

Introduction

Rethinking and Unthinking Development in Africa

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The intellectual and academic task of rethinking and unthinking development in Africa arises from the reality of how development has continued to be elusive in Africa. The development imperative has remained caught up in ten discernible paradoxes and contradictions that were recently delineated by Odomaro Mubangizi (2018: 1): (1) rich and complex cultural diversity; (2) ever-simmering ethno politics that underlie contemporary conflicts; (3) underdevelopment amidst enormous resources; (4) a brain drain amidst limited capacity and financial illicit flows; (5) nascent democratic and governance institutions to anchor sustainable development; (6) longstanding tensions between tradition and modernity; (7) centrifugal and centripetal political and economic forces; (8) longstanding contradictions between the sacred and the secular; (9) an ever-widening gap between rich and poor people; and (10) the quest for homegrown solutions to African problems while relying heavily on foreign aid, foreign direct investment and imported goods and services.

These above stated challenges coexist with two discourses on the state of development in Africa. On one level is the positive discourse of 'Africa rising', which is entangled with such initiatives as the African Union (AU)'s Agenda 2063, Sustainable Development Goals, Africa's demographic dividend, drives towards an African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and 'the increasing attractiveness of Africa as a choice destination for foreign direct investment' (Mubangizi 2018: 2). On another level, there is the negative discourse of the Third Scramble for Africa, taking the form of intensified competition for Africa's

abundant natural resources, which directly counters the positive discourse of a developmentally 'rising' African continent (Southall and Melber 2009).

While the process of rethinking development research set in long ago, it has been accelerating since the end of 2008, when neoliberalism lost most of its triumphalism because of the global financial and economic crises (Schuurman 2009: 831–48). In 2008, the contours of a partial meltdown of global financial capitalism and the subsequent global recession¹ in the real economy necessitated more than ever the need for critical development research to contribute to new, much-needed insights into processes of development and underdevelopment, and possible alternative roots towards a more sustainable future (Schuurman 2009: 835). The financial crisis left neoliberalism, which had created a more unequal society, wounded, but surely not yet defeated and as Hart, Laville and Cattani asked, what can we, the people, do about it (2010: 1)? For Slavoj Žižek, the global capitalist system was approaching 'an apocalyptic zero-point', in the process producing ecological crises, inequalities and poverty, struggles over raw materials, food and water, as well as 'the explosive growth of social divisions and exclusions' (Žižek 2011: x).

In Southern Africa's former settler states, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and in Africa in general, conventional development theories or practices have failed to adequately lead to social transformation that reduces unemployment, inequality and poverty, and the majority of citizens are homeless, unemployed, landless, stateless and undocumented, as well as being afflicted by various diseases. Decolonisation has remained a challenge in Southern Africa, especially in the former white settler states, Zimbabwe and South Africa, where the negative effects of colonialism and imperialism continue to linger on. In both countries, the current governing parties – the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and the African National Congress (ANC) – both former liberation movements, secured black majority rule through negotiated settlements that involved compromises, which left the capitalist economic structure largely intact.

In order to economically empower the majority of the black population constitutionally marginalised by the colonial and apartheid governments, the governing parties introduced various black economic empowerment, indigenisation and land reform initiatives. The extent to which these initiatives have transformed the lives of the majority of the historically disadvantaged communities is debatable, but what is clear is that the majority of the populations continue to wallow in poverty. For example, Hart and Padayachee (2010: 424) argue that the legacy of racial division excluded and still excludes the majority of South African citizens from economic

emancipation. Worse still, South Africa is still racially divided economically, with an extremely advanced sector focused on mining, finance, security and retail, but a more racially mixed elite now is surrounded by black poverty. Economic growth since 2000 has failed to reduce this divide. As a result, South Africa remains a world leader in inequality, and ruling elites in most of Africa often collude with foreign extractive, commercial and military experts (Hart and Padayachee 2010: 423, 426).

National political leaders today continue the process of accumulation without development in most of Africa. As a result, Africa's underdevelopment currently should be substantially attributed to the self-serving actions of the fragmented political class serving the interests of foreign powers (Hart and Padayachee 2010: 410–11). Mbeki (2009) blamed African ruling elites for enriching themselves at the expense of their own people by serving the interests of foreign powers determined to exploit their countries' human and natural resources. Žižek (2013) questioned whether African leaders would dare to touch the capitalist mechanisms or whether they would decide to 'play the game'? The challenge, according to Žižek, is that if one disturbed the capitalist mechanisms, one was very swiftly 'punished' by market perturbations, economic chaos and the rest. What is clear is that global coloniality produced a particular form of leadership in Africa – a petty bourgeoisie that could not invent or even transform political, economic and social institutions inherited from colonialism 'into its own image' so as to 'become socially hegemonic' (Nabudere 2011: 58; Taylor 2014: 5).

Since 2015, South African universities have become a site of struggles for student protests against the deep-seated exclusionist tendencies of apartheid colonialism. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2016), what began as the Rhodes Must Fall movement (RMF), targeting Cecil John Rhodes's statue at the University of Cape Town, quickly expanded into broader demands for cognitive justice. Students demanded change of curriculum; decommissioning of offensive colonial/apartheid symbols; the right to free, quality and relevant education; cultural freedom; and an overall change in the very idea of the university from its Western pedigree ('university in Africa') into an 'African university'. There has been a demand for transformation in universities that embraces the need for a diverse and cosmopolitan student cohort, and enhanced access for talented students from poor and marginalised communities (Habib 2015: 8–10). The issue of alienating institutional cultures features prominent as another grievance. University institutional cultures are deemed European, anti-black, racist, and patriarchal (Tabensky and Matthews 2015). In other words, these universities are what Francis Nyamnjoh depicted as 'European greenhouses under African skies', making

them 'a space of whiteness' even if they are inhabited by black people (Nyamnjoh 2012: 129–54).

As a result, an increase in African and Coloured (people of mixed race) representation in the university and the evolution of the institutional culture where black staff and students feel comfortable within the university is deemed the solution. There are calls to reorganise the curriculum in order to incorporate African theorists and contextual challenges. The movement also called for an end to the exploitation of workers through the in-sourcing of all outsourced services. Finally, naming has to reflect the diversity of society and students (Habib 2015: 8–10). Broadly, the RMF movements are loudly calling for what Brenda Cooper and Robert Morrell term 'Africa-centred knowledges' as a form of cognitive justice (Cooper and Morrell 2014). The 'Fees Must Fall' (FMF) strand of the RMF movements specifically demands the implementation of 'the right to education' for every student as stated in the Freedom Charter in 1955 (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2016).

Generally, millions of poor people inhabit Africa. Even if the middle class has grown substantially and, to the extent that measurements in small formal economies are useful, the measurable level of inequality is also disturbingly high and few African states seem to have comprehensive policies to better the situation. Therefore, now more than ever, we need to imagine different economic development policy alternatives. In other words, in spite of development's dismal track record, Easterly fundamentally argued that a development ideology is needed. It appeals to people in Africa and the Third World in general because they want a definitive, complete answer to the tragedy of global poverty and inequality, and ideologies usually arise in response to tragic situations in which people are hungry for clear and comprehensive solutions (Easterly 2007). In 1988, Escobar (1988: 498) succinctly argued that the concept of development was embedded in the neocolonial construction of the world and was a key ideological tool in global power relations. As a result, he argued that instead of searching for development alternatives, we must search for alternatives to development, which respect local autonomy, culture and knowledge (Escobar 1997). The problem, according to Banda (2004: 98), is that in the language of 'development', Western modernity has been projected as the ideal that others from other parts of the world have to follow, while disregarding their historical, cultural and economic differences. In other words, the 2008 financial crisis has opened up a new terrain for thinking about the economy (Hart, Laville and Cattani 2010: 4), but also about development discourses that are meant to shape the economy.

Economic growth needs to translate urgently into less poverty. However, this has been very slow and hindered by high levels of inequality. In 2013,

for example, the World Bank forecast strong economic growth in Africa of about 4.9 per cent. In spite of this growth, poverty and inequality remain ‘unacceptably high and the pace of reduction unacceptably slow’, with almost half of all Africans still living in extreme poverty (World Bank 2013: 2). Those ‘peddling’ the idea of development keep on adding adjectives to the word ‘development’, but are actually not able to reduce poverty in general (Boaventura de Sousa Santos 2014). For example, according to Banda (2004: 101–2), in the 1950s and 1960s, the development discourse assumed that the growth of the economy would ‘trickle down’ to the masses in the form of jobs and other economic opportunities. Most Third World countries achieved the United Nations (UN) targeted growth expectations in the 1960s, but their economic status remained the same or even worsened. The economists shifted their emphasis from the economic growth model to the basic needs approach in the 1970s. When this failed to yield the desired results, a ‘sustainable development’ with ‘bottom-up’ planning was adopted in the 1980s. Soon after, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) introduced ‘structural adjustment’ policies in the 1980s, forcing governments in the Third World to cut down their expenditure on social welfare programmes. Cowen and Shenton’s *Doctrines of Development* (1996) provides a comprehensive history of the origins, invention and design of the doctrines of development. Shanmugaratnam (2011) provided an excellent up-to-date historical overview of Development Studies research centred on the ideology of development (see Table 0.1 below).

Table 0.1 A historical overview of development studies (adapted from Shanmugaratnam 2011).

‘Prehistory’ – Nineteenth-century Europe: invention of development – Colonial studies: the lesser known connection to development studies	Related events/interventions/ examples
Postwar: 1945	– 1945: World Bank International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD); IMF Keynesianism – Decolonisation – Cold War begins
1960s: development studies/ Western universities	

<p>1960s–1970s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Modernization paradigm and growth theories – Critical theories: Marxist, neo-Marxist/dependency; structuralism 	<p>State-led development policies in newly independent countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – African socialism (Tanzania) – India: economic planning – East Asian Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) emulating the Japanese success story
<p>1980s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Impasse in development theory – Critiques of Marxist and neo-Marxist structuralism – Poststructuralism; post-Marxism – Gender/feminist theories – Middle-range concepts: agency/actor – Empirical/local studies – Environment/development – Microeconomics – Methodological individualism – Washington Consensus and IFIs impact on development studies 	<p>Late 1970s–1980s: International Finance Institutions (IFI) criticise ‘state failure’ and prescribe neoliberal package Washington Consensus,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Market-led development (post-Keynesian) – Transnational Corporations (TNCs) – 1987: World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) Report ‘Our Common Future’ – Development studies in universities in the Global South – 1989: end of the Cold War; neoliberal triumphalism
<p>1990s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rise of postmodernism – Capability approach gains currency – Critical views/studies on neoliberalism, SAPs, etc. – Discourse analysis – Post-development/antidevelopment – More focus on civil society; social movements, Nongovernmental Organisations (NGOs) – Focus on globalization and development – Post-Washington Consensus: state/market – ‘New wars’, conflict/peace/development, liberal peace – Listian theories (late development)/the other canon developed 	<p>Post-Cold War</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1990: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report (HDR) – UNDP popularizes the capability approach – 1995: World Health Organization (WHO) <p>1990s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – -Neoliberalism modified – Post-Washington Consensus – Bringing the state back in – Second-generation reforms: effective states

2000s: – Neoliberalism, ‘Postims’ – Listian theories (late development) – Critical modernism – Climate change/development – Emerging powers and development	‘Global War on Terror’ Securitisation: security–development nexus
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Source: Shanmugaratnam (2011: 38)

In spite of all these ‘development’ efforts, the social, economic and political inequality of the poor, marginalised and exploited people in the Global South is worsening. Where development takes place, some people get excluded because of their gender, ethnicity, regionalism, age, sexual orientation, disability or poverty or other factors.

As a result, the idea of development, peddled under the hegemony of neoliberal economics since the end of the Cold War, has been one of the most globally contested ideas across different historical timeframes. While it originated from and is hugely uncontested in the West, the process towards ‘achieving’ development has been contested greatly in the non-Western world. According to Easterly (2007), the main challenge is that like Marxism to some extent, development aspires to be scientific, and finding one correct solution to poverty is seen as a scientific problem to be solved by experts, the international aid bureaucrats, ‘the self-appointed priesthood of Development’. It favours collective goals such as national poverty reduction, national economic growth and the global Millennium Development Goals (Easterly 2007). In other words, according to Easterly, the ideology of development promises a comprehensive final answer to all of society’s problems. It shares the common ideological characteristic suggesting that there is only one correct answer and it tolerates little dissent. It deduces this unique answer for everyone from a general theory that purports to apply to everyone universally. The ‘one correct answer’ referred to ‘free markets’ and, for the poor world, was defined as doing whatever the IMF and the World Bank prescribed. For Easterly (2007), the ideology of development is not only about having experts design the free market for states; it is about having the experts design a comprehensive, technical plan to solve all the problems of the poor. These experts see poverty as a purely technological problem, to be solved by engineering and the natural sciences. However, countries having the potential to develop are wise to avoid too strong and one-sided Western-centric

ideas that emanate from the World Bank, the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO), among others (Easterly 2007).

Human economists advocate that development policies in the public and private sectors should enhance people's concrete activities and aspirations in societies, a development approach that is rooted in the local people's lived experiences (Hart 2008a). This involves the use of approaches that emphasise endogenous efforts that have sustained local communities in the light of the failure of states to provide for them. Economic anthropologists have argued that the project of economics needed to be rescued from economists, who have tended to portray the economy as an impersonal machine, remote from the everyday experience of most people, but with devastating consequences (Hart et al. 2010: 4–5). Hart (2008a) argued that economics, which ought to be a science for human emancipation, has become a dehumanised expert ideology remote from people's practical concerns and from their ability to understand what to do. The twentieth-century market economy, sustained by a concern for individual freedom, generated huge inequalities, but submission of the economy to the political will on the pretext of equality led to the suppression of freedom (Hart 2008b: 2).

Easterly (2014) reiterated that the experts' idea that they can have a purely technical approach to resolving problems of poverty without any moral implications was an illusion. He noted that development tactics (in the fight against global poverty) trampled over the individual freedom of the world's poor, and in doing so suppressed a vital debate about an alternative approach to solving poverty: freedom. An understanding of 'how can people be more free to find their own solutions' can contribute to the development of a more appropriate development ideology. Easterly thus argues that only a new model of development, one predicated on respect for the individual rights of people in developing countries and one that understands that unchecked state power is the problem and not the solution, will be capable of ending global poverty once and for all. He regards the attitude that views the poor as helpless individuals without any dignity to be respected as condescending and paternalistic. He therefore criticised experts as being too arrogant in their own knowledge and too oblivious to the moral consequences of their overconfidence and about how this can lead to damaging other people. In other words, there is a technocratic blindness to the moral dimension of development. Worse still, according to Easterly, in development, people at times tend to ignore the following question: who has the power (interview between William Easterly and Kent Annan, 2 April 2014)? James Ferguson (1990) correctly postulated that development is not neutral of power and cannot be understood outside of current power dynamics.

Those seeking to promote development that reduces inequality and poverty, but from within the confines of neoliberal economics, talk of inclusive approaches to development in Africa. Inclusive development is one of the human development approaches and it integrates the standards and principles of human rights, including participation, nondiscrimination and accountability. It originated from the realisation that many people in societies tend to be excluded from development because of their gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability or poverty. Inclusive development refers to the improvement of the distribution of wellbeing along many dimensions (falling poverty, narrowing inequality, education and health) alongside the improvement in average achievement (Kanbur and Rauniyar 2009).

Decoloniality thinkers push for the interrogation of the contradictions between the epistemic location of development theory in the academy and the social location of the intended beneficiaries of development in the non-Western world. They contend that the hand of 'invisible power structures' still haunts the majority of the citizens now long after the end of formal colonialism (Ndhlovu 2016). The strength of the decolonial epistemic perspective is that it does not attempt to claim universality, neutrality and singular truthfulness. It is decidedly and deliberately situated in those epistemic sites, such as Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, that experienced the negative consequences of modernity and that are facing development challenges. At the same time, it openly accepts its partiality, the awareness that all knowledges are partial (Ndlovu Gatsheni, Chapter 1 in this volume). Decolonial epistemic perspectives are predicated on the concepts of power, knowledge and being. Coloniality of power locates the discourse of development within the context of the politics of constitution of a racially hierarchized Euro-America-centric, Christian-centric, patriarchal, capitalist, heteronormative, hegemonic, asymmetrical and modern global power structure (Grosfoguel and Cervantes-Rodriguez 2002; Grosfoguel 2007). Deploying decolonial epistemic perspectives can reveal the coloniality embedded in development discourses.

Easterly (2007) also argued that development's simple theory of historical inevitability is highly hypocritical. In other words, experts argue that poor societies are not just poor, but that they are 'developing' until they reach the final stage of history, or 'development', when they 'catch up' with the West, at which stage poverty will soon end. However, and unfortunately, development ideology has had a dismal record of helping any country actually develop and the regions in which the ideology has been most influential – that is, Latin America and Africa – have done the worst. From the above, it is therefore clear that there is now a need to embrace

an interdisciplinary approach in attempts to solve development conundrums and avoiding pretensions of ‘the [purported] superiority of [the narrow focussed orthodox] economics’ (Ndlovu 2016: 188–9; Fourcade et al. 2015: 89). In 1991, Immanuel Wallerstein argued that the presumptions of nineteenth-century social science, which were previously considered to possess a ‘liberating of the spirit, serve today as the central intellectual barrier to useful analysis of the social world’ (Wallerstein 1991: 1–2). Chabal reiterated this in 2012 when he argued that:

Those instruments – that is, the social sciences we employ to explain what is happening domestically and overseas – are both historically and conceptually out of date ... I show that these theories are now obstacles to the understanding of what is going on in our societies and what we can do about it (Chabal 2012: viii) ... The end of conceit is upon us. Western rationality must be rethought. (Chabal 2012: 335)

Therefore, trying to reform the development ideologies, but from within the confines of mainstream neoliberal ideologies, is very problematic. Ideologies cloned from mainstream neoliberal ideologies fail to confront present structural and agential sources of social injustices, asymmetrical power structures, patriarchal ideologies, logics of capitalist exploitation, resilient imperial/colonial reason, and racist articulations and practices (McNally 2005; Santos 2008). In this volume, we argue that racism, the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, and neocolonialism do not only constitute global coloniality as a modern power structure but are also manifestations of the ‘dark side/underside’ of modernity (Mignolo 1995, 2011, 2012). As Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1986: 2) argued, African predicaments are ‘often not a matter of personal choice’, but are a product of a ‘historical situation’. Africans do not yet have a choice to choose the type of economy they prefer. Ngugi wa Thiong’o identified imperialism and colonialism as well as neocolonialism not as mere slogans, but ‘real’. This meant that if the problems of development arose from a historical situation and were structural, then ‘their solutions are not so much a matter of personal decision as that of fundamental social transformation of the structures of our societies starting with a real break with imperialism and its internal ruling allies. Imperialism and its comprador alliances in Africa can never develop the continent’ (Ngugi wa Thiong’o 1986: xii). This structuralist decolonial argument provokes the question of possibilities and potentialities of African people being able to create African futures within a modern world system structured by global coloniality.

Even after the entry of China, Russia, Brazil and India into the African market, which has boosted the sale of primary commodities, Africa is still forced to celebrate an economic growth that is premised on a problematic

'intensification of resource extraction through diversification of partners, while inequality and unemployment increase and deindustrialization continues apace' (Taylor 2014: 160). China's presence in Southern Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa) gained prominence through its support to liberation movements in the region from the 1960s and the construction of the Tazara railway in the 1970s (Moyo 2016: 59). Its presence has increased in Africa since 2001, when the Chinese economy grew sharply and its demand for raw materials increased (Moyo 2016: 61). Today its presence is more visible in those countries with extensive energy resources, which it is increasingly extracting (Moyo 2016: 59). New Chinese small and medium-scale commercial enterprises have also become active players in the construction of new infrastructures, including the rehabilitation of new roads, railways, dams, stadiums, office complexes and so on (Moyo 2016: 62).

Chinese leader Xi Jinping committed to a new round of loans and aid totalling \$60 billion in 2015, with a large portion of the funds directed at South African infrastructure, Zimbabwean projects and other initiatives (Wengraf 2017). In Zimbabwe, while Chinese companies have invested in mining chrome, diamonds and platinum, South African, American and British companies remain the dominant investors in these minerals in Southern Africa. South African supermarkets are also becoming a dominant commercial force in Africa in general (Moyo 2016: 62). However, in spite the involvement of China, industrialisation has failed to gain any momentum in much of Africa (Wengraf 2017).

According to Moyo (2016: 59), China's presence is viewed from three perspectives. The first is that China is recolonising Africa. The second view sees China's presence in Africa favourably in the global arena, with the diversification of markets and its presence as an emerging power providing room for manoeuvre for African states, which have been marginalised by Eurocentric domination for longer periods. Third, China's presence in Africa is viewed as a 'sub-imperial/ force leading the new scramble for African resources hand in hand with the Eurocentric-American capitalism' (Moyo 2016: 59). For Moyo, while China has become influential in Africa through trade, investments and geopolitical relations, it is far from being a hegemonic recoloniser (2016: 58). Stephen Marks (2006) argued that for China, Africa represented a key source of raw materials and a market for cheap Chinese-made products. As a result, Moeletsi Mbeki labelled the trade relations between South Africa and China 'a replay of the old story of South Africa's trade with Europe'. According to Marks (2006), Mbeki noted that the selling of raw materials to China and importing their manufactured goods resulted in an unfavourable balance of trade against South Africa. In March 2018, Chinese companies topped

the list of businesses entities that were identified by President Emmerson Mnangagwa as ‘looters’ who illegally externalised foreign currency from Zimbabwe (Share 2018). Therefore, any development in Africa based on the intensification of resource extraction by diverse powers, whether European, North American, Brazilian, Indian, Chinese or Russian, rather than industrialisation is simply a manifestation of the coloniality of markets, which is at the centre of capitalism and is driving the new scramble for African resources today (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015: 35). The tragedy is that those who have been advocating empowerment of the poor or the distribution of the world’s riches also indirectly support the reproduction of neocolonial power relations (Banda 2004: 99).

It is clear that African intellectuals need to come up with policies and trajectories that can be implemented easily. Perhaps development prospects for African countries may lie in initiatives anchored by some form of an African modernity. The challenge is how Africa can adapt some Western development models to suit its political, economic, social and cultural circumstances. If successful, while they would make Africa very much more Western in most respects, perhaps like Japan or China, they will not be lacking in distinctiveness and will certainly not be following self-interested advice from Western sources of mainstream technocratic approaches (Easterly 2007). For example, the AU’s Agenda 2063 envisions an African future that emphasises pan-African unity, integration, prosperity and peace. Africans have to drive the processes of self-improvement unencumbered by external forces that want to maintain the status quo. While global coloniality works through the division and atomisation of Africans, the AU has identified pan-Africanism as the overarching ideological framework for unity, self-reliance, integration and solidarity (African Union 2013). Before gaining political independence from colonial rule, Africa’s political leaders often embraced the pan-African ideal, unifying all people of African descent to drive out colonial rulers (Hart and Padayachee 2010: 423).

In 2006, the AU conference issued the ‘Livingstone Call for Action’, which emphasised that every African country should have social programmes, ‘including the social pension and social transfers to vulnerable children, older pensions and people with disabilities’ (Hanlon et al. 2010: 2). This was perhaps after the increasing realisation of the failure of the belief that low-income countries should focus on market-based economic growth in order to grow before they could ‘start redistributing wealth and combating poverty’. Equity and social protection are now accepted as crucial prerequisites to growth and development (Hanlon et al. 2010: 143).

However, South Africa has a complicated history of relations within the Southern African region. Since 1994, Africans in South Africa’s

'rainbow' nation have been hostile to their African neighbours that supported them in the struggle against apartheid (Hart and Padayachee 2010: 412, 413). According to Hart and Padayachee (2010: 420), under the African National Congress (ANC), South Africa has increased, rather than reduced, the sense of division between its own citizens and the many Africans who emigrate there to live and work. Social movements in the country do not possess a broader vision of Africa's emancipation comparable to pan-African resistance to colonial empire, which was the most inclusive political movement in the first half of the twentieth century (Hart and Padayachee 2010: 412). As a result, there have been tight restrictions on the movement of people, goods and money within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), with South Africa restricting the entry into its relatively more developed economy (Hart and Padayachee 2010: 412–13). Currently, visas are still required for travel between many SADC countries, and a plethora of bilateral deals and tariff barriers prevent the establishment of any meaningful economic cooperation or community. This is in spite of the attempted revival of the pan-African impulse that former President Thabo Mbeki supported through his African renaissance ideas. However, on the ground, African communities have since colonial times perfected clandestine patterns of transborder movement and exchange, which persist despite their rulers' attempts to force the economy and society into national boundaries (Hart and Padayachee 2010: 423–25).

Ferguson (2015: xi) now believes that simply 'giving' money directly to the poor could yield better results in terms of reducing poverty than spending development project funds on Land Cruisers and foreign consultants. In his book *Give a Man a Fish: Reflections on the New Politics of Distribution*, he focuses on the rise of social welfare programmes across Southern Africa through which governments have adopted noncontributory social protection schemes transferring small amounts of cash to the elderly, disabled and women caring for children. Citing South Africa, which has led the way in this, Ferguson noted that by 2013, more than 30 per cent of the entire population received the monthly cash payments from the national government (2015: 5). He believes that this is a 'quiet revolution' in development practice in the Global South, where capitalism has rendered a growing percentage of the population chronically unemployed (Ferguson 2015: 5). Traditional (industrial capitalist-based) development initiatives that sought to prepare people to work have not yielded the desired results in the economies of the Global South, where many people are not in formal employment. Ferguson thus believes that the social welfare grant in South Africa could be the firm basis upon which the radical proposal circulating in South Africa and Namibia that

every member of society should receive a basic income grant (BIG) without reference to their age, gender, employment and family configuration could be implemented. He believes that this could be the basis of the 'new politics of distribution' that he is proposing (2015: xii). The cash transfer programmes are not unique to Southern Africa, as they have been implemented in Latin American countries.

Hanlon et al. (2010: 1) characterised the cash payment transfers as a 'development revolution from the global South' that pointed to 'a wave of new thinking' rooted in the conviction that 'it is better to give money to poor people directly so that they can find effective ways to escape from poverty' (Ferguson 2015: 13). The key message of Hanlon et al.'s book *Just Give Money to the Poor: The Development Revolution from the Global South* (2010) is that direct transfers to households are a key component of effective poverty reduction and development strategies in the Global South. They argue that four conclusions can be drawn from the cash payments: (1) the programmes are affordable; (2) recipients use the money well and do not waste it; (3) cash grants are an efficient way of reducing current poverty directly; and (4) they have the potential to prevent future poverty by facilitating economic growth and promoting human development (Hanlon et al. 2010: 2). For Hanlon et al., cash transfers represent a paradigmatic shift in poverty reduction. While acting as palliatives for current poverty, they also build productive capacity among those in poverty and promote development programmes. This is a direct affront to the traditional aid and development industry, which is built on the belief that development and the eradication of poverty depended on what international agencies and consultants could do for the poor, while ignoring what the citizens of the developing countries, including the poor, could do for themselves (Hanlon et al. 2010: 4).

This volume is therefore a continuous search for more sustainable and appropriate strategies for communicating development in developing countries (Sachs 1992). It adopts a broader and inclusive view of development than the narrow desire to achieve economic growth in terms of national or regional statistics. It seeks to historicise the present state of development (or lack of it) by placing it within a long-term process of social transformation, while simultaneously analysing South Africa and Zimbabwe's development challenges that exacerbate the prevalence of inequality and poverty. This is not a comparison between the two countries. We also do not restrict ourselves to specific times, as the elusiveness of development has always been ever present. Ferguson (2015: 4) decried the fact that many critical accounts of neoliberalism have settled into the politics of denunciation without offering convincing and realistic alternatives and strategies. However, our intention in this volume is not

to simply reject ideas of development based on exploitative capitalist tendencies, but to free it from coloniality if it has to be attainable in the Global South in general and Africa in particular.

We need to rethink and unthink the current development discourses that are linked to economic growth, but have failed to reduce unemployment and poverty in most of Africa. In other words, we need to rethink our thinking (Odora-Hoppers and Richards 2012: 7) about development. This, according to Odora-Hoppers and Richards (2012: 7), needs to go beyond 'the clutches of mere dissent or post-colonial critiques, to transformative post-colonial action'. This can enable the light that was initially cast on colonialism and the legacy of domination and abuse to be changed to 'vigilant analyses of its failures, silences, and a systematic spotting of transformative nodes that were not recognizable before, but which are now released into public spaces' (Odora-Hoppers and Richards 2012: 7). In our task of rethinking thinking, Odora-Hoppers and Richards note that we need 'to recognize the cultural asphyxiation of those numerous "others" that has been the norm, and work to bring other categories of self-definition, of dreaming, of acting, of loving, of living into the commons as a matter of universal concern' (2012: 8).

As development, inequality and poverty studies are conducted across disciplines by practitioners such as anthropologists, economists, human economists, development workers, geographers, sociologists, and urban planners and historians, a multidisciplinary approach has been adopted here. The contributors to this volume come from different academic persuasions, including anthropologists, historians, economists and decolonial thinkers. Theoretical and empirical contributions in the volume analyse development quagmires militating against efforts to reduce poverty, inequality, social disintegration, lack of social justice, weak citizenship, the collapse of institutions of community and family, and other societal ills. We therefore have chapters on the histories of development studies research, inequality, urban poverty, ethnopolitics, empowerment and indigenisation, land and identity struggles, challenges in conceptualising family social policy, how socioeconomic and cultural barriers may promote the spread of HIV, and the abuse of state pension grants given to the elderly in South Africa. Some contributions adopt a historical approach because a thorough understanding of past historical stages of development policies enables informed debates on processes that can contribute to social transformation for the majority of historically disadvantaged citizens.

The book opens with Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni's chapter, 'Rethinking Development in the Age of Global Coloniality'. Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues that when history meets development studies, the encounter between the

two disciplines invokes an inquiry into the past, a critical reflection on the murky present, and imaginations of a mysterious future. This entry point is vital in order to understand the challenges that have been faced by the African people in their struggles for development in their troubled continent. The chapter seeks to harnesses historical knowledge to reflect on development studies as an academic field, as well as ideology, discourse, and practice from decolonial epistemic perspectives and the world-systems approach. The chapter is organised into four sections. The first of these introduces the concept of decolonial epistemic perspectives, which illuminates how development studies has been colonised and held hostage by global imperial designs, and highlights the need for its decolonisation. The second section discusses development challenges as an integral part of the African national project, highlighting how African political economies have remained hostage to invisible colonial matrices of power. The third section analyses the reality of neoliberal imperialism and its impact on current thinking about development issues. The final section grapples with how to transcend the global development impasse and outlines the complex contours of decolonial options that can lead us into the post-Euro-American neoliberal hegemony.

If development is such a desirable end for both African leaders and their so-called partners, why has it become so elusive and difficult to achieve? This is the question posed by Vusi Gumede in Chapter 2, 'Rethinking and Reclaiming Development in Africa'. Gumede argues that it is important to further problematise the notion of development, including what development is, in whose interest is it being pursued and by whom as well as how. He looks into whether there are alternatives to the dominant paradigm of what is generally accepted as development and whether there are alternative routes to the desired end of inclusive development. His chapter therefore attempts to pull together the various perspectives on the notion of development and to propose a better approach to inclusive development in Africa. He begins by looking at how selected earlier writers on development characterise development. He then moves on to discuss post-development and modernisation, as well as functionalism, and the character and nature of development in post-independence Africa. He then follows this with a discussion of how to make development happen in Africa and then proposes an approach to development in Africa.

Analysts hold divergent views regarding poverty and its solutions. Apart from the disagreements concerning the definitions of poverty and inequality, there is no consensus on the appropriate indices for evaluating the suggested programmes, let alone how to address aggregation problems and construct a comprehensive composite index. This is the subject

of Chapter 3, 'Elusive Solutions to Poverty and Inequality', by Tidings P. Ndhlovu. Ndhlovu highlights how the neoclassical 'trickle-down', top-down analysis defines poverty and inequality as a natural phenomenon whose only solution is to 'get prices right', while the International Labour Organization (ILO)-inspired basic needs approach regards deprivation of consumption as the primary cause, with the solution being the provision of consumption bundles and productive employment. Ndhlovu also discusses Sen's entitlements and capability approach that focuses on deprivation of basic individual capability, and suggests 'functionings' and freedom as the key to the alleviation of poverty and inequality, and of how Yunus goes further in showing the potential of participatory approaches in Bangladesh and other countries. For the Marxian and/or 'solidarity economy' approaches, poverty and inequality are explicable from the conflictual process of accumulation, while deprivation of power is the central cause.

The next two chapters deal with the perceptions and dynamics of poverty in Zimbabwe and South Africa respectively. While Africa's poverty is well described and discussed in the development literature, at times there is a tendency to focus on rural poverty and underdevelopment, while urban poverty tends to receive less attention. This is the subject of discussion in Chapter 4, 'Urban Poverty in Zimbabwe', by *Rudo Barbra Gaidzanwa*. This chapter focuses on urban poverty, its structure and manifestations in Zimbabwe. Using data from research carried out in Zimbabwe after the infamous Operation *Murambatsvina* (clean-up) exercise of 2005, it describes urban poverty, its profile and the determinants. It argues that urban poverty is distributed amongst specific strata, such as the youth, the elderly and people with disabilities and income-earning challenges. In comparison to poverty in the previous century, urban poverty in Zimbabwe has evolved, taking on a younger profile and endangering social and economic development in urban and rural areas.

In Chapter 5, 'Theory of Poverty or Poverty of Theory?', Raymond Nyapokoto and Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni propose a decolonial intervention on urban poverty in South Africa. They argue that what sets South Africa apart is the uneasy coexistence of poverty and opulence, which led former President Thabo Mbeki to articulate the situation in terms of a 'two nations' thesis. They thus propose deploying a Fanonian decolonial theory to critically explore the genesis of poverty and inequality in the country in order to unmask foundational structural causes of poverty, tracing them back to the unfolding of colonialism, the rise of industrial capitalism, and urbanisation patterns and processes. The chapter uses case studies of Alexandra Township and Sandton as epitomes of poverty and opulence respectively. Sandton symbolises the 'zone

of being', whereas Alexandra represents the 'zone of nonbeing'. They posit that the road (M1) separating Alexandra and Sandton represents the abyssal line dividing the two. The zone of being is a site for good living and opulence, whereas the zone of nonbeing is the locale of hellish conditions, depravity and poverty. They argue that these two zones are not natural, but a product of particular histories and deliberate policies, which their chapter seeks to reveal.

The next three chapters in the book address issues relating to empowerment, regionalism, ethnicity, identity and development challenges in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Blaming colonialism can never be sufficient answer for the existence of poverty and inequality in postcolonial Africa. There is thus a need to ponder over whether ruling African elites have a vision and decisiveness to come up with new forms of regulating their own economies. Does affirmative action, indigenisation or black economic empowerment benefit the poor strata of society or those already-privileged elites? This is the subject of discussion in Chapter 6, 'The "Native Returns"', by Tamuka Charles Chirimambowa and Tinashe Lukas Chimedza. Chirimambowa and Chimedza assess whether indigenisation and black economic empowerment are development projects in the 'postcolony' or are just a decoy used by ruling elites for their primitive accumulation. They argue that Southern Africa's former liberation movements and their governments in power have argued for and implemented some sort of 'indigenisation' (in Zimbabwe) or Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) in South Africa. Such policies have been presented and implemented as a strategy to 'empower' citizens, but mostly as a political and policy response to 'develop' the nation, reduce poverty and inequality. Politically, 'empowerment' is framed as a nationalist liberation project to achieve 'decolonisation' and or 'desettlerisation'. The chapter focuses on Zimbabwe and South Africa, and attempts to critically analyse historical and contemporary contestations around 'indigenisation/empowerment' and the possibility of the emergence of a 'patriotic' black capitalist class capable of leading and driving social and economic transformation.

While development has been an attractive catchphrase in most African countries, power, patronage, ethnicity, nepotism, regionalism and other issues are the ones that count the most, not just for politicians but also for the entire elite and the general population. Vusilizwe Thebe's chapter, 'Ethnopolitics and Regionalism, Discipline and Punishment', argues that ethnopolitics and regionalism have characterised Zimbabwe's development trajectory since independence in 1980. After a failed process of moderation, reconciliation and nation building, the postcolonial state increasingly leaned towards patronage and ethnic and regional politics,

using its physical, politically and financial might not only to co-opt but also to punish perceived dissident social groups. According to Thebe, this unfortunate process alongside natural and economic events after 1990 left certain regions politically and economically disenfranchised and underdeveloped as development stalled.

Issues of development and identity remain sensitive in the former white settler states of Southern Africa. Chapter 8, 'The Politics of Land Ownership in South Africa', by Wendy Isaacs-Martin explores whether backyard dwellers perceive that racial identifiers are linked to spatial planning and (re)distribution, as issues of spatial (re)distribution are contentious and emotive in South Africa, particularly for backyard tenants. Backyard dwellers are individuals or families who rent and reside in the yard of main houses, usually council-owned properties, in temporary homes made of wood, plastic and corrugated iron. These are impoverished areas composed predominantly of a single ethnic racial group, the Coloured (people of mixed race). This chapter adopts a desktop research method, conducting structural content analysis of national newspapers following the democratic elections of 1994. Newspaper articles associated with the topic were retrieved from the NewsBank Access South Africa database using a stratified random sample and analysed. An electronic IOL database was used to supplement NewsBank. The period under consideration is from 1997 to 2014. According to Isaacs-Martin, perceptions of entitlement and relative privilege are linked to issues of identity in these impoverished areas. Coloured backyard dwellers perceive this as the reason why they do not have access to land and housing, and that this exclusion and marginalisation is responsible for their economically depressed predicament.

The last three chapters in this book deal specifically with challenges afflicting African families in relation to social policy issues, socioeconomic and cultural barriers to marital unions, threatening diseases and abuse of seniors receiving old-age pension grants. Chapter 9, 'Understanding the Conceptualisation African Families', by Busani Mpofo is an introduction to the ongoing study on the conceptualisation of a family policy in South Africa, focusing on the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo Provinces, which were identified as containing the majority of poor and more child-headed families. Mpofo argues that developing an African family policy from an African perspective is even more crucial now because black African families in South Africa are in a state of crisis, which manifests itself in the form of escalating family breakdowns and very negative effects on children and the youth (see Holborn and Eddy 2011). The major source of concern here is that while the *White Paper* acknowledged that various kinds of families exist in the

country, it concluded that the nuclear family is the most common type in South Africa (Department of Social Development, Republic of South Africa 2012: 15). The problem with this assumption is that, at the end, the Western nuclear family, which is regarded as the norm due to the hegemony of Western imperialism, continues to be the basis of many social policies, despite the fact that this family form is not the most dominant among black African families (Sunde and Bozalek 1995: 65). This chapter argues that living in nuclear households in urban or semi-urban areas should not be conflated with having a nuclear family. A historical understanding of the conceptualisation of a black African family, which was incorrect at certain levels, is necessary before one can think of conceptualising about a family policy.

Can Africa's current problems be divorced from the limitations of its historical development (precolonial as much or more than colonial)? In order for real progress to occur, does social and cultural life in Africa have to change? This is Busani Ngcaweni's subject of discussion in Chapter 10, 'Socioeconomic and Cultural Barriers to Marital Unions and HIV Incidence Correlates'. Ngcaweni explores socioeconomic and cultural barriers to marital unions and HIV incidence correlates in South Africa. He argues that the cultural practice of *lobola* (payment of a dowry) forms part of the causes of low marriage rates among Africans because *lobola* is overpriced and out of reach of most unemployed and underemployed Africans. This leaves more black Africans unable to marry and more exposed to the risk of HIV, as recent studies have shown that single and cohabiting individuals tend to have higher exposure to HIV compared to married people. The chapter therefore asks whether or not, if marriage presents some 'form of protection' against HIV, the national government should actively promote marriage as a public policy response to the HIV pandemic. In addition, should government and other concerned stakeholders actively engage with traditional leaders and other role players to address concerns about the abuse of *lobola* and therefore depressing marriage rates among Africans who happen to be the most afflicted by the AIDS epidemic?

While Ferguson (2015) highlighted the increasing importance of cash pay-outs in the Southern African region, some intended beneficiaries may not benefit much from them. This is the subject of discussion in the last chapter of this book, 'Old-Age Cash Grant Pay-out Days', in which Gloria Sauti argues that seniors (the elderly) attract unprecedented attention just before or during the Old-Age Pension or the 'Old Age Grant' pay-out days in South Africa. Vendors, local stores and taxi drivers claim to significantly reduce prices in their stalls, shops and transport fares respectively around grant pay-out points in order to attract seniors. Some

seniors are forced to become ‘money lenders’ by family members who borrow from them. In order to survive for the whole month, seniors have to eventually borrow and thus fall victim to loan sharks or the so-called ‘machonisas’ who charge exorbitant interest rates. Seniors are abused in the process, a situation to which the government and other humanitarian actors seem oblivious. Sauti demonstrates how this abuse of the old-age grant jeopardises the government’s goal to combat poverty and improve the wellbeing of seniors.

Busani Mpofo is a senior researcher at AMRI, College of Graduate Studies, University of South Africa. His main research interests include Third World urbanisation and the history of African cities, urban poverty, inclusive development, development discourse and theory. His publications include ‘The Urban Land Question, Land Reform and the Spectre of Extrajudicial Land Occupations in South Africa’, *Africa Insight* (2017) and ‘The Land Question, Agriculture, Industrialisation and the Economy in Zimbabwe: A Critical Reflection’, in O. Akanle and J.O.T. Adesisa (eds), *Development of Africa: Issues, Diagnoses and Prognoses* (2018).

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Note

1. For more information on the main causes, responses and effects of the 2008 global financial crisis, see Robinson (2014).

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