



Governance, Development, and their Sustainability in Africa: Towards Post-Abysal Perspectives

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AAPAM-IIAS Joint Taskforce for Governance Research in Africa

The AAPAM-IIAS Joint Taskforce for Governance Research in Africa aims at collecting fresh empirical evidence, building distinctive theoretical perspectives on actual governance systems in Africa and nurturing a community of scholars and professionals. Since 2018, it has been calling for papers in the IIAS Conferences, incorporating the theme in its own intellectual agenda.

The theme of the IIAS 2020 Conference, Public Governance for Climate Action, has a strong resonance for the Taskforce.

Climate change is indeed a risk multiplier. It exacerbates security risks and conflicts in fragile regions and hotspots where poverty, violence, injustice and social insecurity are prevalent. Together with other drivers, climate change has undermined human security and livelihoods, caused destruction and humanitarian concerns in Africa through different pathways: weather extremes, natural disasters (flooding and droughts), resource scarcity, water scarcity, forced migration and farmer-herder conflicts.

Climate change is also the remote consequence of the extractive approach to development: invented in Europe in the Middle-Age, it consists in the violent extraction of human and natural resources in the colonies, creating added-value in the metropolises (Santos 2018). Poor and developing countries are likely to pay twice for this extractive approach to development: for the depleted resources first, and for their vulnerability second.

This extractive development approach has become the global blueprint for nations, uniting their leaders, beyond proclaimed ideological or religious differences, in a materialistic quest. As a governance technique, colonization has been nationalized to serve such a modernization agenda. According to Santos (2018), it consists in ascribing different sets of rights and obligations to subjects depending on their position vis-à-vis an abyssal line.



The avant-garde of an alternative to the business-as-usual techniques necessarily originates in Africa, and the Global South more generally. It is generally argued that the pre-modern societies destroyed by modernization are characterized by a stronger collective ethos, more deliberative methods of decision-making and conflict resolution, lower emphasis on distinction between object and subject. Such features are reified in post- and anticolonial literature through concepts such as Africanity or Ubuntu stressing a distinctive, anti-modernist set of African values.

The AAPAM-IIAS Taskforce calls for contributions interrogating the causes, consequences, ways forward and the very diagnosis of vulnerabilities as well as the adaptive governance capabilities available to African countries. This includes, i.e.:

- Evidence regarding the expected impact of climate change on the African continent,
- Governance response to Climate Change and conflicts in Africa
- Analysis of (sustainable) development policies in Africa,
- Case studies of innovations for sustainable development in Africa,
- Discussion of the challenges set by urbanization and population increase in Africa,
- Theoretical discussion of the development doctrines and plans.

The expected contributions types are: papers, (poster) presentations, panels.

Unorthodox contributions on the form, and critical on the substance, are especially welcome.

References

- Hoste, J. & Vlassenroot, K. (2009). Climate Change and Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Mother of all Problems. (International Symposium: Developing Countries facing Global Warning: A Post- Kyoto, Assessment).
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- Scheffran, J., Link, P. M. & Schilling, J. (2019). Climate Change and Conflict in Africa. Oxford Research Encyclopedia on Climate Science.