

Editor's Note

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The papers in this issue address themselves to two broad areas, namely, the question of knowledge production and utilization in Africa, and the history of women hawkers on the streets of Nairobi.

Helen Lauer argues that international interventions in Africa's public health crises have so far not been successful due to the ignorance of global medical researchers of the real public health challenges on the continent. Lauer uses two social choice theorems to argue that the protocols of the global medical research and the resultant medical consensus and policies that inform international interventions in public health crises in Africa are flawed. She recommends that African medical experts on location, being better placed to understand the nature of public health challenges in their own countries, be the primary researchers, policy formulators and advisors on how best the international medical community should intervene in the continent's emergency healthcare needs.

Joseph Situma and Beneah M. Mutsotso address the challenge of development in Sub-Saharan African countries. They argue that despite concerted national development efforts and policies as well as external development assistance, these countries have generally remained underdeveloped and unable to meet both their millennium and sustainable development goals. The paper uses systems theory to advance the argument that failure to develop is, to a significant extent, due to either selective under-utilization of requisite knowledge or vulgar and degenerate use of knowledge by political elite to acquire and consolidate political power. The authors suggest that Sub-Saharan African countries should re-orientate themselves towards the normative use of knowledge which aims at developing human well-being and capacity to better control and utilize their natural resources.

Leye Komolafe argues that the term African jurisprudence should never be understood to imply uniquely African legal theories or peculiarly African legal thought, but rather as jurisprudence practiced in African historical contexts from pre-colonial times to the post-colonial era. For Komolafe, jurisprudence in Africa is a body of diffused legal theories not only of various historical experiences, but also of natural law theory and legal positivism. Komolafe recommends that a reconstruction of functional post-colonial African jurisprudence take cognisance of its historical and evolutionary legal experiences.

For Badru Ronald Olufemi, the envisioned end result of the philosophy of globalization is a global village undergirded by cohesiveness and egalitarianism. However, he argues that the contemporary phenomenon of globalisation is underpinned by a theoretical construct of economic and information-epistemic determinism, a view dominant in the global North, which can propagate some Western values such as the conception of the self as an unencumbered entity and the contractualisation of human relations, both of which the author believes are not consistent with a cohesive and egalitarian global village. He therefore proposes that if the envisioned global village is to be realized, the global North and the rest of the world ought to recognize and adopt some African cultural values that engender cohesiveness and egalitarianism, chiefly the conception of

the self as relational or encumbered, and the universal brotherhood of human beings.

In their paper on colonial repression of African women street traders in Nairobi in the 1940s, Pamela Olivia Ngesa, Felix Kiruthu and Mildred J. Ndeda argue that from the inception of colonial Nairobi, the administration intended it for white people only. However, due to the need for African labour, they allowed a restricted inflow of Africans, mainly males, into the town. From a gender development perspective, the authors argue that Nairobi's colonial administration, supported by African male elders' negative attitudes towards women, enacted gender discriminatory by-laws and policies to keep them out of legal trade and out of town. The paper concludes that all these notwithstanding, given the low wages for African men necessitating supplementary sources of income to support their families back in the rural areas and to purchase Western products, and due to the unsustainable cost of keeping African women out of town, the women resiliently continued to trade.

I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the editorial board, Drs. Kathleen Anangwe, Francis E.A. Owakah, Emmanuel Ifeanyi Ani, and Wamae Muriuki for their tireless efforts to see that this issue is rolled out after some lull in the publication of the Journal due to unforeseen circumstances.

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Oriare Nyarwath, PhD

Editor-in-Chief

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