

(6) I refer to the Mozambican Youth Organisation (OJM), the Organisation of Mozambican Workers (OTM), and the children's organisation, the "Continuadores da Revolucao" ("those who continue the revolution"). The Mozambican Women's Organisation (OMM) was set up in 1973, during the armed struggle.

(7) After discussions between the Bretton Woods institutions and the Mozambican government, the structural adjustment programme was approved in January 1987, three months after the murder of President Samora Machel.

(8) The OMM was set up by Frelimo, at Tunduru in Tanzania, in 1973, during the armed struggle.

(9) Data collected by the PSLM in Mozambique under Phase III of the project on "Families in Contexts of Change", 1995-97. Partial report on "Access to and control over resources", PSLMOC, DEMEG, CEA, UEM, May 1996, pag. 46.

(10) The Circles of Interest resulted from a recommendation made at the Extraordinary Conference of the OMM, held in November 1984. These are local meetings and education centres for women, at community level, assisted by activists, with the aim of discussing, finding solutions, and learning a variety of skills - sewing, fishing, cooking, seminars about mother and child health, civic and family education, family planning, the promotion of income generating activities through learning the appropriate technologies.

(11) According to a recent publication from KULIMA, there are now more than 300 NGOs, classified as follows: Associations for socio-economic development; humanitarian; youth and students; socio-professional; religious; philanthropic; institutions for supporting and advising NGOs; groups/networks of NGOs; human rights; by province.

(12) Research undertaken by the Planning and Finance Ministry's Poverty Alleviation Unit indicates that 60-70% of rural households and 50% of urban families live below the poverty line. In the countryside the population has less access to social infrastructures, such as water supply, health posts and formal education, and less access to the legal system, than in urban areas.

(13) In fact, 25.2% of Mozambican parliamentarians are women, which is the second highest proportion in Africa (beaten only by Seychelles). This occurs at a time when, internationally, the percentage of women parliamentarians has fallen from 14.8% in 1988 to 11.7% in 1997, according to figures from the Interparliamentary Union.

CHAPTER 9 POSSIBILITIES FOR REDISTRIBUTION. RURAL WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA TODAY

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Political change in South Africa has done little to bring about much needed economic change for the vast majority who were dispossessed as a result of colonialism and the policies of apartheid. Since the coming into power of the Government of National Unity under Nelson Mandela there has been little change in the situation of the black 75% of the population living in third world conditions with a standard of living slightly better off than that in Congo. Nor has there been change in the circumstances of the white 12% of the population who enjoy a standard of living equal to that of Canadians. Instead the government's move away from redistribution to neo-liberalism promises little change in the life circumstances for that 75% in need of change (Adelzadeh and Padayachee 1995, Pillay 1996).

This paper concurs with recent critiques that neo-liberal options do not promise changes for the majority of the population. Such options do not address issues of equity and social justice which are key issues of stated concern on the part of the African National Congress (ANC), the majority party in government. In particular these policies offer little hope for marginalised rural women who make up a significant proportion of the vast dispossessed majority. What neoliberal solutions do promise is the opening up of the white first world enclave to a small black, and largely male elite.

I argue that in addition to shortcomings relating to neoliberal options, rural women's interests will not be adequately met because of current shortcomings in addressing gender, and because of the fact that rural women do not constitute a force to be reckoned with in considering policy alternatives. Present shortcomings can begin to be rectified firstly through more serious consideration of gender as a stratifier of social life within policy frameworks. And secondly through the organised action of rural women as a social force.

I suggest that policy needs to be informed by an understanding of how gender is constructed or influences conditions in specific local communities and households. This includes consideration of women's participation as agents in a process of development, and leads to questions of how rural women can begin to constitute a force able to advance their interests.

The Race, Gender, and Space Dimensions of Poverty

A recent government report 'Key Indicators of Poverty in South Africa' (prepared for the office of the Reconstruction and Development Programme by the World Bank and based on a study conducted by SALDRU at the University of Cape Town) highlights intersections between race, space, and gender in relation to poverty. This study confirms previous findings from more localised studies as well as assumptions that those in greatest need of redistributive policies are rural African women in the ex bantustans. The significance of this and other recent national survey reports, is however that for the first time we have a national map that includes the former bantustans. In addition unlike previous national data there are breakdowns by race and gender.

According to this study 53% of South Africa's population are classified poor, experiencing high unemployment, hunger and malnutrition, inability to pay for or lack of access to health care and basic services, and the risk of homelessness. By race 65% of all Africans are poor, and nearly 95% of S. Africa's poor are African.

The devastation resulting from the apartheid state's forced removal policies in order to demarcate the spatial dimension of the apartheid state has resulted in more extreme poverty in rural areas. While 53% of the population of South Africa live in rural areas, almost 75% of South Africa's poor live in the rural areas. Within rural areas the study points to greater poverty in the former bantustans. This results today in nearly two thirds of South Africa's poor living in the three provinces which include the former bantustans -- the Eastern Cape, Kwa Zulu/ Natal and the Northern Province.

As compared with the urban poor, the rural poor suffer greater levels of unemployment, lower educational attainment, much lower access to services such as water, and electricity as well as lower access to productive resources.

In addition to a race and space dimension, poverty has a gender dimension. A higher proportion of working age women live in poor households, and a higher proportion of the poor elderly are women. In addition women suffer from substantially higher unemployment rates than men (36% vs 26%). The study found that households headed by females had a 50% higher poverty rate than male headed households. This confirms the findings for other countries on the increase and vulnerability of female headed households. However there is also currently much debate about the underlying assumptions and usefulness of this category for analysis and policy, as I will discuss later.

The RDP study reflects the greatest concerns of the poor to be: jobs, piped water, housing, food aid, electricity and schools in that order. Among the rural poor electricity, clinics and roads also ranged as high priorities. These

priorities are echoed in case studies which define rural women's needs as jobs, housing and infrastructure development.

Most crucially it would seem it is access to and control over regular incomes and land that are the major concerns of rural women. Land is required primarily for housing, settlement and social infrastructure under present conditions of overcrowding and lack of security of tenure. Land for small scale farming is a secondary concern for most, but is a primary concern for a significant minority (DLA). For most rural households land will contribute to food security and may comprise one means of income among a range of livelihood strategies (Walker 1994).

Under present conditions rural women lack access to employment opportunities and land. Providing them with such access will change present inequalities and existing power relations at the local level.

As Levin (1994) points out, changing resource allocations, empowering people and involving them in development will constitute a threat to local interests and will be resisted since this 'contests directly the power relations through which people in their localities live their daily lives' (Levin 1994). These social and power relations include relations between men and women, relations with chiefs and the local state.

In order to understand more clearly what blocks there might be to a reallocation of resources at the local level it is necessary to complement large survey data by case studies that add a more nuanced understanding of local dynamics, local histories and experience.

Understanding Local Dynamics

Local dynamics need however, to be understood historically and in terms of their links with the regional and national.

The expansion of capitalism over the last 100 years or so was based on male migrant labour. As a consequence of this, together with the race policies of the colonial and apartheid states, and the controls over women exerted by traditional patriarchy, women remained in the rural areas, tending the homestead and maintaining this as a base while male migrants undertook contract employment in the mines and emerging industries (Bozzoli 1983).

Over time male migrancy became a permanent feature of life with men returning at regular intervals from more permanent jobs, and rural residents came to constitute a rural proletariat, whose incomes today are largely made up of migrant remittances and transfer payments (Levin 1995). As homesteads and women came to rely more on male incomes women's dependency on men increased and their status and position in society decreased.

Under apartheid and continuing into the present women in the ex-bantustan areas have limited options to independent incomes. The bantustans continue

to serve as labour reserves to meet the needs of capital. However in addition they provide a source of social security to those discarded by capital in the absence of effective welfare institutions serving the needs of African workers.

Thus the current high employment, contributed to by massive job losses resulting from industrial restructuring in response to external pressures, and estimated by some as affecting half the potential labour force (Seidman Makgetla 1995) takes its toll on rural livelihoods and in particular on women as retrenched workers return to rural homesteads. The numbers of rural dependents are increased and vital sources of income are lost to rural households.

Gender and Local Access

While there are common shared experiences across bantustans, needs, experiences, possibilities for livelihoods and possibilities for organisation will differ across rural areas and between different interest groups within an area. Within a local community possibilities will usually be shaped as a result of class, gender, and generational differences among residents. This includes different possibilities open to different categories of women by class, age, marriage status etc.

Thus specific categories of women will have differing access to incomes and land in different localities. This will be determined by the local history, specific experiences of dispossession, and the social and gender power dynamics.

A major distinction between rural areas in South Africa is that between the former bantustans and the former 'common areas'.

Within common areas there are the large commercial farms such as in the Western Cape and Natal; disused commercial farms on which ex farm workers may continue to live and find ways of securing livelihoods, such as in the provinces of Gauteng and Mpumalanga; and there are the settlements, usually close to small towns, of ex-farm workers who were forced off farms. Social relations including gender power relations will be shaped by specific conditions within these localities (James and Ngcobo, Hill Lanz and Rickets, Waldman and Ntsedi).

Cross and Friedman (forthcoming) differentiate rural areas by relations of tenure, including traditional systems of communal tenure, informal systems and state land systems which exist in most former reserve and bantustan areas; African freehold systems which exist on privately owned land; tenure on white commercial farms; and tenure relations of farm workers and tenants forced off farms. They show how women's access to land differs in all of these systems. In the systems of tenure in former reserves and homelands women are seldom afforded land in their own right. While freehold tenure opens up space for some women to own land, this system of tenure often closely resembles communal tenure (Walker 1994, Friedman and Cross forthcoming).

Bantustans may be differentiated into deep rural areas on the one hand and dense settlements created as a result of mass removals under apartheid. Both these areas generally lack infrastructure with residents having little access to water, electricity, employment opportunities, schools or clinics. Within some bantustans are centres of industrial development created between 1960 and 1981 as part of the apartheid state's regional development policy (Jaffee 1991).

In a comparison between two bantustan areas Sharp and Spiegel (1990) show that although women in Bantustans generally face severe hardships in gaining access to income and are virtually excluded from wage labour, options available for income vary from one bantustan area to another.

Sharp and Spiegel (1990) point out that bantustan areas differ in their availability of residual productive resources such as arable and pasture land, their residents past involvement in wage labour and experiences of forced relocation, and in the forms of material differentiation amongst residents. All of these will have an impact on possibilities for present survival, on the construction of gender relationships, and on organisational strategies.

In their study they focussed on gender relations between married women and their men. They showed how married women's more or less complete economic dependence on their husbands had implications for shaping gender power relations within the household.

Most migrant men come home infrequently. Their erratic remittances were the main source of income. These men had absolute discretion over their earnings, and given the lack of wage employment for women, considerable power over their wives. The migrant men alone decided how much of their wage to remit at any one time or over a given period. The social environment of the workplace and hostel was probably far more significant in shaping this decision than the objective needs of dependents in a distant home. In addition migrants had control over how household income should be used. Sharp and Spiegel found that a portion was set aside for cattle purchase, another portion for investment in arable production and a specific amount was released to a wife or mother for general day-to-day subsistence.

The women however did not accept this situation unquestioningly. Evidence of tension over the use of remittances was widespread, with women prioritising subsistence needs and men giving preference to longer term needs, including consideration for their future retirement. The tension over men's and women's differing needs resulted in constant friction and often in men beating their wives.

Other causes of tension between men and women in this study arose from the consciousness based on the recognition that many of the forms of gender oppression that are individually faced are manifestations of a wider system of gender inequalities, are shared by women and that women have a common interest in fighting them.

Other evidence seems to suggest that the creation of group consciousness is not necessarily dependent on employment outside the home. Other networks, experiences and conditions might lead women to develop group solidarity and consciousness. For example the Rural Women's Movement represents an example of both group consciousness and joint action in South Africa. This organisation developed under conditions of political struggle in South Africa and through the active support of a non governmental land rights organisation to challenge. Other examples are church and township based actions.

What leads to group consciousness is a question that needs further exploration. What also needs exploring is the potential in women existing networks – church groups, burial societies, self help groups for the creation of group consciousness and action.

Which Women?

We have thus far referred to two broad categories of women within bantustans - married women who are the wives of migrant husbands, and the single women who chose to live without men.

Other research has focussed on women farm workers on commercial farms (Hill Lanz and Rickett forthcoming) on women dependents of evicted farm workers (James and Ngcobo forthcoming), and on women who form part of land invading communities (Middleton, forthcoming). Waldman and Ntsedi (1994) challenge notions of homogeneity of community and women in a discussion of the categories of women who occupied farms in Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces. Among the women on one farm were: farm worker's wives some of whom worked on the farm while others constantly sought employment; widows and single women who worked on the farm, as domestic workers or are unemployed; wives of mine workers at the nearby mines, who rent accommodation on farms which their husbands paid for; and migrant women workers who worked on the farms and live in the farm compound.

While Waldman and Ntsedi (1994) suggest that the needs, interests and priorities of these women differed, they did not explore their differing conditions and needs. Further research is needed to explore for example the lives of migrant women farm workers, of mine worker's wives on farms, as well as of the other categories of women in order to assess needs, involve them in planning and ensure that planning is responsive to felt needs. Another category of women in need of disaggregation is the category female head of household. Walker warns against an 'undifferentiated and unproblematised' category of head for analytical and planning purposes, and in relation to domestic decision making.

In her study of Cornfields in Kwa Zulu Natal Walker found that not all rural women, nor all female heads of households were equally in need. Policy

intended for the poor she suggests should not therefore indiscriminately target female heads. Community specific criteria should be used in identifying poor women for example the number of dependents, stock levels, sources of income. Some of the female heads in her study owned cattle and were among the better off in the community.

Walker notes further that it was difficult to categorise headship since the status and location of headship was not fixed. She found in her study that gender household relations were complex. The distribution and exercise of authority between men and women and across generations within households were in a state of flux. Some women who had the title of head deferred to their sons. Others were not seen as head yet had household authority. Authority was also linked to personality and circumstance. Still others functioned as temporary heads until sons were old enough to take on this position. Walker found that an ideology of male household authority operated despite evidence of more complex operation of power in the household.

Cross and Friedman (1993) drawing from research in the Eastern Cape, Former Transvaal and Kwa Zulu Natal point out that not all women-headed households are equally disadvantaged in land access or poverty. They point out that older widows with grown children are the best positioned group in land access and incomes, under most rural tenure systems. They are allowed to keep usufruct right to their late husband's land and have a regular source of income in the form of state pensions. In some instances households headed by older widows as somewhat better off in income terms than male-headed households because of their access to regular pensions (Cross and Evans, 1991 referred to in Cross and Friedman forthcoming).

Younger widows and abandoned wives are more vulnerable than older widows to loss of land and impoverishment, since without the protection of older male children neighbours are likely to encroach on her arable land. Since she is too young to get a pension and unable to leave her children to work in town she has no reliable cash income and is likely to be impoverished. Without a cash income even subsistence cultivation is difficult. Usually there is very little assistance from the husband's family and such a woman may give up her land and either marry again or return to her parents home (Cross and Friedman, forthcoming).

The most disadvantaged group according to Cross and Friedman, is that of single mothers with children. If not in the process of marrying the father of their children such women are not considered to be heads of proper households, and are not seen as eligible for land rights. This usually forces them into the households of parents, relatives or patrons. The position of such women is most precarious in the households of brothers in relation to brothers' wives.

In considering the category of married women with absent husbands who contribute little or no remittance Cross and Friedman (forthcoming) point out that these women are de facto and not de jure heads. While such wives

usually have land to live on, they may be disadvantaged in access to arable land, and will have insufficient income and labour to cultivate the land. They will in addition have little decision freedom. They are not able to move house, rejoin their own families or move to town without obtaining their husband's support and permission.

Questions relating to organisation can be asked of each of these categories of women. What networks do these women belong to? what constraints do they have on their time? What possibilities are open to them for group action?

Access to Authority

Rural women generally are usually not allowed participation on community decision making structures. This further limits women's power to control their lives and interests. Walker (1994) for example found that even those women in Cornfields who owned cattle and land, and who exercised authority within their households, did not enjoy social status, or a place of authority on the two community decision making structures: the Residents Association and the Trust Committee.

However, while these structures continued to be male dominated, women's participation on these structures was under discussion and there seemed to be possibilities for women to gain access to these structures. Walker found gender relations in flux, and under negotiation but within an all pervading acceptance of male authority. Women themselves were ambivalent in their challenging of male authority. While women challenged some aspects of tradition such as the inability of widows to inheritance rights, they reflected ambivalence in relation to their daughter's rights to inheritance; and on the question of chiefs more women than men were in favour of chiefs controlling land access even though Cornfields is officially a freehold area outside of a chiefs jurisdiction.

In other rural situations where a minority of women have representation on community structures women seldom speak out (Cross and Friedman, forthcoming).

In the former bantustan of Lebowa, Small (forthcoming) show that women in the village of Tsimanyane, unlike neighbouring villages, have the right to participate in the traditional decision making structure the Kgotta. Women got this right as a result of pressure exerted by their migrant husbands who were anxious to have their wives represent their interests in their absence. A significant difference between the men in this and the neighbouring village was age. The men of Tsimanyane were considerably younger than the men in the neighbouring village, and Tsimanyane as a settlement was a more recently settled area, being populated as the younger members of extended families from neighbouring villages moved off as a result of overcrowding.

The impact this has had for women is evident in Tsimanyane women's refusal to perform the compulsory labour expected of women on the chief's fields. By comparison women in neighbouring villages, despite their resentment of this task, did not feel they were in a position to refuse their labour. Local power dynamics between the women and the chief were thus being reshaped as a result of women's involvement in the Kgotta. Further research is needed in order to understand more clearly the conditions under which women can engage in group action to challenge chiefly authority.

There is need for more research in different rural localities in order to understand women's conditions their priorities and livelihood strategies; to explore in greater detail the construction and fluctuation of gender and other power relations within households and communities; and to consider questions of what would lead women to constitute a force.

This will allow us to anticipate the blocks to the reallocation of resources and authority, and provide pointers for ways in which to empower women. In relation to women's access and control of land, for example a complex range of factors, social administrative and ideological stand in the way. Most significantly these include male relatives, male violence, legal institutions and officials (Cross and Friedman forthcoming, Agarwal, 1994).

Present proposals on restructuring for South Africa do not consider the complexity of gender relations. Nor do they treat gender as a serious category as we will show in the next section.

Section Three

Before it came into government the ANC recognised the need for redistributive policies which would in particular address the condition of rural African women among the dispossessed and exploited in South Africa. However evidence seems to suggest that the ANC within the Government of National Unity (GNU) today is not about to change the conditions of rural women for two reasons.

Firstly the GNU is pursuing a policy of fiscal restraint and is driven by the demands of global competitiveness rather than by the drive for redistribution. Secondly the response to gender inequalities by the GNU is inadequate.

The reason for the shift away from redistribution I argue, reflects the power of national and international capital and of International Financial Institutions in shaping the government's agenda. The inadequate response to gender reflects the deepseatedness, of patriarchal ideology and the power of traditional leaders in determining outcomes. Pitted against the power of capital and chiefs rural women have a hard time advancing their interests!

Before the 1994 election the ANC together with its political allies the SACP and COSATU put forward the RDP base document as the overall programme that would address the extreme social devastation created by apartheid. The basic principles of the RDP base document include an integrated approach;

a process driven by the people of South regardless of race or sex, whether rural or urban; a notion of democracy as an active process requiring all South Africans to have access to power and the right to exercise their power.

The document also states a strong commitment to women's development and empowerment. It suggests mechanisms to address the disempowerment of women and boost their role in the development process.

The RDP was introduced by the ANC to the Government of National Unity (GNU), and following its adoption by the GNU the RDP white paper was put out in October 1994. This paper contained a watering down of the sentiments expressed in the RDP base document. Significant changes between the RDP Base Document and the RDP White paper represent a "compromise to neo-liberal trickle down economic policy preferences of the old regime" (Adelzadeh and Padayachee 1994)

These changes reflect pressure from business to liberalise trade. Adelzadeh and Padayachee conclude that this will not do anything for the bottom 60-70% of the population.

The government's land reform programme carries the limits of its broader economic policy. The Green Paper on land (DLA) puts forward government's commitment to a willing buyer willing seller basis for land reform where possible. Where not possible the state must be able to expropriate land required for the public good, and in such cases the state will compensate \$an amount not to exceed reasonable assessment of market value'.

The market based solution to the question of land access together the property clause in the draft constitution of the country will not make it easy to reach the needs of the marginalised. The framework is patchy and determined by concerns of international donors and interests of business and farming sectors. Redistribution will be limited by the budget; constitutional and property clause as well as by concern for investment climate (Cross 1995).

While the green paper makes the point that the state cannot allow a situation where it appears that those who benefitted under apartheid are using limited state resources to benefit under land reform, this might well be the case.

Experience elsewhere suggests that 'market based land reform options have tended to benefit rich peasants and the efficient sectors of large-scale corporate agriculture, and there is no reason to believe that they will benefit other groups in the South African context. Indeed an emergent petty-capitalist class in the bantustans is the likely beneficiary of a market-based land reform strategy, while various strata of the rural proletariat are likely to be marginalised' (Levin 1994).

Further despite the continued emphasis on the need for affirmative action along gender lines it is unlikely that the market solution will achieve this. For exploited rural groups including women to benefit the "social structures of poverty and oppression" need transforming in the S.A. rural political economy.

The National Land Committee has pointed out further, that the state grant made available to potential beneficiaries is insufficient to allow families to develop the land they acquire.

This position is supported by the LAPC (1995) study for Kwa Zulu Natal which shows that the production potential in the pilot is low because households do not have the resources to develop the land. The majority of households live in considerable poverty and the market led state assisted reform initiatives have forced communities to liquidate savings in order to get land. The outcome of this is that while land has been acquired resources in many households have been stretched to limits. It is therefore difficult if not impossible to develop this newly acquired land because of lack of savings or easily accessed capital. Among households there was growing resentment that treasured wealth which took years to accumulate and which could be used for survival, productive and other purposes has been sunk into buying land.

The LAPC study points out that government needs to ensure that white farmers or small group of emergent black farmers are no the group privileged as a result of land reform.

Section Four: Policy Responses to Gender

The RDP base document acknowledges the need to address existing gender inequalities as they affect access to jobs, land and housing, and the removal of all laws and practices that discriminate against women's access to land.

The Macro Economic Research Group Report on which the RDP was based recognised that women are limited by 'patriarchal culture and oppressive invented legal traditions in the homelands'. It singles out adult female members of landless households in rural bantustans as those to be allocated land as a first priority. As this will result in benefit to their own and their children's diet through consumption of vegetables and other food produced on newly acquired land and through small amounts of additional income they may acquire through sales and of agricultural products.

Of all current proposals under discussion government comes off best in acknowledging gender differentiated experience, reflecting perhaps the impact of the significant proportion of women in parliament. However there are still clearly problems to do with conceptualisation, as well as inconsistencies in government's approach. In particular the entrenchment of the powers of traditional leaders in the constitution is inconsistent with gender equality.

Despite these intentions, policy approaches to gender are inconsistent and inadequate. A major inconsistency exists between the equality clause in the constitution which guarantees gender equality and the clause which guarantees rights to traditional leaders. As Walker (1994) points out the gains won by women in the constitution could be wiped out as demands made by traditionalists are acceded to.

In part the problem is of a conceptual nature. As Agarwal (1994) states policy directives typically treat gender as a category to be added to existing ones, with women as a special target group. Rather gender is a lens through which the approach to development should be examined. Gender should be seen as a stratifier of social life comparable to other stratifiers such as class, race, and ethnicity. Hence the distribution of productive resources, and political power and social division of labour needs to be questioned along gender lines (Agarwal 1994).

However the exclusion of gender relates not only to a conceptual defect. It relates to deeply engrained prejudices. It challenges deeply entrenched ways of knowing, theorising and doing science. Gender as a cultural construct has had an impact on the construction of knowledge (Beneria 1995).

Feminist economists point out that most macroeconomic modeling of restructuring has been oblivious to gender as an analytical category. There is need to bring a gender lens to macroeconomic discourse at the level of conceptual frameworks, formal models, empirical research such as historically informed country case studies and comparative cross country analysis, and diagnosis of macroeconomics problems and the formulation of policies to remedy them (Cagatay, Elson and Grown). Feminist economists are beginning to suggest ways in which this can be done.

Macro policies are neither class nor gender neutral. Neither are markets neutral. Macroeconomics takes the reproductive economy for granted, assumes it can continue to function adequately no matter how much its relation to productive economy is disrupted. It assumes that the reproductive economy will accommodate to changes - and assumes an unlimited supply of female labour (Cagatay, Elson and Grown 1995). It simply can't.

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SECTION FOUR: AFROCENTRISM OR AFROPESSIMISM