Interestingly, the members of the parents' committee told me they had no idea about Gülen and his philosophy when they sent their children to the school and that they received information about this only when they went on a trip to Turkey organized for them by the school. They had mainly chosen to register their children at Yavuz Selim because of the good academic results of the school.

After my first steps in this new research field in March 2016, developments in Turkey in the summer of 2016 greatly changed the fate and prospects of my research object. An unsuccessful coup d'état against Turkey's President Erdogan led him to accuse Fettulah Gülen of being the instigator. A real witch-hunt against Gülen's followers in Turkey and beyond followed, including a request to the United States to extradite Gülen to Turkey in order to stand trial. Turkey put increased[206] pressure on many governments to close the Gülen schools in their countries. In Senegal, the Turkish teachers started the new school year by keeping a low profile, not speaking out, and waiting to see what would happen. At some point, there were rumours that the Gülen schools in Senegal would be closed; but it appears that in the end, the schools have remained open, the leadership of the schools however being replaced. I have not yet been back after these events, but the website of Yavuz Selim looks remarkably similar to how it looked before.

206 In fact, pressure had already started in the years before, when the once close relationship between Gülen and Erdogan began to deteriorate.

Conclusion: Toward a research agenda

The foregoing presentation of some preliminary research results has shown that Turkish schools in Africa are a promising field of investigation in view of Africa's changing global connections and how these take shape in, and through, education. I am currently developing a research methodology to further flesh out the processes involved, at the individual level, the institutional level, and the national/international level.

Thus, it will be extremely insightful to follow the alumni of these schools: what does their education path mean to individuals? Do these alumni indeed become a new generation of Senegalese leaders? If so, what are the consequences at the national level and for Senegalese international relations?

Secondly, I aim to investigate the school as a focal point of connections: connections between pupils and teachers, connections between parents and members of the Gülen movement (e.g. Turkish entrepreneurs, Turkish charities), and connections between the school and the neighbourhood. What do these connections bring in terms of opportunities/constraints for different parties?

Finally, it will be important to include the national and international level and to investigate how the Gülen schools are being used in geo-political strategies, those of the Erdogan government, the Gülen movement, and the Senegalese government. The latter has a great interest in having good relationships with the Turkish government, but also with the Turkish business community,[207] and with its own elites.

Returning to the larger perspective of Africa's changing educational landscape, as outlined at the beginning of this chapter, one of the main aims of this research is to contribute to answering the following question: Does the diversification of educational options lead to polarization in Senegalese society (such as the already existing Arabophone/Francophone divide), or to more diversified connections leading to better economic and political opportunities for Senegalese society as a whole?

In this respect, this research directly links to Ton's interest in reflecting on Africa's future, starting with his inaugural lecture 'Silverlining Africa' and followed by subsequent analyses integrating new developments. The topic also links to other current questions concerning both education in Africa and African studies, related to a 'decolonization of the mind' (Wa-Thiongo 1993; see also Amoah 2011). One only has to think of the current struggle at South African universities to get rid of apartheid legacies in higher education, or

207 In April 2016, two Turkish companies won the bid for finishing Senegal's national airport.

the discussion in African studies concerning the role of African scholars in the academic debate and the curriculum of African studies. These questions are quite complex and not so easy to answer, but at least Ton has dared to address them.

The question of 'African engagements: on whose terms?' remains topical, also in the sphere of education. A more diversified educational landscape at least offers the (theoretical) opportunity to choose between systems and worldviews. African bottom-up approaches to knowledge formation, also beyond academia—such as those tried by some West African colleagues in the framework of the IIAS Mellon-funded project 'Humanities without Borders',[208] and PADEV-like approaches of community learning (Dietz 2013)—are important as a counterweight to external influences and add to this landscape as well.

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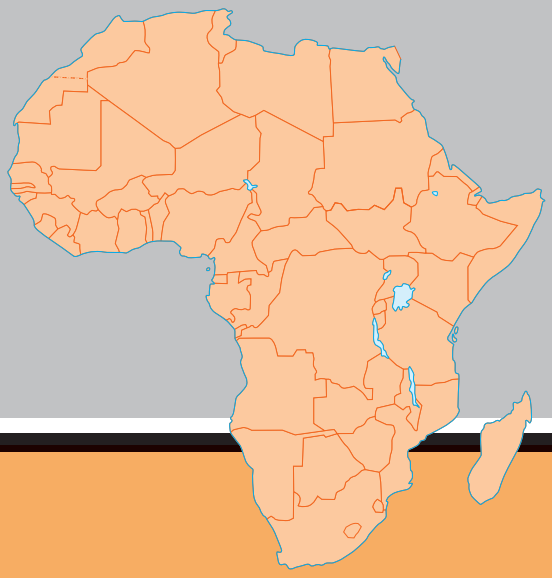

Occasional Publication 28

This volume is an homage to Ton Dietz who served as Director of the African Studies Centre, Leiden, from May 2010 to September 2017 and as Professor of the Study of African Development, at Leiden University. Colleagues and former colleagues at the African Studies Centre want to show their appreciation for him, both as a director and as a scholar – and even as a stamp collector – by zooming in on the topics he has engaged in during his long career.
As Ton Dietz has a wide and encompassing interest in Africa, so the 19 essays in this volume range wide and address three broad themes, which the editors (Wouter van Beek, Jos Damen & Dick Foeken) have suggested to the contributors: coping with Africa, the relation between people and environment, and development. The latter issue forms the topic of his inaugural address at Leiden University on 14 January 2011, entitled 'Silverlining Africa'.
Ton Dietz studied human geography in Nijmegen (1969-1976), and in 1987 at the University of Amsterdam defended his PhD based on fieldwork among the Pokot of Kenya; in 1995 he was appointed Professor of Human Geography at the same University of Amsterdam. From 2002 until 2007 he was a (part-time) Professor of Social Sciences at Utrecht University and the Scientific Director of CERES, the Research School for Resource Studies for Development. He was the Scientific Director of AMIDSt, Amsterdam Research Institute for Metropolitan and International Development Studies in 2008 and 2009.

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