



Editorial

The state of static dynamism

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The year 2021 ended with the world under the grip of the fourth wave of Covid-19, driven largely by the new variant known as Omicron. This is a constant reminder of how vulnerable our society is to ever-changing disease situations in general and the emergence of variants evading pharmacopoeia used to manage previous variants. This leads to a constant interface between change and regress, a sort of static dynamism.

The more the world prospers, the more the inequalities between the wealthy and poor expand. These leave the poor most vulnerable to calamities like the Covid-19, where lack of access to quality and affordable healthcare means almost certain morbidity or mortality for the poor. While Covid-19 is our biggest immediate crisis, poverty and inequality are age-old and remain the most enduring crises further complicating the Covid-19 pandemic. This affects black women on the periphery more than another group.

The Covid-19 has taught the world just how crucial it is to strengthen international cooperation to exchange tools, tears, and technologies to confront this shared threat. It has made global and regional organisations ever more important. The threat has also united the world about basics needed, including keeping basic hygiene, face-masking and keeping a safe physical distance from each other so as not to transmit the virus. We hear that there has been minimal transmission of other seasonal viruses that usually affect us every year as a result. We have seen amazing international solidarity at times.

Nevertheless, with the progress in international cooperation, we have seen the hydra of right-wing nationalism and racist attitude from rich nations rear its head. This includes the decision by the rich nations of the west to hoard potentially life-saving vaccines, reserving them for their populations first when the whole world needed them. They bought all early vaccines making it hard

for even developing countries with the means to purchase any vaccines to do so, thus delaying the start of vaccination in the South. Then, once all willing citizens of the North had been vaccinated, the North still hoarded most of the vaccines.

A few weeks ago, South African scientists identified the latest variant. Then, we saw a new round of this discrimination in the decision of several western nations to impose a travel ban on southern African countries ostensibly to contain the spread of Omicron. Even when it turned out the variant was present in Europe before it was identified in South Africa, the travel bans continued to project African countries as a source of disease to Europe. The cartoon by a Spanish newspaper showing a shipload of South Africans crossing the Mediterranean Sea with Omicron variant like the tweet by a prominent US politician alleging that South Africans were breaching the US southern border carrying a Covid-19 represent the deep-seated anti-black racism the west still needs to deal with. This comes on the back of the continued booing of black soccer players in some European countries. The focus on Covid-19 is said to be starving many other global challenges of their attention, meaning we will soon have to deal with various crises simultaneously.

This is our last edition as an editorial collective appointed in 2018, consisting of Profs Everisto Benyera, Kgothatso Shai and myself. We present a mixture of work by seasoned and emerging scholars, covering subjects as varied as notions of being and belonging, human security, social security, crisis management, political parties and policies, liberation movements, foreign policy, financial inclusion, and two articles on Covid-19 issues. Articles on vaccine nationalism and collective African responses to Covid-19 are timely. The book review on foreign policy and national interest suggests some issues for future discussion, which we hope scholars will take up. Certainly, the more things change in all these themes, the more they remain the same, a sort of static dynamism.

We wish to thank the many dedicated reviewers for sterling work supporting the journal, a contribution that protects the quality and pedigree of a journal such as this. This edition benefitted from excellent reviews by phenomenal reviewers: Frank Lekaba, Salome Delaila, Moorosi Leshoele, Rich Mashimbye, Chido Nyere, Tinuade Ojo, Hlengiwe Phetha, Makhura Rapanyane, Alex Rusero, Lebogang Legodi, Siphumelele Duma, Johannes Mancha, Crystal Gradwell, Oluwaseun Tella, Enock Ndawana, Norman Sempijja, Lebohang Tiego, Keobaka Tsholo, Fred Bidandi, Kamogelo Segone, Edwin Yingyi, Alexis Ninsin, Thulisile

Mphambukeli, and Gideon Chitanga.

We also wish to thank Ms Heather Thusynma, who has been unfailing in her support for this journal, making the work of the editors much less daunting than it would have been. I thank my colleagues in the editorial collective and wish them well in their future endeavours.

Dedication

We wish to dedicate this edition to the late Mr Skhumbuzo Zondi (no blood relative), a PhD student close to finishing his PhD studies on human security in Southern Africa through Unisa's Department of Development Studies. He passed away in early November 2021, having completed the revision of his paper. We say hamba kahle Nondaba, Gaga she, Luqa, Nhlabshile.

Cheers!

Siphamandla Zondi

Editor-in-Chief