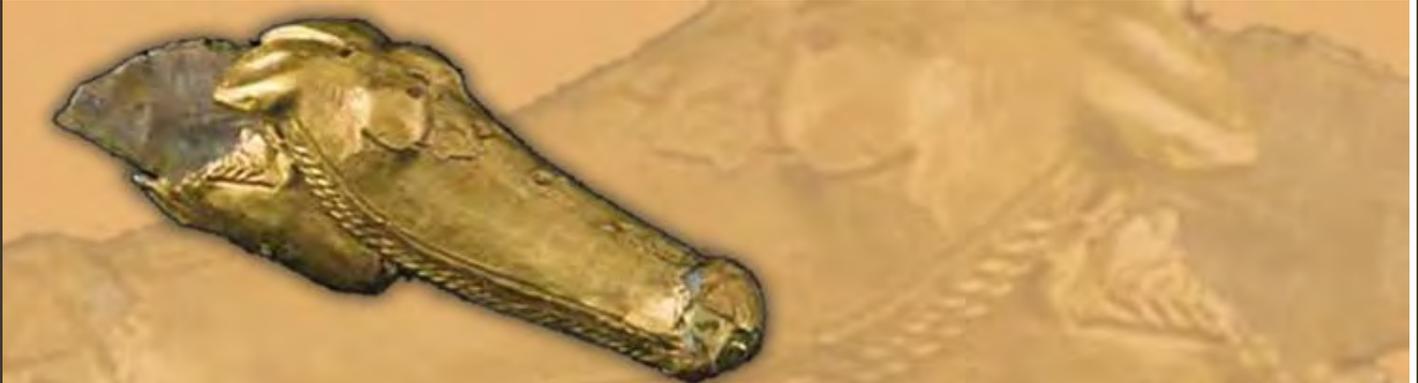




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MISTRA's Monthly Briefing is a newsletter from the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection. It aims to inform MISTRA's partners about the Institute's research, strategic reflections, published papers, and other news relating to the network of people and organisations committed to MISTRA's strategic engagement with the issues facing South Africa. The briefing is issued monthly.

In issue **Number#26** we report on:

- An upcoming colloquium titled *Earth, Wind & Fire: Unpacking the political, economic and security implications of the discourse on the Green Economy*.
- MISTRA's participation in the Harambee "Accelerating inclusive youth employment" conference.
- A range of articles, including "*The Green Economy In Africa: A Critical Overview*" by Radhika Perrot and Diran Soumonni, "*Fear of losing power breeds action*", "*Echos of the first term*" and "*Parliament must see robust debate*", by Dr Mcebisi Ndletyana.
- "*Young, black, jobless? Here's what to do*" by Joel Netshitenzhe, as well as his presentation on *Inequality in South African Policy Discourse* at a UNU-WIDER Conference, "*Is pageant a true reflection of SA?*" by Xolelwa Kashe-Katiya and Jeffrey Sehume, and "*Betrayal of our valiant past*" by Gail Smith.
- A Chapter by MISTRA Director Operations, Yacoob Abba Omar in a book on "*GCC Relations with Post-War Iraq: A Strategic Perspective*", which explores the underlying reasons for the region's instability from a variety of perspectives
- The appointment of Thulani Mdlalose as an intern in the Faculty of Knowledge Economy and Scientific Advancement and Ms Tshwarelo Mdluli who joins MISTRA as volunteer. Furthermore, while we are sad to say goodbye to Rachel Browne, we are pleased to welcome the return of Barry Gilder.

We hope you find our Monthly Briefings informative and invite you to visit our website, where you will find more information on our research, key papers, media on MISTRA, as well as information on how you can participate in any of the Institute's research projects.

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MISTRA STRATEGIC REFLECTIONS

Colloquium on the Green Economy: Earth, Wind and Fire



Earth, Wind and Fire

8th October 2014

THE TURBINE HALL
NEWTOWN, JOHANNESBURG

65 NTEMI PILISO STREET
NEWTOWN
2001

Unpacking the political, economic and security implications of discourse on the Green Economy

On the **8th October 2014**, MISTRA will be hosting a colloquium titled, *"Earth, Wind and Fire"*, which will seek to unpack the *political, economic and security implications of the discourse on the Green Economy.*

The research is intended to provide a framework and guidelines to aid policymakers develop a more integrated mix of policy instruments to promote sustainable development and innovation in South Africa. It analyses various topics, such as clean energy transportation, the water-energy nexus, sustainable low-income housing, recycling tyre industry, business model innovations, de-centralised energy options trade and green growth in Southern Africa. These different but overlapping themes are being investigated by evaluating existing policy instruments and other measures, and fall under three themes:

- I. Co-evolutionary role of governments, civil societies and industries
- II. Transition to a Low Carbon Economy
- III. Regional Integration: Exploring Optimal Energy Strategies

Speakers include:

- Prof Lynn Mytelka
- Ms. Simone Haysom
- Ms. Lynda Mujakachi
- Prof Edison Muzenda and Jeffrey Pilusa
- Dr. Saliem Fakir
- Ms. Manisha Gulati
- Fumani Mthembi
- Dr. Diran Soummoni
- Dr Betchani Tchereni
- Ms. Radhika Perrot

To RSVP or for more information on this event, please contact **Radhika Perrot at RadhikaP@mistra.org.za** or **Hope Prince at HopeP@mistra.org.za** or call **(011) 518 0260**

[For more info on the colloquium please click here](#)

Harambee "Accelerating inclusive youth employment" conference.

The structure of the economy needs to change to urgently provide jobs for the unemployed youth.

This was the message at the National Planning Commission Youth Employment Conference held in Stellenbosch on 8th and 9th September 2014. The Conference jointly organised by the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA), the National Planning Commission and Yellowwoods (Business Leadership South Africa member and founder of Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator) was a multi-stakeholder event to mobilise, align and accelerate efforts to drive inclusive youth employment in support of the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP).

The conference - attended by government, labour and business - aimed to look at ways to break down barriers to eradicate youth unemployment. The two day conference aimed to address the factors preventing young people from finding jobs and keeping employers from appointing them.

United Nations University - World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) Development Conference: Inequality – Measurement, Trends, Impacts And Policies

MISTRA Executive Director, **Joel Netshitenzhe** presented a paper titled *"Inequality in South African Policy Discourse"* at the UNU-Wider Development Conference: *Inequality – Measurement, Trends, Impacts And Policies* held in **Helsinki on 05 – 06 September 2014**.



Inequality In South African Policy Discourse by Joel Netshitenzhe



What are the major trends with regard to income inequality in South Africa?

First, income poverty has been declining since the advent of democracy.

Second, functional distribution of national income has worsened, and with it, income inequality.

Third, the change in the share of national income has not favoured the 'middle class', despite the fact that their proportion of the population has increased, with the per capita expenditure growth incidence curve evincing a U shape.

Fourth, being employed does not, on its own, guarantee an escape from poverty and this has worsened anomie within the labour market and across society.

Fifth, the inequality measures show a declining trend between races, while it has shown a rising trend within races.

Sixth, inequality in South Africa's labour market is aggravated by the skills shortages which do add a premium to salaries; while on the other hand, the oversupply of unskilled workers pushes wages down at the lower end.

INEQUALITY IN PUBLIC POLICY CONSCIOUSNESS

To what extent have insights on inequality impacted on South African policy-making and discourse?

South Africa has not been immune to global discourse on this issue: both in the context of the negative impact of the global economic crisis as well as the positive

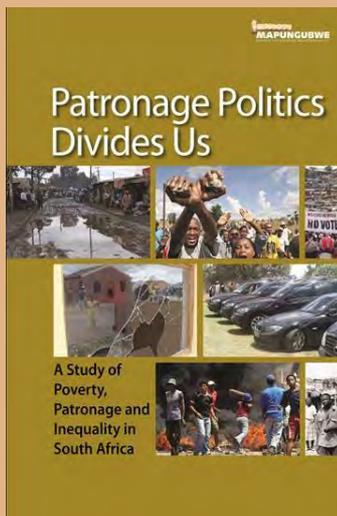
instances of progress made in Brazil during the second term of Lula's presidency. But the matter is of great interest to South Africa because it is estimated to have the second highest Gini coefficient across the globe; and this manifests along the racial dynamics inherited from apartheid.

[To download full paper in PDF](#)

MISTRA books for sale on Kalahari

MISTRA is proud to announce that the following selection of MISTRA publications is now available for purchase in hard cover or as an eBook on Kalahari.com:

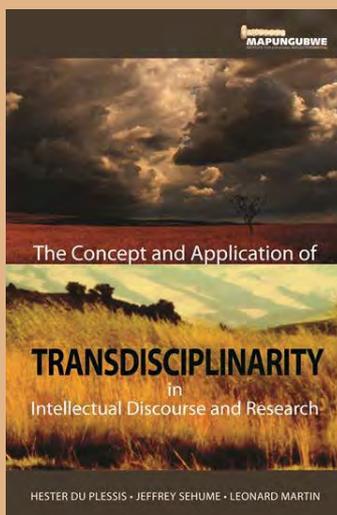
Patronage Politics Divides Us: A Study of Poverty, Patronage and Inequality in South Africa



Patronage Politics Divides Us: A Study Of Poverty, Patronage And Inequality In South Africa is the culmination of a research project that forms part of MISTRA's first suite of eight priority research projects. The research explores the relationship between patronage, poverty, and inequality with a particular focus on its impact on the conduct of local politics. The overall aim of the study was to explore the possibility of constituting public institutions in a manner that enables them to become legitimate arbiters between the various interests, rather than as instruments that are captured by contending interest groups for their own accumulation. Most importantly, this study was necessitated by the realisation that post-apartheid patronage politics has not received sufficient scholarly attention. This research study aims to help fill that gap, especially by contributing empirical research to the subject. The report goes beyond answering the primary questions of the study: it is a profile of socio-economic life in South Africa's various communities as experienced not only by locals, but also by foreign-born residents. The findings provide a window on relationships between councillors, business interests, and local party organisations.

[To purchase Patronage Politics Divides Us: A Study of Poverty, Patronage and Inequality in South Africa click here](#)

The Concept and Application of Transdisciplinarity in Intellectual Discourse and Research

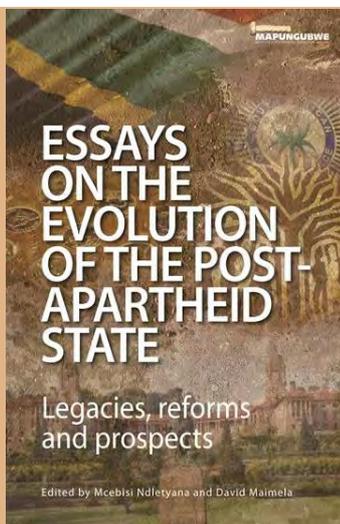


The Concept and Application of Transdisciplinarity in Intellectual Discourse and Research addresses transdisciplinarity as an innovative mechanism to engage knowledge production as a means of fostering a more inclusive society. By orientation transdisciplinarity is an approach that recognises a united and borderless intellectual terrain. It is an attempt to formulate an integrative process of knowledge production and distribution in reaction to the twentieth century narrow discipline focus and hyper-specialisation. It responds to the multi-layered challenges of diffused disciplines, interlinked socio-economic problems, the impact of globalisation, the de-territorialised nation state, technological advancements, environmental concerns, agriculture and food security and health. And it recognises that, in history, some of the most revolutionary breakthroughs in science and technology in fact happened on the margins of narrow disciplines.

[To purchase The Concept and Application of Transdisciplinarity in Intellectual Discourse and Research click here](#)

Essays on the Evolution of the Post-Apartheid State: Legacies, reforms and prospects

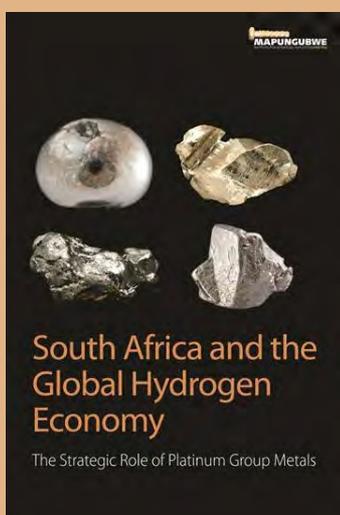
Essays on the Evolution of the Post-Apartheid State: Legacies, Reforms and



Prospects investigates the evolution of the South African state. It explores the impact on transformation of the State inherited in 1994 as well as the transformative efforts undertaken by the State since 1994. This collection also seeks to deepen the search for an understanding of the theory of the State as it applies to a transforming society such as ours, and to trudge the dividing line between theory and practice so they can feed into each other in a progressive spiral towards the desired 'end-state'. It is a collection of essays by independent scholars and researchers in various fields and is a product of a variety of sources, including interviews, and official documents and reports. This publication is intended to generate strategic reflection beyond issues to do with the day-to-day chores of governance.

[To purchase *Essays on the Evolution of the Post-Apartheid State: Legacies, reforms and prospects* Click here](#)

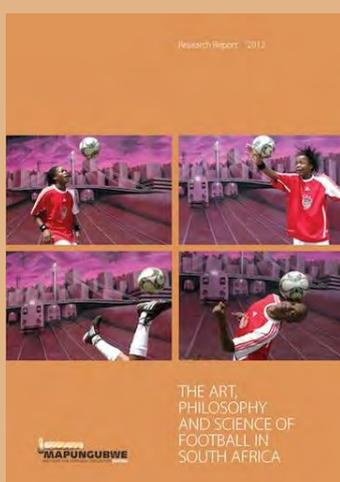
South Africa and the Global Hydrogen Economy: The Strategic Role of Platinum Group Metals



South Africa and the Global Hydrogen Economy: The Strategic Role of Platinum Group Metals highlights the global significance of platinum group metals (PGM) and explores the strategic opportunities that arise out of South Africa's endowment with these strategic resources. From their extraction to their applications in fuel cells, what options are available for the country, the region, and the world to better leverage this endowment towards supporting growth and development objectives? In view of their expanding range of applications, do PGM need the hydrogen economy? Conversely, does the hydrogen economy need PGM? Addressed to all key industry stakeholders, including those in the public and private sectors, the options explored in this book are based on a thorough analysis of the global dynamics that should inform policy and business models related to PGM.

[To purchase *South Africa and the Global Hydrogen Economy: The Strategic Role of Platinum Group Metals* click here.](#)

The Art, Philosophy And Science Of Football In South Africa

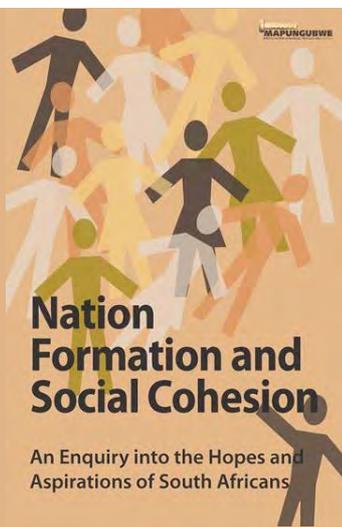


The Art, Philosophy And Science Of Football In South Africa explores why South African football evinces so much promise, and yet in relation to many of our peers in Africa and further afield, at both club and national level, we flatter to deceive? It is the outcome of an 18-month research project that set out to explore the factors that contribute to success in football and develop a long-term strategy to place South African football on a trajectory to become a successful international competitor. It is the culmination of eighteen months of literature reviews, interrogation of the science that underpins the sport, and fieldwork. The study confirms what is otherwise common knowledge: South Africa needs systematic youth football development. This is as pivotal to football as it is to any other sport; and plodding industry rather than immediate gratification should be the guide.

[To purchase *The Art, Philosophy And Science Of Football In South Africa* click here](#)

Nation Formation and Social Cohesion: An Enquiry into the Hopes and Aspirations of South Africans

Nation Formation and Social Cohesion: An Enquiry into the Hopes and Aspirations of South Africans examines different interpretations and meanings that diverse social actors attach to the calls and prospects for nation formation and social cohesion.

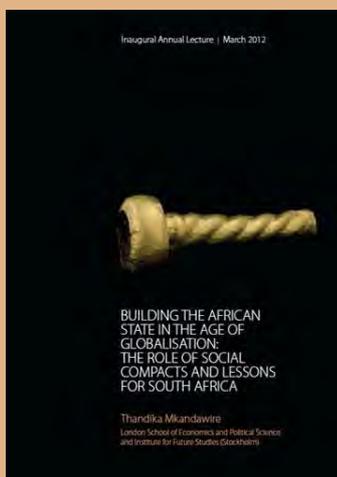


It links theories of nation formation and social cohesion to actual practises, both focused on the attainment of a just society founded on the irreducible equality of all its members on the one hand, and the factors militating against achieving this, on the other.

Ethnographic research in four provinces provides the substance or practise to the theoretical framing of the discourse. The study proceeds by interrogating the theoretical suppositions of nation formation and social cohesion and this serves as a starting point for a thorough reflection on these two processes. Thus a synthesis, and not a conceptual position is arrived at, where the interdependence of nation formation and social cohesion, specifically for postcolonial societies, (and South Africa in particular) can be interrogated effectively and critically. It is intended to add to the debate and stimulate new thinking around the difficult processes that are being sought to build a South African nation in the 21st century.

[To purchase Nation Formation and Social Cohesion: An Enquiry into the Hopes and Aspirations of South Africans click here](#)

Building The African State In The Age Of Globalisation



In *Building The African State In The Age Of Globalisation* Prof **Thandika Mkhandawire** explores the role of social compacts in building the African state and the impact of globalization on this process. For all the predictions of its demise, the State in Africa is alive in all its diverse manifestations. The complete breakdown of the State in places such as Somalia is the exception that proves the rule, although judging from some writings one would think that they are the norm. The real issue then is not so much building the African state but making it a more accountable and more efficient instrument for addressing the issues that Africans have reason to consider fundamental. A growing understanding is that we are talking about democratic developmental states: developmental (in the sense that they facilitate and promote economic growth and structural transformation), democratic (in the sense that they derive their legitimacy through popular participation and electoral process) and socially inclusive (in the sense that they pursue social policies that ensure equitable entitlements of all their citizens to ensure that their capacities and functioning are adequate for a decent inclusion in societal affairs).

[To purchase Building The African State In The Age Of Globalisation click here](#)

MISTRA IN THE NEWS

The Green Economy In Africa: A Critical Overview By Radhika Perrot and Diran Soumonni

African countries are at a critical predicament in their development trajectories. Many countries are encountering problems of poverty and unemployment; their extractive industries are causing environmental degradation including air and water pollution, and some countries are facing the worst effects of climate change such as desertification, loss of biodiversity, depletion of fish stocks, water scarcity and soil erosion. These countries also face risks of premature deaths due to pollution, poor water quality and diseases associated with a changing climate, which undermine development (OECD, 2012).

Despite remarkable economic growth rates made in many countries in Africa, the continent still faces challenges of poverty and low human development. Indeed, if we move beyond the superficial headlines announcing the "impressive growth" of such countries, we could consider the fact that such growth is based on what is a very low level of national income and that the increased growth is more due

to the increased demand for their raw materials from industrialising countries such as China and India, than any particularly significant change in the way the economies are managed.

More importantly, according to Karuri-Sebina et al. (2012) this growth comes without any significant commitment to fundamental changes relating to the political, economic, social, technological, learning and ecological dimensions. Thus, for instance, while some countries are emerging as economies, in the context of accelerating growth and development are issues of the link between climate change and poverty, which these countries still need to address. A recent 2014 analysis of data by the World Bank from 136 countries shows that poor countries (and from Africa mostly) are losing natural resources very fast, and without gaining much by way of human resource capital or gross wealth.

[To read full article click here.](#)



Fear of losing power breeds action

It wouldn't be a surprise if the ANC introduced drastic steps to counter abuse of state funds, writes **Mcebisi Ndletyana**.

'Asibhatyazi, asibhatyazi kodwa s'phethe (We mess up, we mess up but we're still in power)," the late Steve Tshwete would often say in his usual candour, admitting to government blunders while also relieved that they hadn't cost it its hold on power. Although expressing relief in one sense, the expression could also have been an unconscious statement of surprise. Poor governance makes a governing party unpopular. Conversely, it is fear of losing power that jolts a governing party into action. The ANC is at that fearful point. The worry initially set in after the 2009 elections, then grew to dread following the 2011 local government elections. Both saw a dip in support, resulting in a decisive loss of Cape Town and a near-loss of the Nelson Mandela Metro.

Dreading a repeat of a defeat in the Mandela Metro, the ruling party introduced reforms barring local politicians from holding political and municipal positions simultaneously, and advertising positions at municipalities nationwide to attract as wide a pool of applicants as possible. The idea was to enable party officials to exercise oversight over the municipality – something that was impossible where party leaders were in charge of both structures – and to attract the best qualified candidates. Local leaders resisted the reforms, but national leadership, cognisant of the cost on the party's popularity, pushed them through. The election outcome in May this year not only stressed the risk of the ruling party losing the Mandela Metro, but also three other metros: City of Joburg, Tshwane and Ekurhuleni. Because it happened in the aftermath of the 2011 electoral outcome, we're yet again at the cusp of another set of reforms.

[To read full article click here.](#)

Originally published in The Sunday Independent on 28 September 2014

Fear of losing power breeds action

September 28 2014 at 09:01am

 Comment on this story

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Residents from Westbury and Coronationville fetch water from a tank using buckets during this week's water shortage. Picture: Boxer Nwemva

Young, black, jobless? Here's what to do by Joel Netshitenzhe

Last week, the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA), the National Planning Commission and Yellowwoods, the investment holding company of several businesses in the financial services sector, convened a conference at Spier Wine Farm in Stellenbosch to drill deeper into practical programmes to speed up the absorption of young people into economic activity. More than 200 union, business, academic, civil service and political leaders took part.

The detail of the outcome is important because it adds to the pool of ideas contained in, among other things, the National Development Plan (NDP), the Youth Employment Accord and programmes of the National Youth Development Agency. But the event should inspire a new confidence from other perspectives as well.

Firstly, the very composition of the gathering sends a message that mini-compacts are possible to attend to the challenges the country faces. While the NDP calls for a social compact to attain Vision 2030, building blocks like these will impel the forging of such a compact.

Secondly, the conference was organised around specific themes that relate to the experiences of young people. Critical among these is that employment is more than paid-for work.

[To read more click here.](#)

Originally published in City Press on 21 September 2014



voices

WINSTON CHURCHILL: A good speech should be long enough to cover the subject, short enough to be remembered.

Joel Netshitenze



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Secondly, the conference was organised around specific themes that relate to the experiences of young people. Critical among these is that employment is more than paid-for work. It enables social integration and allows young people to progress to independent adulthood. Inversely, long-term unemployment can create negative social circumstances in communities, especially among young people who feel both disconnected and rejected, undermining the self-esteem required for them to experience their rites of passage in their communities.

Thirdly, case studies of practical programmes to address this mismatch were examined. One such experience is the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator that seeks to address this discrepancy as it applies to youth who have passed matric.



LOCKED IN In the past 20 years, the situation has only gone from bad to worse for SA's youth

PHOTO: GALLO IMAGES

YOUNG, BLACK, JOBLESS?

HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

A State SA survey out this week

Unemployment figures

Unemployment rate by age
Unemployment rates for the youth are higher than for adults

Is pageant a true reflection of SA?

By Xolelwa Kashe-Katiya and Jeffrey Sehume

A short article appears in the Saturday Star (Indoni Miss Cultural South Africa 2014, September 13) asking readers to vote for their "favourite Queen's cultural group name". Readers have a choice in "12 girls, 12 South African cultures, nine provinces". The aim of this pageant, also involving 12 boys, is to promote self belief in one's own culture. A larger objective it says, is to contribute to social cohesion and nation building. In this instance, Indoni is congratulated for its efforts in declaring that the "beauty of the past belongs to the present". Obviously, these objectives are important in a country coming to terms with the legacy of apartheid. Nonetheless, staging cultural events like the Indoni pageant is not immune to unintended effects. Culture matters when commenting on power relations, and in its inclusion of some and exclusion of others.

[To read full article click here](#)

Originally published in The Saturday Star on 20 September 2014

Is pageant a true reflection of SA?

XOLELWA KASHE-KATIYA
AND JEFFREY SEHUME

Certain practices directly and indirectly reinforce apartheid narratives

A SHORT article appears in the Saturday Star (Indoni Miss Cultural South Africa 2014, September 13) asking readers to vote for their "Favourite Queen's cultural group name". Readers have choices in 12 girls, 12 South African cultures, nine provinces.

The aim of this pageant, also involving 12 boys, is to promote self-belief in one's own culture. A larger objective it says, is to contribute to social cohesion and nation building.

In this instance, Indoni is congratulated for its efforts in declaring that the "beauty of the past belongs to the present".

Obviously, these objectives are important in a country coming to terms with the legacy of apartheid. Nevertheless, apartheid narratives

To qualify to receive public services, like a four-roomed house, a person had to demonstrate their affiliations to a particular tribal group.

Unlike white people who were mostly seen as a single unit, Africans were given different tribal homelands.

The 1927 Bantu Administration Act laid the groundwork for the implementation of this thinking in segregated education, health care, workplace, restaurants and in so-called beauty pageants.

Does the Indoni pageant reinforce these racial, tribal stereotypes by its objectification of the black female body?

Where are the Afrikaner *volkspele meistes* in the parade? What about the *problematiek*, *ontwikkeling*

and the sub-elements that define who we are. Critical in this is the need to address the material conditions that threaten the very social fabric of our country.

The Indoni event has to avoid the danger of treating girls and women as objects of male lust and acting as a platform for perpetuation of ethnic stereotypes.

Geca Machel reminds us that "as social beings, as we grow and absorb the influences of a wider society, so we transform ourselves and gain a broader sense of belonging - beyond the family, beyond the tribe, beyond the nation".

Much like the "doek campaign" during Women's Month, which was also supported by the Department of Arts and Culture, the Indoni campaign can end up undermining the very principles it is meant to amplify.

The last that one hopes to be

and the dead faith of the living".

Second, ethnic affiliations are returning at the same time as we are trying to define the South African nation.

We see this in the steamingly harmless car stickers stating "100% Tsonga" and "Shumela Vanda" (work for Venda), and in the tension between certain black and Indian communities in KwaZulu-Natal.

Such practices directly and indirectly reinforce apartheid narratives in its emphasis on ethnic identity. To recall, the Black Self-Government Act of

If anything, the Indoni pageant is important since it is generating discussion on these issues.

Indeed, at the same time as we encourage pride in our histories, our languages and our cultures, there is the danger that such "ethnic consciousness" can congeal into exclusivist and antagonistic mindsets, with serious consequences for the nation formation project.

This is particularly dangerous against the backdrop of opportunistic politics and business where individuals try to use narrow identities to advance personal interests. The story of post-colonial Africa is littered with examples of stillborn nation-building programmes, and South Africa would do well to learn from these experiences.

Culture matters when commenting on power relations

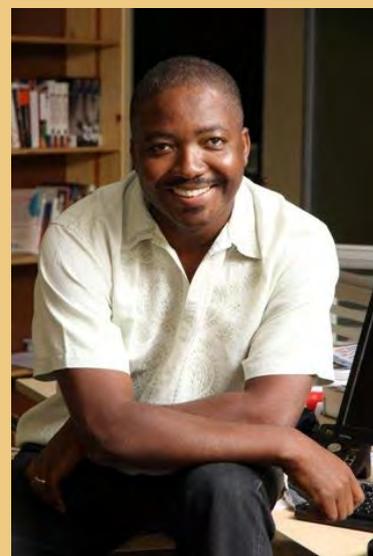
Echos of the first term

Few of the promises made have been kept this term, writes **Mcebisi Ndletyana**.

'Izinto zizoshintsha!' Proclaimed a beaming Jacob Zuma. He had just taken an oath for a second presidential term and was addressing an excited crowd on the other side of the podium – in the cheap seats. Unlike the measured and dry speech he had delivered earlier to the respectable audience, here he was forthright, promising drastic changes. The second term, Zuma reassured the expectant masses, would be dramatically different to the first. Today Zuma's administration is exactly 112 days old. Twelve days beyond the 100-day mark, during which a new administration is meant to define its policy agenda and character. Does everything that has happened so far point towards a significantly different second term? The answer is mixed. Policy declarations and some appointments signal a new beginning, but the character of leadership remains largely unchanged. And the latter may stifle the former, making this term even worse than the last, not only for the party but also for the republic.

***Originally published in the Sunday Independent 17 September 2014.**

[To read the full article, please click here](#)



Parliament must see robust debate

Screaming matches on this platform are far better than angry mobs confronting each other in the streets, writes **Mcebisi Ndletyana**.

Johannesburg - "The security cluster cannot watch while the authority of Parliament is compromised in a manner that was witnessed last Thursday," remonstrated the Minister of Defence, Nosiviwe Maphisa-Nqakula. She then went on to reassure the public that: "It is the responsibility of the JCPS cluster to ensure that state institutions are not threatened and are safe and secured as required by the constitution." The ministers responsible for the safety of the country, which include the army, police and intelligence, have obviously cast the recent parliamentary brouhaha as a security threat. Consequently, they're contemplating a security-oriented solution and, given the ministries involved, those security measures can take a number of forms, including illiberal measures.

While understandably infuriated by unusual behaviour in Parliament, it still behoves us to probe whether the promised strong-arm tactics will address the source of the problem: What does the ease with which ministers propose a clamp-down on the institution that embodies freedom say about the state of the republic, and what implications will the pending illiberal measures have on our freedoms? Proffering security measures to counter what happened in Parliament misdiagnoses the problem. In fact, it does not even attempt to come to grips with the underlying cause but merely addresses the symptom. The disorderly behaviour is a manifestation of a crisis of legitimacy. Members of the Economic Freedom Fighters doubt the zeal of Parliament to adhere to its own rules and

treat everyone without discrimination.

***Originally published in the Sunday Independent 28th August 2014.**

[To read the full article, please click here](#)

Betrayal of our valiant history

Every year we sink lower in our betrayal of those valiant women who marched on the Union Buildings in 1956, writes **Gail Smith**

August is my least favourite month. And, since 1994, the most miserable month of the year has a name: Women's Month. Moreover, to add insult to winter misery, those of us unlucky to have been born with two X chromosomes are subjected to an unsolicited annual month long fiesta of vapid congratulatory messaging. This year, 2014, will probably go down in history as the year that we didn't just scrape the bottom of the barrel, but also scoured it down to paper-fine sawdust. Every year we sink lower in our betrayal of those valiant women who marched on the Union Buildings in 1956; each year we forget more of their just and revolutionary cause.

The 1956 women's march is routinely remembered as a protest against the "introduction" of passes for African women. This narrow remembrance of the march may favour the current predilection to peddle spa treatments and foot massages at reduced rates for Women's Month or exhortations to women to participate in "doek Fridays" in August, but it does little to broaden our understanding of the women, the issues, the time, their opponents or the staggering revolutionary significance of their protest.

***Originally published in The Mail and Guardian on 29 August 2014.**

[To read the full article, please click here](#)

28 Mail & Guardian August 29 to September 4 2014

Comment & Analysis

A betrayal of our valiant history

Brave women have been battling social injustice for decades, yet we reduce their efforts to a single event

WOMEN'S MONTH
Gail Smith

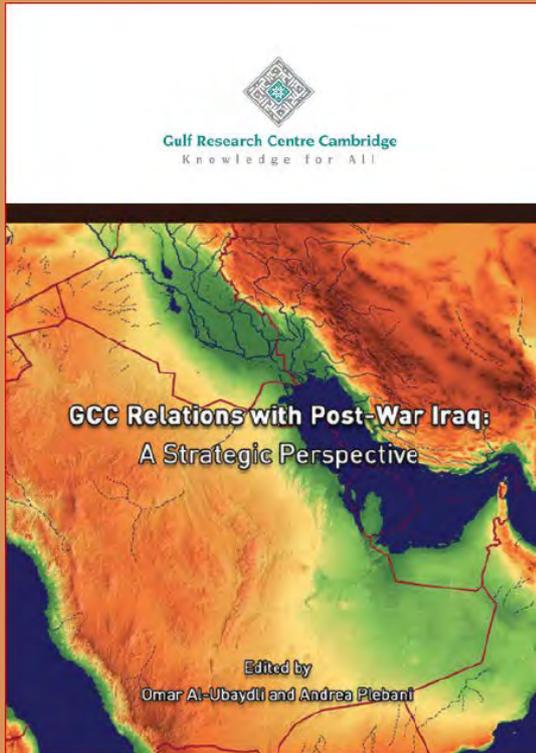
August is my least favourite month. And, since 1994, the most miserable month of the year has a name: Women's Month. Moreover, to add insult to winter misery, those of us unlucky to have been born with two X chromosomes are subjected to an unsolicited annual monthlong fiesta of vapid congratulatory messaging.

This year, 2014, will probably go down in history as the year that we



MISTRA PEOPLE

MISTRA Director Operations, Yacoob Abba Omar in "GCC Relations with Post-War Iraq: A Strategic Perspective"



MISTRA Director Operations, Yacoob Abba Omar, retains his interest in the Middle East where he served two terms as an Ambassador (Oman 2003 – 2008 and UAE 2008 to December 2012), having a chapter in "GCC Relations with Post-War Iraq: A Strategic Perspective" edited by Omar Al-Ubaydli, Andrea Plebani and published by the Gulf Research Centre.

The volume's contributions explore the underlying reasons for the region's instability from a variety of perspectives and with an emphasis on the GCC's relationship with Iraq. Topics covered include: Iraq's federal architecture, the highly controversial role of Iran, the effects of regional sectarianism, the possibility of Iraq becoming a member of the GCC, the impact of Chinese oil demand, the evolving nature of US regional military deployments, and the expanding use of social media by religious clerics.

The volume's goal is to produce operational recommendations for senior government figures. To that end, each author provides two lists of recommendations for improving the region's stability: one targeting GCC policymakers and the other targeting their Iraqi counterparts. There is a strong consensus concerning the need for a more inclusive and multilateral approach to regional security, and for any such approach to be spearheaded by the region's principle stakeholders: Iraq, Iran and the GCC countries themselves. However, the precise nature of a potentially successful common security strategy remains an area of considerable controversy.

[Download the book](#)

Barry Bilder appointed as Manager: Publications and Events



Barry Gilder, MISTRA's former Director Operations has been appointed as Manager: Publications and Events.

From 1990 to 1992 he was Administrative Editor of Africa Information Afrique, a development news agency, first in Zimbabwe and then in South Africa after his return from exile in 1991. He then served as Head Communications and later Deputy Director of the Matla Trust until he was deployed into the new democratic government at the beginning of 1995. He served as General Manager and later Deputy Director-General of the South African Secret Service from 1995 until 1999 and then as Deputy Director-General of the National Intelligence Agency from 2000 to 2003.

In 2003 he was appointed Director-General of the Department of Home Affairs and in 2005 was appointed Coordinator for Intelligence until his retirement from government in 2007.

In 2010 he helped to set up the Mapungubwe Institute and served as its Director Operations until early 2013 when he left to spend a year and a half in New Delhi, India. He continued as a Fellow of the Mapungubwe Institute.

In September 2013 he was appointed as a Senior Visiting Fellow in the University of the Witwatersrand's Graduate School of Public and Development Management (now known as the Wits School of Governance) and in October was appointed to the Council of South Africa's new National School of Government. He took up his new post in MISTRA on 1 October 2014.

He is the author of *Songs and Secrets: South Africa from Liberation to Governance* (Jacana 2012, Hurst 2012).

Ms Tshwarelo Mdluli joins MISTRA as volunteer.

Tshwarelo Mdluli has joined MISTRA as a volunteer. Tshwarelo matriculated from Thembeke Senior Secondary School in 2009. She holds a secretarial and computer skills certificate from Brooklyn City College. Her goal is to study social work at UNISA so that she can help disadvantaged and less privileged people in her society. Tshwarelo enjoys reading and helping people.

Thulani Sandile Mdlalose joins MISTRA as KESA Intern

Thulani Sandile Mdlalose, holds a bachelor degree in Geography and Environmental Management. He is passionate about contributing to and finding environmental solutions that exist in South Africa. He believes that South Africa faces a number of critical environmental challenges ranging from land degradation to the over utilization of limited resources. Thulani has been appointed as an intern in MISTRA's faculty of Knowledge Economy and Scientific Advancement and sees himself being actively involved in policy making regarding environmental issues. In addition Thulani's future aspirations are to complete his Masters in Geography and Environmental Management.

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