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Book Reviews

Globalization and Social Policy in Africa: Issues and Research Directions, Tade Akin Aina, CODESRIA, Dakar, Senegal (1997) ISSN: 0850-8895 (p/b), 92 pp, US\$8.

Introduction

Tade Akin Aina's working paper on *Globalization and Social Policy in Africa: Issues and Research Directions* provides a critical and certainly an interesting re-examination of the now popular 'buzzword' of *globalization* especially as it relates to the nature and dynamics of social policy in Africa. Although a fair amount of information already exists on precisely what the concept of globalization is concerned with, not much critical and analytical work in the context of the African experience exists. In this regard then, Aina's proposed study must be a relevant and timely study and one which will be useful not only to policy makers, but in the provision of a deeper understanding of economic and social phenomena implied in the globalization process.

The author begins by defining the concept of globalization, showing the divergences in theoretical perceptions about the phenomenon and explaining the basis upon which a broader framework for understanding the concept must be established. His carefully selected and fairly extensive choice of the current literature on the issue provides a balanced understanding of the divergences of opinion in this field. The author's objective critique succeeds in the *deglorification* of the concept of globalization. His critical examination of *the other side* of the coin, namely, the *ugly* side of the issue, in a sense does revive certain fundamentals embodied in Amin's centre-periphery debate and Frank's *Development of under-development*. Aina's point of emphasis differs somewhat from the aforementioned theorists largely in the manner in which he assesses the relationship between globalization and social policy.

Social policy is defined both as a theoretical and empirical issue. It is treated as the dependent variable in the broader framework of globalization. The role of "*State-Society, State-Economy Relations, Inequality and Poverty, Gender Relations, Economic Restructuring and Social Change and Citizenship Rights*" in shaping a deeper understanding of globalization and social policy are discussed.

The relationship between globalization and social policy underscores the primary focus of the paper. The analysis of this relationship begins by providing a critical appraisal of conventional approaches which tend to undermine or underplay important social issues such as inequality, gender relations, poverty and

citizenship and human rights, to name a few. As the author puts it, social policy must be analysed, *"in terms of its history, nature, dynamics and relationships not only with internal forces, various forms of social relations and structures, but also as they are affected by external pressures and dynamics."*

The ultimate objective of the working paper is to identify key issues of research around the theme of globalization and social policy. Three broad research themes are identified, namely:

- a) Development, Globalization and Social Policy-Making in Africa.
- b) External Influence and Social Policy.
- c) Globalization, Social Policy and the State and Society.

An in-depth analysis of these themes is aimed at the re-examination of social policy issues in Africa in terms of origin, design and effectiveness.

The Concept of Globalization

The author presents a divergence of views and perceptions on the issue of globalization. Proponents of globalization have tended to glorify this phenomenon, focussing mainly on what Tade Akin Aina refers to as the *"sugary notions of interdependence, global flows and exchanges,"* a view which clearly presents globalization as a benign force, a *"creative process producing new technologies and expanding opportunities."* The author's own analysis of the process differs fundamentally from the above. For him, globalization is, *"the transformation of the relations between states, institutions, groups and individuals, the universalization of certain practices, identities, and structures and...the expression of the global restructuring that has occurred in recent decades in the structure of modern capitalist relations"* (p 8). Embodied in that definition is the idea that the process of globalization has brought about fundamental changes in relations across nations in various aspects of social, political and economic life. The author criticises conventional wisdom on globalization in the sense that it downplays or underestimates issues of *"coercion, conflict, polarization, domination, inequality, exploitation and injustice"* (p 11). Globalization has led to further imperfections in labour and capital goods markets and has introduced new distortions, social hardships and marginalisation of communities.

There is an extensive review of literature to show the divergence of opinion embodied in the above section.

Globalization and Social Policy

The ultimate objective of the proposed research is not just to present the theoretical variations in notions of globalization, but rather, to determine the nature and impact of those processes on the design, implementation and effectiveness of social policy in Africa. The impact on social policy is investigated in the context of:

- State-Society and State-Economy Relations.
- Inequality and Poverty.
- Gender Relations and Gender Analysis.
- Economic Restructuring and Social Change

There is the fundamental premise that globalization engenders certain kinds of responses as the various interest groups in society (state, civic society and labour) protect or enhance their interests which may be at stake through the globalization process. It is these responses that the author wishes to investigate.

There is also a fundamental premise made that globalization has impacted the design and effect of social policy. The proposed research aims to explore the interrelationships between globalization and social policy within a dynamic context such as characterises the African economies today.

Identification of Research Themes

The author identifies and discusses very clearly the research issues emerging from the debate on the relationship between globalization and economic policy. The key research questions to be investigated are: (and to use the author's categorisation):

Theme I: Development, Globalization and Social Policy Making in Africa

This aspect of the study is intended to focus on the historical evolution of and the nature of social policy-making in different administrative and management systems in Africa. The origin, the design, the gender, class, ethnic and socio-political dimensions of social policy-making will be explored.

Theme II: External Influence and Social Policy

This section will focus on the impact of global social and economic developments on social policy.

It examines the role of multilateral and international and regional financial and trading institutions on the administration and management of social services. Key issues to be studied in this regard include (p 78):

- adjustment and economic restructuring and social policy;
- urbanisation and urban poverty;
- household and family health; and
- rural development and poverty.

Theme III: Globalization, Social Policy and the State and Society

Taking cognisance of the fact that globalization has engendered certain political, economic and social responses (both positive and negative), the author chooses this as another research theme. In particular, the author intends to study how "*households, communities, social movements and several strategic groups have devised and utilized strategies and various means of pursuing and defending their interests*" (p 78). This is important in terms of tracing the evolving nature of, for instance, definitions of social rights and citizenship status in relation to issues of access and entitlements to social services and other benefits of social policy.

Comment on Methodological Issues

Regarding the research methodology to be employed, the author chooses to dwell on the more general (albeit very important) study approach to be adopted in this particular research rather than focus on the more standard description of both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of research, such as methods of data gathering and analysis. His methodology emphasises the following principles:

- "*open, bold, critical and disciplined*" (p 80). The emphasis lies on the need to go beyond the "*singular and monolithic, ideological and theoretical and disciplinary orientation*" (p 80).
- "*inter and multi-disciplinary, comprehensive, open to combination of various modes of investigation.*"

Critical Appraisal of Working Paper

Aina's working paper on globalization is a must for all those keenly following the globalization debate. It provides a refreshing departure from conventional arguments which clearly portray the issue in a very limited and biased manner which chooses to ignore some of the adverse effects that globalization has had on the design and impact of social policy in Africa. His paper introduces balance in the assessment of the impact of globalization and social policy.

A major strength of the paper lies in its very extensive review and analysis of the nature of the discourse on globalization, pointing out the shortcomings of each

argument. Thus, the proposal to re-think social policy in light of the multi-dimensional analysis of globalization constitutes a key policy as well as a research issue.

Although the paper makes very interesting reading, there are a few problem areas. The choice of thematic areas for research, whilst relevant, is too broad and one is not too sure that justice will be done to all these chosen areas of study.

A major weakness of the paper, though, lies in the serious omission of the quantitative and qualitative methodological techniques the author intends to use. Clearly, in the final analysis, the legitimacy of many of the author's alternative views on the issues of globalization and social policy must rest on the extent to which they can amass relevant data and information on the issues, and so the methodological issues should definitely have been elaborated in a lot more detail than has been done.

The shortcomings of the paper notwithstanding, Tade Akin Aina's paper on globalization is an interesting work which provides a critical appraisal of the whole globalization debate. His attempt to *deglorify* globalization may be an ambitious undertaking but his theoretical frame convinces the reader that he is very likely able to do so.

It therefore remains to be seen whether in fact he can demonstrate his perception of globalization as a predominantly pervasive or negative process in relation to social policy.

Reviewed by Dr Theresa Moyo, Economics Department, Box MP 167, Mount Pleasant, University of Zimbabwe.

The Tanzanian Peasantry: Further Studies, edited by Peter G Forster and Sam Maghimbi, Avebury, Aldershot, England (1995), ISBN 1-85628-493-X, 329 pp inc index. Price: N/K.

Many studies have been carried out on Tanzania, focused on the need for rural development with a view to alleviation of poverty and the concomitant precarious conditions of existence. The context in which these studies took place was greatly influenced by the policies of Julius Nyerere, a leader who anticipated a large-scale transformation of society, by the creation of *ujamaa* villages.

In this collection of essays, the contributors take note of Tanzania's transition phase when its leadership flirted with the Bretton Woods institutions, a period which was characterised by conflict with them and eventually, the capitulation. Not only did this result in a change of leadership, but also an acceptance of economic "liberalisation" in the context of "structural adjustment."

Such changes it is argued, were not dealt with in the contributions to the first

volume of the *Tanzanian Peasantry* which appeared in 1992. The present collection pays particular attention to recent changes, as new policies are implemented and have their impact throughout the Tanzanian countryside.

The book has a total of 15 chapters and is divided into five parts. Under the theoretical and macroscopic considerations, an effort is made to define Tanzanian realities; the rise and fall of *ujamaa* (Nyerere's populism), conflict between state and grassroots-based institutions in Tanzania's rural development, and finally the performance of the agricultural sector under structural adjustment.

Part two consists of three chapters that explore land and environmental issues in the districts of Lake Kilimanjaro, Mwanga and the Pare mountains.

Part three focuses on the role of indigenous technical knowledge, especially the importance of using participatory approaches. One interesting chapter focuses on the role of indigenous technical knowledge in increased food production.

The final section addresses three major issues around the state-administered justice and modes of social control in society.

There is no doubt that the book covers a wide variety of topics on Tanzania's rural development and the challenges the country faces under a "liberalised" context. It will appeal to people in the academy and is likely to be restricted to those who specialise in peasant studies. This can safely be proven if one takes time to reflect on the remarks in Part One, whose import will make the reader feel that under Julius Nyerere, for example, "socialism" was a metaphor which did not refer to an economic model or plan, but rather a process in which people collectively arrive at "working solutions" to issues that have been located for discussion.

For those who studied Tanzania in the early days, Nyerere would have wanted socialism to be closely linked to the *ujamaa* village policy of collective rural production. There is no better way of initiating oneself into this book than by reflecting on this.

Reviewed by Thomas Deve, Assistant Editor, Sapes Trust, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Woman Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse. Healing through Grief Work – Beyond Survival, Judy Chew (1997), The Haworth Press, New York. ISBN: 0-7890-0110-1 (h/b), 0-7890-0284-1 (p/b), 160pp inc index. Price: US\$31,96 (h/b); US\$14,95 (p/b).

This practical guide for students in counselling settings provides a systematic method with which to conceptualise and conduct group work with women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse. Experienced counselling practitioners in psychology, social work, psychiatry, and nursing, will also benefit from this session-by-session account of how to conduct group work.

This book's integration of theory and clinical intervention provides a thorough basis for addressing some of the key themes in the resolution of sexual abuse. The first three chapters contain a detailed discussion of the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings involved in conducting group psychotherapy with women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse. Anecdotal and self-help approaches are also outlined, which provide a useful foundation for research and clinical practice. However, the necessary bridge between theory and practice is initially accomplished by including contributions from the Eriksonian approach, the feminist perspective, narrative therapy, and the solution-oriented approach. These different theoretical frameworks establish the rationale for group treatment. The importance of language in the recovery process is also extensively covered, as in the quote from Walters and Havens (1993): *"Becoming a survivor certainly is better than being a victim, but becoming a celebrant of life seems to us to be an even better outcome."*

The following chapters provide the practical "how to's" of conducting a thirteen session group, which emphasises the discovery of solutions, strengths, and both internal and external resources, while highlighting the temporal nature of *"being a victim,"* and *"being a survivor"* at theoretical and clinical levels. The detailed step-by-step account of how to conduct group work emphasises leading clients to personal empowerment, self-compassion and resourcefulness.

The final chapter on *"Self-care and the therapist: creating a context for renewal"* seems almost an adjunct to this book. However, the critical importance of facilitators having adequate training in addressing sexual abuse issues in a counselling context, as well as having experience working with groups, and competent clinical skills, is highlighted. Sexual abuse work is extremely challenging, and, *"one of the most important tasks of the therapist is to cultivate a healthy sense of self amidst the myriad of responsibilities of working with individuals with past sexual abuse histories."* Thus, care for the self of the therapist, particularly in this domain, is a high priority and so the chapter constitutes a useful ending to a readable volume. Indeed this book is an important addition to the extensive literature on sexual abuse and is a valuable and efficient source for counselling practitioners embarking on group work.

Reviewed by Sally Tasker, Clinical Social Worker and Family Therapist.

Islamic Society and State Power in Senegal, Leonardo A Villalon, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England (1995), ISBN: 0521-460077 (h/b). Price: N/K.

This book is a major study that should be read by every student of Islam and politics as well as of Africa. It underlines a very important observation which escapes many

researchers in Senegal, that the political role of Islam in this country is clearly not that which much of the recent literature on Islam and politics would lead one to predict.

Leonardo Villalon argues that in Senegal, the Muslim orders have been a central component of a political system that has been among the most stable in Africa. This can be understood by looking at his detailed account of grassroots politics with an analysis of national and international forces and examination of the ways in which the internal dynamics of the orders shape the exercise of power by the Senegalese state.

Villalon's study shows how the interaction of religion and politics in Senegal proves intriguing and puzzling. For example, the religious elite carry great weight in national politics. Political discourse is replete with references and appeals to Islam; Islamic symbols are omnipresent, and a myriad of popular organisations centred around Islam are flourishing.

On the other hand, there is little evidence of the social phenomena which might be expected to accompany the politicisation of Islam; socio-political cleavages based on religion, whether between Muslim and non-Muslim or between orders, are virtually non-existent; and outside a very small urban minority, there is virtually no opposition to the much-touted principle of the secular state.

This book explores the relationship between the two central traits of the Senegalese political system. It recognises, as many others have, that there is a close link between the role of Islam in the country and its political system.

The methodology adopted differs substantially from various other models that have been suggested by writers on Senegal. This book particularly calls into question both interpretations that would rely too heavily on Islam and those which consider it too lightly. It is noted that much of the recent literature on the role of Islam in politics has sought an explanation in Muslim theology.

More specifically this book develops an analysis which specifies the *process* and examines the *institutions* through which the "people's voice" is expressed and heard, and places this discussion in the context of current debates about state and society in Africa.

Although this book was built on an empirical case study, the author hopes that it will ultimately be read as a statement about the conditions shaping the exercise of state power in Africa: a growing number of political systems in Africa must be understood in terms of variations in the specifics of societal structures and in the capabilities of those structures to effectively organise and transmit social concerns. Politics in Africa are largely shaped and conditioned by the evolving fortunes of the continent's still-fragile civil societies. This is the perspective that Villalon uses to analyse the political impact of Senegal's Sufi orders.

Reviewed by Thomas Deve, Assistant Editor, Sapes Trust, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Traditional Medicine in Africa, edited by Isaac Sindiga, Chacha Nyaigoti-Chacha & Mary Kunanah, East African Educational Publishers, Nairobi, 1995. ISBN: 9966-46-548-0, pp 197 + Preface, maps, tables and references.

The volume opens with an outline of the motivation behind the workshop that culminated in the publication of the book. The workshop was motivated by the fact that the majority of Kenyans – rural and urban, illiterate and literate – spanning a myriad of ethnic and religious affiliations, utilise traditional medicine at one time or another. The volume consists of conceptual and empirical papers organised into chapters.

In an introductory article, Sindiga sets out a case for the incorporation of traditional medicine in official health care. Providing a general overview of the theory and practice of traditional medicine, the author stipulates that if the goal of health for all by the year 2000 is to be realised, there is need to pay more attention to primary health care, which entails utilisation of traditional medicine.

The empirical papers by Wandibba, Gitae, Kawango and Sindiga gives the theoretical aspects of the book a solid base in terms of empirical case studies. These authors examine in substantial detail the traditional medicine of the Babukusu, Agikuyu, Luo and Gusii.

In the last chapter the editors, albeit speculating and prescriptively, integrate the themes of the articles in the volume by focusing on areas of future concern with regard to the traditional medicine in Africa. Drawing almost exclusively from Kenyan examples, the editors identify three areas of immediate concern in traditional medicine: traditional medicine and health care policy; professionalisation of traditional medicine; and material medica in traditional medicine. For instance in the case of health care policy, the authors observed that “...whereas traditional healers recognise biomedicine and refer their patients there, the reverse is not true.” This state of affairs is later attributed to the perceived and actual competition between biomedicine and African traditional medicine for the clients. Thus though traditional medicine was officially recognised in Kenya in 1979, up to now little has been done at policy levels because biomedical practitioners, whose negative attitudes towards traditional medicine have changed little, are still in control.

In addressing these emerging concerns, the editors not only map out the direction traditional medicine is likely to take in future, but also acknowledge that traditional medicine, like other forms of culture, has inherent dynamism. It would probably have been futile if the editors had not tied up the rather diverse theoretical and methodological articles by abstracting elements of linking them to the future.

This book is quite valuable in that not only does it provide useful data on the various aspects of traditional medicine, but also defines its role in the provision of health care. Thus it is both informative as well as evaluative.

The book will no doubt be useful to community health workers, health researchers, health practitioners, policy makers and planners. Discipline-wise, students of medical anthropology, medical sociology and community health will find the book quite useful.

However, many readers might find the title "Traditional Medicine in Africa" rather too broad. The editors' attempt to justify this title on the basis of "*inclusion of several new chapters....to improve the conceptual foundations of the work and case study coverage*" seem not convincing enough since virtually all contributions (including the conceptual ones) draw heavily from the Kenyan situation. In fact, a casual look at the the list of contributors to the volume indicate that the authors are mostly Kenyans and they researched on Kenyan communities. The inclusion of conceptual papers notwithstanding, the title "Traditional Medicine in Kenya" seems more appropriate.

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