



# After the African Awakenings

**An Interview with Firoze Manji by Nokoko  
Editors, Toby Moorsom and Christopher Webb**

Firoze Manji is a Kenyan activist with more than 40-year's experience in international development, health and human rights. He is the founder and former editor-in-chief of the pan-African social justice newsletter, Pambazuka News and of Pambazuka Press, and former executive director of Fahamu – Networks for Social Justice. He has previously worked as the Director of the Pan-African Baraza for ThoughtWorks and Head of CODESRIA's Documentation and Information Centre. He is a co-editor, with Sokari Ekine, of *African Awakenings: The Emerging Revolutions*. He was previously a Visiting Fellow at Kellogg College, University of Oxford, and is currently a Richard von Weizsäcker Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin. He is also an Associate Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies. He holds a PhD and MSc from the University of London. He is the publisher of Daraja Press.

**Toby Moorsom:** This issue of Nokoko provides an assessment of electoral politics in Africa. We've chosen this theme because we are approaching 30 years since the so-called third wave transitions of the 1980s, a process that saw the simultaneous adoption of liberal democracy and neoliberal economic policies. Looking back over the interim years would you say this has been a period of progress for African nations?

**Firoze Manji:** Well, the short answer to that is rather limited. In order to really understand what's going on, we need to look at the

political nature of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism, after all, serves a political need; it is not merely an economic policy. I draw this very much from Domenico Losurdo's outstanding book, *Liberalism: A Counter History*. The point that he makes is that liberalism was born out of the Enlightenment, but it was born as a twin of racism. In other words, the enlightenment occurred in the immediate aftermath of massive primitive accumulation through genocide and slavery. The democracy that emerged out of that was a democracy for a very tiny elite. When democracy was born in the United States, for example, only white, male, slave owners were allowed to vote. It was, in other words, an exclusive project. There were two domains created out of that process: first, the so-called 'sacred space,' an exclusive club that has the right to vote and access to privilege, and second, the profane space where everyone else, including women, were condemned to being the 'other', those considered non-human or less-than-human.

Now, it's really important to frame it in this way, because the struggles that have occurred over the last several hundred years have been about ordinary people demanding to be recognized as human and therefore, having rights to claiming a universalist humanity. In other words, all the democratic gains, including social welfare etc. weren't something granted as *noblesse oblige*, it was won through struggle. The abolition of slavery, for example, came about as a result of the massive opposition that occurred to the whole process of enslavement in Africa, in the Americas and the Caribbean, including the establishment of Haiti, the first successful overthrow of slavery. I'm belaboring the point, but once we understand the nature of liberalism—that it is constantly seeking to have an exclusive domain of the sacred space and constantly in struggle with those in the profane who are seeking democracy and access to justice and dignity—only then we can understand that *neoliberalism* (that is new liberalism) is a return to the fundamental aspirations of liberalism.

That is, over the last 30 to 40 years, there is a growing attempt to exclude the majority of people from the sacred space and to push them into the profane. I think the election and language of Trump is a perfect example of thrusting out, and building walls against, what the regime believes are the members of the profane space.

One of the things I think many of us have failed to acknowledge has been that over the last 40 years in Africa, since the implementation of neoliberal policies, we see a vast majority of people condemned not merely to transient periods of unemployment, but to conditions of 'never employment'. People have been dumped in the dustbin of history, and as a result, are condemned to a profane space in which they have no access to rights, justice or dignity as humans. The last 30 to 40 years has been a period in which the membership of the profane has expanded concurrently with the growth of a greater exclusiveness of the sacred space. We see this in all African countries; you have a minority who are incredibly rich. They have been given access to the privileges of the sacred space while the vast majority of people are excluded and condemned to impoverishment. If you talk about Kenya for example, and you think about people living below five dollars a day—the World Bank talks about one dollar a day, but who can live on one dollar a day? What Africa experienced 30 to 40 years ago as 'structural adjustment' is precisely what Europe and the North are experiencing today as 'austerity'. But austerity is not a transient thing as it was in the past. This is the creation of a permanently unemployed population excluded from the exclusive privileges of the sacred space. This is happening both in Africa and in the advanced capitalist countries.

The struggle for independence has been a struggle to establish a zone wherein the majority can actually experience justice, dignity and self-determination. The gains of independence lasted only until the beginning of the 1980s when, with the rise of neoliberalism, most of

the gains of independence were reversed. We tend to accuse the World Bank and IMF for imposing structural adjustment programs that privatized the commons and opened our countries to exploitation by transnationals and finance capital, but this isn't quite the whole story. African elites have been amongst the greatest beneficiaries of structural adjustment. They have accumulated at an extraordinary pace while the vast majority have been impoverished. So, has there been any progress? Well for the emerging elite in Africa, it has been a period of huge progress.

One of the impacts of neoliberalism has been to reduce the democratic space: although, now multiple political parties are allowed, in practice there is little to distinguish between them in terms of their political programs. Elections have become all about whose turn it is to eat.

**Toby Moorsom:** These changes have coincided with increasing forms of consultation, so, for example, development aid packages usually require a consultative process. So that's been reified, but it hasn't translated into material changes in people's daily lives.

**Firoze Manji:** A rose by any other name ... the so-called consultative processes of PRSPs and so on have been public relations exercises for the implementation of the same policies as structural adjustment. But implementing them has not been straightforward. If one takes a longer view, what we have seen are growing movements seeking to re-establish their right to justice, dignity and to their futures. Michelle Alexander has recently made the point in an article in the New York Times that there is a tendency for us to see our struggle against the Trumps of this world as 'resistance'. But this, she argues, is not the resistance. We—the movements for justice and dignity—are the ones who are giving birth to a new world. It is the Trumps of the world, that is the ruling classes, which are in crisis, it is they who

are the resistance; they fear the new world that these movements are trying to give birth to.

Looking at it that way completely transforms the way we see the struggles that are going on. We have to see the struggles that have emerged since we published *African Awakenings* as giving birth to a new world. It is not just that, as the World Social Forum put it 'another world is possible,' but rather another world is *absolutely necessary!* Because if one looks at it in terms of the human destruction that's going on, compounded by the environmental and climate crisis, we see the contestation between the profane and the sacred as being central to the future. It is the movements of the profane that are seeking to create a new world, but there is resistance to this from the establishment and the elites.

**Chris Webb:** In *African Awakenings* you argue that the Arab Spring was accompanied by related uprisings across the African continent, against impoverishment, despotism and the multiple effects of neoliberalism. Seven or eight years later, what do you think the legacy of some of those uprisings has been?

**Firoze Manji:** First, I think we must acknowledge that since that book was published, there continue to be movements struggling to give birth to that new world. One looks at, for example, Abahlali baseMjondolo, the shack dwellers movement in South Africa. Their membership has expanded, and they have forged partnerships with groups like NUMSA, the South African metalworker's union. In Burkina Faso, we've seen the ousting of Compaore. We've seen similar things going on across the continent, but under very difficult circumstances. Our elites are getting more and more ruthless. Their resistance against us is escalating, and they are drawing on the military might of the US and Europe to help them. If one considers the scale of militarization: AFRICOM has had more than 150 operations in countries across Africa over the last year, but it is not

simply occupying the continent: AFRICOM is there at the behest of our elites. That militarization is happening on a grand scale. It is accompanied by the militarization of aid, of humanitarian assistance, to say nothing of the direct military interventions to protect what are perceived of as 'US interests'.

**Toby Moorsom:** Do you see any connection between the crackdown on these protests particularly in North Africa and what has been referred to in Europe as the migrant crisis? What is leading people from everywhere from Libya to Nigeria to flee these countries in such numbers?

**Firoze Manji:** Well, I think that the conditions people are facing in Africa, especially as a result of military interventions in places like Libya and Mali, is such that people are seeking desperately to find refuge. The majority of them are not going to Europe—they are seeking and finding refuge in Africa. While it is well-known that the Mediterranean has become a massive cemetery of refugees, it is small in comparison to the cemetery that the Sahara has become. The EU has been outsourcing its borders to Africa with African regimes paid huge sums to prevent people reaching Europe. Development today has been turned into a means of providing the necessary resources for preventing migration, and this has been accompanied by both security and military interventions to ensure that Africans do not go to Europe. So, people are desperate, and this is an outcome of neo-liberalism. It is an outcome of the exclusion of the profane from the sacred spaces. And it is fundamentally racist: there are no mechanisms placed on preventing the migration of US citizens, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders etc.

**Toby Moorsom:** I want to go back to the issue of the economic policies imposed over the last 30 to 40 years. Their justification was partly that liberalization would remove the oppressive yoke of the state from interfering in the capacities of a nascent bourgeoisie; and

allow the innovative capacities of such a bourgeoisie to take root. Looking back, are these new elite the sort of comprador class, in the way that Fanon wrote about them, or have there been some among them who have really become an indigenous bourgeoisie?

**Firoze Manji:** What Fanon talks about with this elite was its parasitic nature and how much it is compliant with the needs of international capital. I think one of the things that has happened in Africa (not everywhere, but certainly in Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa) is that you have the emergence of a class who are actually part of the transnational bourgeoisie. They have morphed from being parasitic accumulators, to become members of a transnational class. Now that has very important implications because, in that process, they have sidestepped any development as a national bourgeoisie, in the sense that such a national capitalist class would seek to develop the productive forces in their own countries. The main way in which they accumulate profits is through rent rather than through production. Agriculture is like mining, it is two thirds, maybe nine tenths, rent. If one looks at the developer of the mobile phone companies, you can see that wealth is entirely from rent —charges imposed on telecommunications that in reality cost almost nothing. There is no, or very little, productive investment. If one looks at South Africa, you can see this huge problem that the real productive capital remains largely in white hands, and the headquarters of these companies are no longer in South Africa.

So this isn't, in my view, a productive bourgeoisie. It isn't seeking to develop the productive forces. You may find there are examples of individual capitalists who are committed to productive investment, but they are a minority. What structural adjustment did was open up borders for the movement of capital which means that international capital was able to move in, with no tariff barriers, and able to flood the markets with products produced elsewhere, with the effect that

they completely smashed local industry. At the same time, structural adjustment allowed this aspiring transnational class to export capital elsewhere and make a lot of money in the international speculative domain.

**Chris Webb:** You make the argument that structural adjustment created this elite that has access to the political sphere, that accumulates in a variety of ways, and then the creation of this profane layer, a surplus population. But the anthropologist Tania Li makes the point that this actually isn't very good for capitalism. You have all these people that are effectively excluded from the market, and this is a barrier to capitalist profitability. So, how does this shape our understanding of the nature of capitalism in Africa? Is this capitalism? What type of capitalism is it?

**Firoze Manji:** Capital is moving into a stage where there is a lot of discussion about robotics and artificial intelligence, so you're finding fewer and fewer people are being employed. On a theoretical level, there is a contradiction here. If you don't have a market where you can realize the surplus value that has been incorporated in commodities, then you're in trouble. The other contradiction is that the majority of the accumulation that's occurring comes from speculative activity, playing the markets. It's a casino economy. It is speculative because it's not on the basis of what is actually being produced, it's what might be produced or might be linked to what might be produced. So, we have a global crisis of capitalism, but it doesn't mean it will be resolved in our favor. The crisis of capitalism is precisely that it cannot resolve its own contradictions without engaging in destruction.

Part of the destruction that is going on in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia and, in due course, in Iran as well, are part of that process of destruction. If you can't develop capital productively and you have limits to how much you can get out of the speculation, you

are going to have to engage in some kind of destruction. So, I think we are living in very dangerous times because I think the stakes are really high. Politically, even the elites have given up on this idea of 'promoting democracy'. This belongs to the past. Today, dictatorships are much more important for them. Saudi Arabia is a good example, and many of our regimes in Africa are good examples. Capital will back them because that's their guarantee. I think that the terrifying thing about the Brazilian case with the rise of Bolsonaro is that it is not an exception. The neo-fascist resurgence is something that is happening in Europe, in India, in the Philippines, and it could happen anywhere.

**Toby Moorsom:** I want to go back to the discourse of 'civil society' that arose in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the same time as economic conditionalities were being imposed on African countries, a number of them also had a surge of new civil society movements that were heralded as very important developments, which almost justified getting rid of the supposedly oppressive state. That civil society discourse therefore, had undersides to it. How do you see the broader impact of that discourse?

**Firoze Manji:** If one looks at the period of *liberalism* it was characterized by a huge resurgence of philanthropy. In Africa, that was historically carried out by missionaries during the colonial period. Under *neoliberalism* we see the same phenomenon happening. The growth of NGOs in Africa was a direct result of the neoliberal policies which reinforced the argument that the state was inefficient. Basically what was happening was that neoliberalism sought to privatize the public domain. Where it was profitable, like water, telecommunications, and healthcare, they privatized those and the corporations made a fast buck. But when it came to rural development or, water provision or, healthcare for the poor, that's not a profitable venture. So, they sold it off to the other private

sector, the so-called civil society organizations. As a result, citizens are turned into beggars for healthcare rather than having that as a right, which is what we had after independence.

But I think NGOs are facing a crisis because their funding is dropping. I think the access to serious funds is waning because money is now not going to NGOs so much as to the militarization of aid. I think we are seeing another crisis brewing amongst NGOs. At the same time, there are some, a very small minority, who are political and are engaged in the struggle for justice, in the struggle for providing solidarity to those who are engaged in struggles. But words, like solidarity, are today dirty words amongst civil society because it is overtly political. As I have pointed out in previous publications, the majority of NGOs, especially international NGOs, have contributed to the depoliticization of impoverishment.

**Chris Webb:** With the rise of right-wing populism in Europe and North America, there's also been some hints of a left-wing populism. I am thinking of Corbyn and Momentum in the UK and Sanders in the US. Do we see something similar on the African continent? Is there a Left to speak of anywhere in Africa now that poses some sort of alternative?

**Firoze Manji:** First, I think that the left in Europe and in the West has undergone a social democratization; it's drifted to the right over the last period. But there's a crisis of social democracy and also a crisis of dogma in the revolutionary parties, which I'm very skeptical about. The so-called revolutionary left are too preoccupied with reiterating dogmas, rather than developing critical analyses that enhance our understanding of how to challenge the rule of capital. I think what we're seeing is, at the same time, a recomposition taking place. I think we need to start thinking about whether the vanguard party is the way forward. I think there are too few left organizations that spend their time actually listening to and engaging with

movements where people are giving expression to the world that they want to give birth to.

But no, there is hardly any left in Africa, at least a left that is committed to the goals of emancipation of humankind, of asserting the dignity of the oppressed and exploited, and who are committed to building movements of self-determination. There are some lefties in some of the bigger countries like Nigeria. In Kenya, they are almost completely absent except in the main urban centres, but they have little influence. Many may call themselves the 'Left,' but that is essentially in a social democratic, rather than an anti-capitalist tradition. The left in South Africa is also a complete mess: the major left formations are focused on how to manage capitalism in the peripheries to behave nicely, rather than seeking to overthrow capital. So, I think we have a real problem. I believe that the objective conditions provide a real potential for the left to emerge as a strong force, but the ability to deliver has thus far been very limited. The challenge remains of building an explicitly anti-capitalism movement in every country of the continent.

The tragedy in countries like Venezuela, as in other Latin American countries, is the social democratization of the Left. That is to say, that it is not concerned with the complete abolition of the social relations of production of capital. Rather, it has the view that you can manage capital; that you can be nice to people and still have capitalism continue and still have private accumulation happening. Unfortunately, the Left in Latin America never challenged the dominance of capital. It was a form of social democracy in those circumstances. We can see that Brazil is a very good example of how that is completely being overturned, and I think we've seen it in Venezuela. I'm hopeful about Mexico, not because I have any illusions about Amlo, but we will see that there are limits to compromises with capital. Capital will go in for the kill. I think

that's guaranteed to happen unless a strongly anti-capitalist movement emerges.

**Toby Moorsom:** What do you think of the position of the African Union (AU) in building any kind of left alternative given that it's been central to promoting neoliberal policy on the continent? Is it an organization that the left should be engaging with and, if so, in what ways? I want to qualify this by saying that over the last couple of years that I've been in Accra, I've seen efforts of very committed Pan-Africanist scholars who are taking on the discourses of the A.U. and seem to be functioning as if it's an important field of struggle for the left.

**Firoze Manji:** Well, we have no choice, wherever we are, but to engage with the state. We engage our own governments in policy and so we do the same with the AU. You have the European Union, for example, which offers some guarantees to workers and so it has to be engaged with. But there is a distinction between having to engage because we have no choice and engaging because that is all we think needs to be done. These are where decisions are made; this is where the ruling class operates. We have no choice but to engage. But we cannot have the illusion that just by engaging with it that we are creating an anti-capitalist movement. It's not one or the other. We have to do both.

So, we have to do both with the African Union. At one level, you could just say it's a 'dictators club', but at the same time, there are big decisions that are made there. But to have illusions that the AU is where the left is going to be, that it has the ability to provide any anti-capitalist progressive outcomes, I am very skeptical about that. There are gains to be made by engaging with the institutions of so-called democracy, but it has to be done at the same time as trying to build movements that are explicitly anti-capitalist and outside the state.

**Chris Webb:** I wanted to ask about a topic that's both personal and political for you, which is about the late Samir Amin who, of course, died on August 12, 2018. When did you first encounter Samir Amin's work and him personally?

**Firoze Manji:** I think it must have been in the mid-1970s that I first came across Samir's work, in particular *Unequal Development*, around which many of us had many long debates. He was incredibly prolific, an incredible thinker, and somebody who was amazingly kind. The number of people I've come across who have written to say, Samir helped me when I was planning my thesis, is amazing. He always had time for other people.

In the 1990s, I began to feel that people had forgotten Samir Amin and that he wasn't being given the recognition that I felt was due to him. So I made contact with him at a CODESRIA meeting in Yaoundé and, I said to him, look, I think your books need to come out and reach into Africa and to a much wider audience than they do now. So, he agreed to Pambazuka Press publishing a series of his books and we became, over time, his main publisher, whereas now it is mainly Monthly Review that is fulfilling that role. For some time, Pambazuka became a place where we actively sought to promote Samir because he is an African thinker, an economist and has written some extraordinary work that I think has been responsible for the rekindling of interest in Marx's economic writings.

Samir was very committed to building some other means of moving things forward. Two weeks before he died, I had dinner with him to discuss a document he had prepared to organize an international conference to bring people together from the left. A lot of people talked about the formation of a 'Fifth International,' and our discussions led to a point where we both agreed that was not the way forward. What we needed to do was to allow a diversity of the

left and peoples' movements to come together to think through collectively what way forward involved representative movements and not just little political parties. The idea was to have a much broader movement and so, we were in the process of preparing. I revised one of his documents and arranged translation. That was two weeks before he died, and I have not yet got over that loss. He was such a sweet man, incredibly generous and always had time for people. We've lost a real giant.

**Toby Moorsom:** I actually started thinking about some of his ideas when you were previously talking about the ways the African elite sidestepped a developmental stage gravitated towards sectors which are heavily rent dependent. I was thinking about an article that was very influential to me, which is Samir's 1972 article, *Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa: Origins and Contemporary Forms*. In many ways, what you described is indicative of these long-term historical trends in which the African bourgeoisie was pulled away from productive sectors of the economy, especially toward transportation and mercantilism. This was something especially prominent in West Africa and so you see from his work, how these are world historical processes which are linked to the broader world systems theories that he was engaging with. I'm wondering, for you, are there particular aspects of his thought that you find have been most influential in the way you think about Africa and have thought about Africa over the years?

**Firoze Manji:** I think one of the most important lasting, short comments that Samir repeatedly made, and was really important in terms of framing one's thinking was to point out to us that capitalism is but a mere 'parenthesis in world history'. It is a short-lived parenthesis. And I think that's really important because he reminds us of what was happening internationally in China, in Africa and elsewhere before the birth of capitalism and what the

potentials therefore are in the aftermath of capitalism. But the other point I would make is that the core motivator of capitalists is to increase the rate of profit. It's not just about making profit; it's about increasing the rate of profit.

In the independence period, when capitalists emerged and the state became a tool of accumulation, they didn't want a 50 year investment plan. The problem is that the imperial form of accumulation was not open to the emerging African bourgeoisie. For a bourgeoisie like the European bourgeoisie to emerge in Africa, it would have to have the ability to enslave millions and to send millions of its citizens to establish settler colonies across the world, to say nothing of the need to carry out plunder, genocide and mass killings, it would need to do that to get really serious about primitive accumulation. There was no capacity existing in the 1960s and 70s for that kind of accumulation to take place. And so what do you do? How do you make a fast buck? And you are competing with everyone else as well so what do you do? So, you forge strategic alliances with capital, investments overseas, overseas banks, you name it, you look for every way in which you can turn a fast buck faster than your competitor because then you have more power over them.

**Chris Webb:** You mention that Samir Amin's ideas were not receiving the attention they deserved or his work wasn't getting read as widely. I wonder if this is because of a waning interest in the 1990s in Marxism and dependency theory? Do you see a renewed interest today in Samir Amin's ideas?

**Firoze Manji:** Yes, I think we made a really good intervention in popularizing him, not just by publishing his books, but getting him to write articles and doing interviews with him. So, we take some of the credit for keeping the flag flying. I think to a large extent we succeeded. I think today Samir Amin is viewed in very different ways

and I think it's encouraging that people are aware of him and some people have read him. But what we need to encourage is some critical reading. In other words, to listen to what he has to say and build our own perspectives so that we become part of that creative movement he was part of.

**Toby Moorsom:** I wonder if you have any advice for young, emerging activists today on the continent or outside of the continent. What are some of the avenues for supporting African liberation struggles today? For a time, Samir Amin was engaged in the World Social Forum (WSF). Is that one of the avenues that young activists should be gravitating towards?

**Firoze Manji:** I think the World Social Forum has passed its 'sell-by date'. I think it achieved a certain amount, but it did become too much of a cattle market. The ethos of equivalence of all participants was lost. If you went to any of the WSF events, if you had a lot of money, you had much larger stalls. If you had only a small amount of money, you had tiny stalls, and so, the basic democratic aspiration that we're all equal was lost. So, it was totally undemocratic. It reproduced the social relations of the market economy.

My message to young people would be this; we need to ask questions framed in the following way: What are we doing to contribute to the emancipation of our people? What is it that we are doing for the freedom and dignity of people? We have to recognize that being African was originally a term of abuse which Europe created. You know in France, immediately after the Thermidor (the 1794 defeat of the first post-revolutionary government), anyone who resisted the turn intended to reestablish, if not slavery, then the regime of white supremacy, in the colonies was branded 'an African'. It was a shorthand for the non-human. The term African was subsequently appropriated by the liberation movements and turned

into something that was about emancipation, about the creation of a universalist humanity, an inclusive humanity. And in that period, Africa immediately became associated with the struggle for liberation. But after (African) independence, the term has been detached from the meaning of emancipation and freedom and dignity. Instead, it's a taxonomic term. It's been attached to identity politics; it's all about whether you have curly hair or broad nose or dark skin or not. So, it's lost its emancipatory link. And so, for the young people they have to say, look, the true African is a liberator, fights for freedom and finds opportunities for the emancipation of humanity. To build a universalist inclusive humanity is the most important thing that we can focus our attention on today.

**Toby Moorsom:** When you talk about universalist claims, that harkens back to the liberatory aspects of Enlightenment thinking that were not made available to Africans, or other people in the peripheries. But when you look at major issues facing countries in many parts of Africa (and I'm thinking of the city I mean right now, Accra) you have massive informal settlements with no water supplies, no proper sanitation, all of these conditions which are extremely unhealthy for people on so many levels. When I see the scale of these problems, it's really hard for me to imagine resolving them without Africans re-engaging with ideas of modernization that were previously associated with independence struggles. Obviously, one must remove their authoritarian dimensions, but there seems to be a need to take on big projects. I'm wondering if you'd agree with that and if so, how do you address the logistical problems of trying to finance such investments?

**Firoze Manji:** First of all, let's be clear: it was African people who had been enslaved and shipped to San Domingue (later Haiti) who were to develop further the idea of a universalist humanity that the French revolution was unable to—we need to give recognition to

what Toussaint Louverture achieved. There were similar struggles elsewhere on the main continent. So, it is not accurate to say that the ideas of Enlightenment were not available to Africa. As for modernization, that was a euphemism for establishing the hegemony of capital in Africa and particularly of transnational capital. That's what it did. We should refer to it strictly as Euromodernization. People don't have water, not because of an ontological condition of 'poverty', but because they have been *deprived* of water. The issue is a political one, not an economic one. It is a question of how we organize to recapture the public domain for the public. How do we organize in order that our interests, that the interests of the vast majority, that the interests of dignity and humanity and justice prevail as the motive force for liberation? Because it is only by so doing that we stop the constant and persistent impoverishment of our people. That is why it is not going to be solved by economic development in the abstract. It has to be a product of struggles for that justice. It is only then that there can be a debate about how do we then produce? What do we produce? For whom do we produce? In what way do we produce? How do we build a world that we want to live in collectively? And that's the framework for an economic policy and economic development. It can't be a technical one. It can't be about 'modernization'. For the basis for the idea of modernization is to become like the European. Europe has lost its humanity. The rekindling of a universalist humanity will happen in Africa, of that I am convinced.