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Conclusion

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Introduction

The quest for comparative perspective on the role of values and culture in development in African societies continues. If there is one matter that has become clear in the process of putting together the results of this book, it is that there are all sorts of gaps in what we can put together without comprehensive new research. The aim of this section is not to try to summarise the results of each section, but to reflect on where the different inputs have brought us in terms of the research questions posed at the beginning and to reflect on the current limitations and future possibilities of our work. However, we need to elucidate the gaps in what has been possible to do on the basis of the material that is available for comparative research first.

The first level of problems emanate from the fact that the research that has been done ever since independence came to Southern African countries has always been dominated by models and theoretical frameworks that are a product of the industrialised and primarily Western countries; and therefore, the dynamics, problems and consciousness that framed the research has been less than appropriate for the African situation.

A second problem is simply that we do not have enough data collected systematically and over a long period of time to be able to assess dynamics as they play out in African societies. This is partially due to the instability of many African countries; but mostly because central institutions like universities and government institutions have not had the funding and the capacity to develop long-term processes and maintain them. A bare minimum of statistics is available in most countries, but the data is mostly standard demographic and economic data and one does not have anything to work with that helps the cause of

establishing the impact of values and culture in society. If one compares what would be possible in terms of analysis on the basis of the General Social Survey in the USA and what is possible in Southern Africa, the point becomes clear enough.

The third problem is ideological. The research that has been done in African societies that would be relevant to our quest, has been couched in terms that are often very relevant in Europe and North America but not so clearly relevant here. Research in Africa has also been dogged by ideological limitations emanating from the very clear and continuing need to make the point that African societies have been decimated by the effects of colonial and post-colonial structures. This has very often meant that the research done by Africans stops at the point where the connection between exploitation and African underdevelopment has been made. To go further seems too much like blaming the victim to be politically feasible; it will not attract government funding or funding from large local agencies and to strive for support from multi-lateral and international bodies may mean that the agenda for the research is again determined elsewhere. These are issues that CODESRIA has been dealing with since its inception and the aim of fostering and developing comparative research is a clear attempt to do something about the problem. The development of the Afrobarometer has helped a lot in generating data that can assist; but an opinion survey that is dominated by issues of public concern cannot deliver the full scope of aspects that is required for a values and cultural analysis.

Reflection on Research Questions

We asked whether values can explain poverty and continuous exploitation in Southern Africa. It is not clear that values can do so. The work values and work ethos arguments would seem to be good candidates to support such claims. The assumption that while people are poor and desperate they have a short-term and instrumental approach to work and to the fruits of labour and no real commitment to work as such is not borne out by the analysis. In fact, Southern African countries (or at least the countries that we were able to survey) are moderately European in their approach to these matters.

We asked whether it was possible to explain the fact of survival on the basis of values; and in that played to the gallery that would say that African communalism and social solidarity is a fundamentally African characteristic. We found some historical and anthropological evidence of solidarity constructs that could be enduring, but quite importantly, also evidence of competitiveness among African siblings and family that could be argued to facilitate an opposite argument. None of these directions could be confirmed in data analysis. There is evidence of consensus seeking and the variation point more or less in the direction of

survival as the more desperate countries are more consensus-seeking. However, the analysis itself is limited in that it does not attempt a multilevel explanation of the aspects analysed, partly because the nature of the investigation is explorative and partly because the data that would enable a multilevel analysis is not always easy to find. In the work value analysis we found that it was impossible to locate a reliable set of information on unemployment in a particular country, and could not control for that variable in our analysis (we were later on informed that such data does exist, but at the time of the analysis this was not possible to find).

We asked whether values or cultural aspects could be defined that could play a pivotal role in development in the future in Southern Africa. There are many aspects that one could speculate on, but to claim that we have identified such notions would be dishonest. One of the aspects that we would like to consider as candidates is the work values that do seem to exist. When given the opportunity, and in the right structural framework, it seems that African workers can be incredibly productive and deliver quality (the BMW plant in Pretoria South Africa has achieved the top industry award for quality production in the world, 2003b). Another aspect that we would like to investigate more fully is the balance between competitive and social solidarity aspects. We know that productivity as measured in industry is also a function of cost and that the kind of sibling competitiveness that is balanced by matrilineal solidarity in communities that we have put forward material on could also have downsides. Investigation is needed.

We asked whether political-economy dynamics, demographic change and geographic features can be understood better in development terms by the addition of the values question. It seems to be clear that demographic change, on the most fundamental level, is affected by values and these values are in turn affected by demographic change (Chapter 4). It seems clear that particular political choices and frameworks are related to values that we have identified (Chapter 5). The nature of these relationships is a difficult question though. We were not able to establish the causal direction in many analyses that are presented. It is always difficult; but it is just about impossible if the range of questions addressed is as wide as what we discuss and many of the macro-variables are so difficult to obtain.

We asked whether different development paths in different countries could be explained by virtue of insight into the values variations that may exist. We have found some variation in values between countries, but the number of countries that we have data on and the failure of important constructs that we imported from other analyses in Europe and the developed world precludes a definitive answer to the question. The question has to be delimited more carefully, and more specific analyses would have to be done to answer the matter in any sensible way.

Reflection on Key Concepts

The research questions that we posed led us to the concepts discussed in Chapter 3. We indicated the exploratory and tentative nature of our detailing of the conceptual scheme while expressing a stronger commitment to the idea that a values perspective will have to deal with cosmology, power, human relationships and human qualities. Having gone through the list of items that we produced in our initial reflection on the matter with more attention to the content of the basic concepts, and with due attention to the aspects listed under these concepts, we might consider reducing or even reordering the structure of the argument.

The fundamental realisation has been that power, cosmology and relationships cover the ground in a quite balanced way and the fact that the rest of the concepts were put in a basket with a label of human qualities was the result of less than fundamental conceptualisation in the initial phases of the project. It becomes clear what the logic is when a serious and contextualised discussion of any cosmological aspect points to the power relationships and the social nature of the cosmological aspect that the triangle between cosmology, power and relationships would be a more fundamental conceptualisation.

The interesting part of this has been the quite important role of anthropological material on cosmological concepts. These kinds of arguments are often missing in sociological analyses and do not feature in any significant way in political or economic analyses. The logical direction of any attempt at discussion of values and culture has to be that meaning is at stake and that the meaning that is at stake is not only instrumentally and functionally defined. The methodologies of anthropology help elicit these kinds of meaning much better, and although we were not able to present our own qualitative material as we intended to, it is clear that this aspect of the triangulation that the methodological section speaks about is of critical importance in a full analysis of the role of values in development. It is even more important in the African context as the concepts that are to be investigated in the quantitative dimensions of such studies have to be developed from the ground up and cannot be assumed to be clear and available as seems to be the case in Europe and the industrialised and developed countries in the world that the European Values Study and the World Values Survey serve well enough.

African Research Required

We would like to take most of the concepts that we have developed some understanding of and ask ordinary people to respond to the aspects in terms of whether it could be the reason for various dynamics in the development of their well-being. This would make an African comparative study of the role of values in development possible. It is the proper way of developing constructs for quantitative analysis to investigate preliminary ideas in available literature and in

the field adapt and learn from those encounters before venturing out with quantitative constructs and the items that support such constructs. This has to be done in the African context in a manner that is not as dependent on the existing pattern of quantitative research in African values as is the case in the World Values Survey. We propose that we have done some of the work that proves the need for alternative constructs and that we have done some of the work needed to facilitate the first phase of qualitative investigation of the relevant constructs. This can now be taken further in a meaningful manner. The dialogue that we are hoping for could consider the concepts and arguments put forward in Section 2 of the book.



Appendix: Country Reports¹

Botswana

Since attaining independence in 1966, Botswana has emerged as one of Africa's most stable democracies, performing well on issues such as human rights and corruption (BBC News 2007). Its last democratic election was held in 2004 when Festus Mogae was re-elected as president for a second term. Although Botswana is considered to be a relatively stable democracy, with a score of 0.7 on the World Bank political stability ranking, the government has been criticised for its treatment of the Barsawa Bushmen. According to some accounts, the Barsawa have been forcefully removed from their traditional homes in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, causing tension, not only between the Bushmen and the Botswana government, but also between the Botswana government and the international community. Nevertheless, the various ethnic groups in Botswana (the Tswana, Kalanga, Kgalagadi and Europeans) generally live in relative harmony. Christianity is the dominant religion in Botswana (having 71.6 per cent of the population confirmed), while atheism is also widespread (20.6 per cent) (CIA World Fact Book 2007, Country Watch 2007).

Despite its democratic success, HIV/Aids has proven to be a major threat in the country. In 2003, it was established that 37.3 per cent of Botswana's 1.6 million inhabitants are infected with HIV/Aids. This has had a major impact on life expectancy, which has dropped to 33.74 years. HIV/Aids has also had a negative impact on population growth, creating a negative growth rate of -0.04 per cent, which is a new precedent for Africa. Yet, in reaction to the devastation that HIV/Aids has caused, Botswana has instituted 'one of Africa's most advanced treatment programmes' (BBC News 2007).

Botswana is considered to be politically free according to the Freedom House rankings (Piano & Puddington 2005). However, its human rights record presents some obstacles. Although human rights are generally respected, press freedom has sometimes been limited by the government, prison conditions are poor and overcrowded, child abuse is rising and ethnic violence against the Barsawa has emerged. Nevertheless, Botswana is ranked 131st out of 177 countries on the Human Development Index (Country Watch 2007, World Fact Book 2007).

Despite Botswana's democratic success, gender equality and representation continues to be a problem. In parliament, only 11.1 per cent of MPs are women, a relatively low percentage for Southern African standards considering that more than a third of MPs are women in Mozambique, South Africa and Tanzania (Parliament of South Africa 2007). Although Botswana is slowly moving towards gender equality, the customary nature of its legal system remains problematic in terms of gender equality. Offences such as rape within marriage are yet to be classified as such, and it remains legal for girls to marry at the age of 14, while boys may only marry at the age of 16 (SARPN Wade 2004). Civil society too, remains relatively weak and underdeveloped in Botswana. This is largely attributed to a 'lack of financial resources', 'lack of ideological consciousness', 'lack of capacity' and 'lack of solidarity amongst organisations' (Tlale 2005). The one area where civil society has been relatively successful has been in women's organisations. Although women's representation and equality is not yet at ideal levels, it has improved a great deal since independence, largely as a result of civil society activism (Tlale 2005).

Since independence in 1966, Botswana has boasted of one of the highest economic growth rates in Africa. Currently, GDP stands at \$18.72 billion and the GDP growth rate is a stable 4.7 per cent. However, despite its stable GDP, Botswana still struggles with inflation (which is currently at 11.4 per cent), unemployment (23.8 per cent) and poverty (30.3 per cent of the population living below the poverty line) (World Fact Book 2007).

Mozambique

Mozambique attained independence in 1975, after having waged a bloody civil war against the Portuguese. Since then, Mozambique has managed to maintain some degree of political stability, achieving a -0.15 political stability ranking according to the World Bank (2004). Mozambique was, however, only declared 'partly free' according to the Freedom House ranking system in 2005. Contributing to these ratings is large-scale corruption and impunity, as well as disrespect for human rights in the country. The government of Mozambique also has the power to restrict the freedom of the press, political parties and party members, if it is seen as necessary. Discrimination against peoples with disabilities, HIV/Aids and women is also evident (Country Watch 2007). Although Mozambican women hold 34.8 per cent of seats in the national parliament, women are far from equal. The literacy rate in Mozambique averages at only 47.8 per cent, yet the national average for women is even lower at only 31.4 per cent, while for men the figure rises to 62.3 per cent. This may largely be the result of poor school enrolment amongst girls (38 per cent) (Government of Mozambique n.d.).

Even though Mozambique has a better track record in containing HIV/Aids than many of its neighbours, having an adult prevalence rate of only 12.2 per cent, life expectancy remains low at only 39.82 years. Another testament to Mozambique's relatively low HIV/Aids prevalence rate is population growth, which remains steady at 1.38 per cent. Economically, Mozambique has maintained a very high growth rate (7.9 per cent in 2006). Unfortunately, inflation too has remained high (12.8 per cent in 2006). Despite only 21 per cent of citizens being unemployed, 70 per cent of Mozambicans continue to live below the poverty line (CIA World Fact Book 2007). One of the major causes of poverty in Mozambique has been the intermittent droughts and floods that the country has experienced, the most recent of which occurred in February 2007 (BBC News 2007). Demographically, Mozambique is nearly 100 per cent African, of which the largest ethnic tribes are the Makhuwa, Tsonga, Lomwe and Sena. Thirty per cent of Mozambicans are Christian, 20 per cent Muslim and 50 per cent have retained their indigenous beliefs (Country Watch 2007).

Crime has continued to plague Mozambique after the end of the civil war. Some of the major reasons for this have been the widespread availability of weapons after the war, and the high incidence of poverty in the country. Due to ineffective law enforcement and police oversight, Mozambique is a major interim destination for drugs, as well as money laundering. The incidence of organised crime remains quite high, as well as child labour, child prostitution and child abuse. Crime in Mozambique is facilitated by the understaffed and ineffective police and judicial system (Country Watch 2007).

South Africa

Since its peaceful transition to democracy in 1994, South Africa has become Africa's shining example of democracy and economic growth. Although ethnically divided (79 per cent of the population being African, 9.6 per cent European, 8.9 per cent coloured and 2.5 per cent Indian/Asian), South Africa has managed to maintain some degree of political stability, achieving a -0.24 World Bank rating. Freedom House has classified South Africa as completely politically free in 2005. The South African constitution has widely been regarded as one of the most liberal in the world, especially with regard to human rights (Country Watch 2007). As a result, the South African government has instituted an affirmative action policy, aimed at creating racial and gender equality. In terms of gender equality, 32.8 per cent of parliamentary seats are currently held by women (Parliament of South Africa 2007). This achievement is partly due to the involvement of civil society in South Africa, which has been active not only in lobbying for the rights of South Africans, but also in providing services to the poor where government has been lacking (Baden et al. 1999).

Related very closely to gender equality, is income equality. Currently 50, per cent of South Africans live below the international poverty line and the majority of these are women and children. Unfortunately, these inequalities also place women at greater risk of contracting HIV/Aids, which currently has a 21.5 per cent adult prevalence rate. It has become very worrying that these inequalities persist despite the 86.4 per cent literacy rate that South Africa has attained. As seen in the case of Botswana, HIV/Aids in South Africa is having a negative impact on both life expectancy (which is currently at 42.7 years) and population growth (being -0.4 per % in 2006) (Country Watch 2007, CIA World Fact Book 2007).

Economically, South Africa has been doing very well. It has managed to maintain a GDP growth rate of about 4.5 per cent and has also maintained inflation at 5 per cent. Nevertheless, unemployment persists at 25.5 per cent, which contributes to the large-scale inequality in the country (CIA World Fact Book 2007). Crime and the perception thereof remains one of the major obstacles in South Africa. Despite the overall crime rate having decreased since 2003, the widespread media coverage and a number of high profile cases have recently caused outrage amongst South Africans. Even though crime rates have decreased, they remain extremely high, threatening investment and tourism (Louw 2006).

Tanzania

Since independence in 1964, Tanzania has not managed to maintain a great degree of political stability, rated at -0.38 by the World Bank. Tanzania can also not be considered politically free, only being rated as 'part free' in 2005 by Freedom House (Country Watch 2007). One of the reasons for this ranking is that civil society in Tanzania is constrained by law. The Societies Ordinance of 1954 is still in operation, effectively suppressing civil society and political organisations by forcing them to be non-political and declaring their donors (Duhu 2005). Closely related to this problem, is the equality of women in Tanzanian society. Although 30.4 per cent of the Tanzanian parliamentary seats are held by women, women are far from equal. As in many other African states, customary law continues to constrain women in their traditional roles. As a result, women continue to occupy unskilled and low-paid positions. As is the case in South Africa, poverty disproportionately affects women – so much so that up to 60 per cent of Tanzanian women currently live in poverty (Government of Tanzania n.d.).

Although the population of Tanzania is close to 99 per cent African, it is ethnically diverse, consisting of more than 120 different ethnic groups of which not one constitutes more than 15 per cent of the population. In contrast to many other African nations, the HIV/Aids prevalence rate in Tanzania is only 8.8 per cent, and the population growth rate is 0.34 per cent. Life expectancy remains

low at only 45.64 years. Religiously, one-third of Tanzanians are Christian, while Muslims and those following indigenous African beliefs also constitute a third of the population (Country Watch 2007).

Economically, Tanzania has proven to be very stable by maintaining a GDP growth rate of 5.8 per cent, as well as keeping inflation below 6 per cent. It has also managed to maintain a literacy rate of 78.2 per cent. Nevertheless, 36 per cent of Tanzanians still live below the poverty line. Despite this poverty problem, Tanzania remains open to African refugees, currently providing asylum for nearly 400,000 refugees from Burundi and 150,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Although crime rates in Tanzania remain high, the types of crime (such as theft, robbery, fraud and drug trafficking) are much less severe than those found in many other African nations (Country Watch 2007).

Zimbabwe

After attaining independence in 1980, many had very high expectations of Robert Mugabe and the envisaged democratisation process. Today, however, most of these hopes have been shattered by the oppressive Mugabe regime. What began as an attempt to return the land to the people, has become the violent subjugation and intimidation of a nation dissatisfied with its leaders' choices. In 2002, Mugabe censored the press and in 2005, he initiated operation Murambatsvina in which he demolished many informal settlements, leaving Zimbabwe's most destitute without shelter. Unprovoked attacks on opposition party leader Morgan Tsvangirai and his colleagues have also dominated the headlines (BBC 2007). Politically, Zimbabwe is rated as 'not free' by Freedom House, while its political stability is only rated at -1.86 (Country Watch 2007). Life expectancy plummeted to 39.29 years in 2006, which is exacerbated by the HIV/Aids adult prevalence rate of 24.6 per cent, as well as the 1.5 million people who suffer from malnutrition (CIA World Fact Book 2007).

Even though Zimbabwe boasts of an incredible 90.7 per cent literacy rate, unemployment is rampant at 80 per cent, while the same proportion of Zimbabweans live below the poverty line. In ethnic terms, the Shona are by far the largest ethnic group, totalling 82 per cent of the population, followed by the Ndebele and Europeans. Economically, Zimbabwe's GDP growth rate is currently -4.4 per cent, while inflation totals at 1,204.6 per cent (BBC 2007). With regard to human rights, all opposition to the Mugabe government continues to be violently oppressed, while the position of women in Zimbabwe has also deteriorated dramatically (Wines 2003). As a result of the NGO Act, which effectively outlaws the work of aid agencies, they are finding it difficult to continue operating in Zimbabwe. Due to these conditions, riots frequently occur, generally being violently suppressed by the government forces (Country Watch 2007, CIA World Fact Book 2007).

Zambia

Subsequent to achieving independence in 1964, Zambia has not achieved great democratic and economic success. In 2004, Zambia obtained a 'partly free' Freedom House rating and a -0.16 World Bank political stability rating. This could be attributed to the more than 70 different ethnic groups that can be found in the country, as well as the fact that more than half of Zambians are Christian, while the other half are Muslim and Hindu. Zambia, like most Sub-Saharan African countries, is embroiled in a constant struggle with the HIV/Aids epidemic. In 2003, Zambia recorded a HIV/Aids adult prevalence rate of 16.5 per cent, with 89,000 having already died from the disease. Considering that Zambia has a population of only about 11.5 million, this is a significant segment of the population. As is the case in many other African countries, this has an effect on both the life expectancy of Zambians, being about 40 years of age in 2003, as well as population growth rate (2.11 per cent in 2006) (CIA World Fact Book 2007).

Economically, Zambia had a GDP of \$11.51 billion in 2006, which translates into an economic growth rate of 6 per cent. However, when taking the inflation rate of 8.8 per cent into account, as well as the 86 per cent of Zambians that live below the poverty line and the 50 per cent of Zambians that are unemployed, a very different picture emerges. In terms of gender equality, Zambia does not match up to other SADC countries. Although the overall literacy rate in Zambia is 80.6 per cent, that of men is 86.8 per cent, while that of women is only 74.8 per cent (2007d). In contrast to most other SADC countries, only 18 out of the 158 members of parliament are women, and only 5 ministers out of 21 are women. Although crime in general remains a problem in Zambia, crimes against women and children have become pervasive (Embassy of Sweden 2005). Despite this disregard for human rights, Zambia does provide refuge for nearly 76,000 Angolan refugees, as well as 61,000 from the DRC and nearly 6,000 from Rwanda (CIA World Fact Book 2007).

Note

1. The appendix provides basic data and does not pretend to be an objective or neutral or complete perspective on the countries surveyed. The references provided are skewed towards the Western press, Western governments and Western dominated multilateral or NGO organisations.