

Quotidianism of “Newness” in “Oldness”: Modernism, Poverty and Inequality in South Africa

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ABSTRACT This paper illustrates that South Africa’s democratic governance has not eradicated apartheid structural matrices of poverty and inequality. Over the past 20 years, South Africa reinvented “newness” in “oldness” through at least three neo-libertarian development trajectories. After replacing the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme with the 1996 Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), South Africa adopted the 2012 National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 Vision, which portrays itself as a departure from “entitlement” and “state welfarism” to “developmental paradigm”. But this self-proclaimed paradigmatic shift reflexively reinvents GEAR’s unrealistic hope of marrying orthodox modernity with social equity and redistributive justice through fast economic growth. The NDP places the burden of development on the victims of apartheid capitalism. Tacitly, it provides neoliberal matrices similar to those of GEAR macroeconomics. Also, it makes a promise that it equally undermines through continuities wherein “newness” is reflexively invoked in “oldness”, thereby rendering experiences of poverty and inequality quotidian. The paper analyzes statistical trends of poverty and inequality to demonstrate that their continuities have become quotidian amidst pronouncements of “newness” of policy.

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years after 1994, “new South Africans” should ask vexed questions of their “newness”; and, the same is true for Africa 50 years after independence (Mama 2014). If poverty and inequality have been quotidian experiences for the majority under apartheid, how “post apartheid” is a democratic South Africa? Indeed, “the burden of inequality falls inordinately on the poor and the marginalized” (Netshitenzhe 2014). It should not be farfetched to argue that there is a significant degree of “oldness” in the “newness” of South Africa, because the majority of the previously disadvantaged people live with apartheid continuities rather than discontinuities. There is no “newness” in the old globalist modernization logic that saw Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) triumphing over the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 Vision above the New Growth Path (Biko 2013; Parsons 2013). Over the past

twenty years, South Africa’s development trajectories have been dominated by the globalist modernization perspective (Calland 2013; Habib 2013); and, the persistence of poverty and inequality are intricately connected to the apparent official satisfaction with reflexive quotidianism of “newness” in “oldness”. Nattrass and Seekings (2001: 60) contend that the policy implications of South Africa’s stark and enduring societal poverty and inequality are that whereas taxation and social welfare expenditure may provide mitigation, “other government policies, affecting the labour market and the overall rate and path of economic growth, serve to reproduce inequality (and, there are) truly poor ... policies that inhibit a reduction in ... inequality”. Whereas Netshitenzhe (2014: 8, 11) believes that South Africa’s taxation is progressive and has “massively expanded access to social grants”, he strongly asserts that while social interventions and economic growth are critical to dealing with inequality, they “should be pro-poor”. To be precise, Nattrass and Seekings (2001) lament the anti-inflationary, restrictive fiscal GEAR and trade liberalization economic freedom policies’ failure to lift all boats in a democratic South Africa. Accurately, Netshitenzhe (2014: 8) posits that “public policy should target both the reduction of poverty and inequality”.

The present paper however, eschews the Newtonian cause-effect analysis because of the

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complexity of the process that precipitates poverty and inequality as well as the difficulty of perfectly isolating causes from effects. Instead, it illustrates the concomitance of the South African state's reverence for neoliberal globalist modernization logic with persistent poverty and inequality over the past twenty years, amidst puerile euphoric public enunciations of "newness" in "oldness". Caution should be exercised, though, because this paper does not hope to chronicle the stories of domestic strictures of poverty, deprivation and inequality over the twenty years of South Africa's democracy. Rather, it draws from snapshots that attest to an underlying trend of lived experiences of privation amidst the promise of "a better life for all". A democratic South Africa has goaded its development trajectory to "There Is No Alternative" (TINA) paralysis (Legum 2002; Nabudere 2006; Parsons 2013), notwithstanding the fact that its democracy was not choice less (Mkandawire 1999; Biko 2013). Underwritten by neo-libertarian macroeconomics and capital accumulation philosophies, GEAR allowed for state intervention on behalf of the private sector (Bond 2002; Nabudere 2006; Calland 2013; Parsons 2013). According to Bhorat et al. (2001: 21), "The dominant themes of South Africa's economic history are inequality and exclusion.... a key benchmark against which all contemporary economic planning must be assessed is the role such plans can play in narrowing inequality and breaking down the barriers that exclude people from participating in the economy on the grounds of race, gender or location". The same point is made by Mama (2014) and Netshitenzhe (2014). South Africa's colonization, like that of most of Africa, relied on socio-politico-economic conditioning along racial, ethnic, cultural, religious and such other human qualities to induce domination, subjection and subordination (Bayart 2000; Mama 2014). Complex interactions and interrelations occur between the state and the public at all geographic scales in what is called "governmentality", which is described as, "a way of acting upon one or more subjects who are themselves actors, for as long as they are capable of action" (Foucault 1994 cited in Bayart 2000: 219, 247; Desai et al. 2011: 24). Through governmentality, technique of extraverted domination and subordination, a democratic South Africa has continued to reinterpret and reinvent the same modes of experiencing the world (Bayart 2000;

Desai et al. 2011; Mama 2014; Sesanti 2014) through unending pronouncements of reflexivity and "shifting" development trajectories.

The present paper investigates that South Africans' quotidian experiences of poverty and inequality amidst unending public stunts of "newness" in "oldness" of state development trajectory, has occurred largely through extraversion. This philosophical positioning adequately explains the present concoction in South Africa's twenty-year "life story" of wealth, peace, democracy, public violence, state brutality, poverty and inequality (Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Parsons 2013; Mama 2014; Sesanti 2014). However, this acceptance does not justify the African state's apportionment of blame to the poor for their sufferance (Mama 2014; Sesanti 2014). In their critique of the NDP 2030 Vision, Alloggio and Thomas (2013: 109) conclude: "The rhetoric of active citizenry adds insult to injury: those who suffered the worst forms of injustice under apartheid are now *liberal subjects* who are cast as responsible for their failure to transcend and transform the harshness of life post-apartheid". In fact, questions of whether there is any post-apartheid society are more pertinent in the present settings. In short, a democratic South Africa has come to perpetuate, as it were, old habits in its conduct of economics as a system. It is worth reminding that the African National Congress (ANC), a former liberation movement and now ruling party since 1994, is at the forefront in urging South Africans and, for that matter, poor Africans to swallow the neoliberal globalist prescriptions without flinching.

Globalist Modernization Logic and Development Trajectories' "Newness" in "Oldness"

The hegemonic development discourse has exulted the neoclassical approaches which are enunciated within the conceptual heritage of the "new-left orthodoxy", neo-liberal macro-policies, structural adjustments and the populist poverty alleviation strategies (Legum 2002; Adedeji 2009; Dlamini-Zuma 2009; Mbeki 2009; Desai et al. 2011; Alloggio and Thomas 2013; Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Parsons 2013). Conversely, the Keynes alternative conception of economics as "value-laden" and "a servant of humanity's development" as well as pursuit of political justice and gratification of

the electorate's interests, was undermined (Legum 2002; Mbeki 2009; Desai et al. 2011; Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Parsons 2013). Notwithstanding the recent global market crisis showing "some fundamental fault lines of (neo-liberal) globalization" (Dlamini-Zuma 2009: 7), the neoliberal globalist modernization philosophy has continued to dominate the development discourse and practice in most developing economies. Responding to the critique about the inequalities associated with economic growth, as described in the Kuznets Curve, proponents of the globalist modernization philosophy call for tolerance of such inequalities at the initial stages (Todaro 1997; Adams 2001; Parsons 2013; Netshitenzhe 2014).

With global restructuring and shift from Monopoly Global Capitalism to Fordism and to Flexible Specialization "statist" thinking of "development action as government action" was superseded by greater reliance on free markets, especially after the 1960s with the predominance of neo-libertarian ideology (Mbeki 2009; Biko 2013). The post-war resurgence of neo-liberalism, founded on the neo-classical economists' central principle of the superiority of the market above the state, was fervently supported through notions that as government withdraws from the economy, "the private sector, operating the renewed and strengthened market processes, will quickly appear to (re-)take the initiative" (Koppel 1990: 6). As a result, the post-war era was marked by buzzwords of "efficiency, privatization, trade liberalization and monetary reforms" and their crude translations into national development policies (Narman 1995: 45), which are disguised as the necessary responses to neo-libertarian globalization (Veseth 1998; Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Parsons 2013; Mama 2014). Equally, absurd theoretical arguments were used as excuses for everything else that unfolded in the new global context (Jordaan 2001; Desai et al. 2011). Increasingly, cumulative evidences demonstrate that global progress associated with neoliberal globalist modernity has, for the developing world, historically undermined the narratives of emancipation whilst the so-called development was devoid of societal self-responses to own "historical experiences and social needs" as well as self-discovery (Mkandawire 2011: 7).

Essentially, GEAR allowed for the democratic commercialization, commodification and mar-

ketization of South Africa, amidst widespread poverty and stark inequalities. These free market regimes are as old as colonization itself (Desai et al. 2011). Citing Michie and Padayachee (1997), Bond (2002: 2) records that "In the South African context, globalization has become a synonym for inaction, even paralysis, in domestic economic policy formulation and implementation". Indeed, colonialism did condemn Africa to sharp internal contradictions whilst eroding capacity to imagine own nuance development pathways by institutionalizing social systems and worldviews that would make the search and conception of realistic alternatives insurmountable among those who hold power (Amin 2001; Mkandawire 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). Fashioned through colonization, former liberation movements have appeared to collude with global forces to subjugate African societies (Simon et al. 1995; Ramutsindela 2001; Mbeki 2009; Desai et al. 2011; Mama 2014). The structural reforms are often sold to developing countries as "changes in the organization, composition, and orientation of an economy, which are necessary if an economy is to remain or become more competitive in the world economy" (Koppel 1990: 5). These adjustments bear particular effects on the domestic structures of poverty, deprivation and inequality because of their capacity to alter fundamentally the domestic relations of economic production (Calland 2013; Parsons 2013). Conceptually, there is no hope that Africa or, for that matter, South Africa, to successfully instigate and shape the current global system through neo-orthodoxy strategies (Biko 2013; Mama 2014; Sesanti 2014). Despite their great diversity, national liberation movements across most of Africa have tended to aspire for political independence, modernization of the state and industrialization of the economy with a capitalist modernist vision (Amin 2001; Bond 2002; Mbeki 2009; Desai et al. 2011; Biko 2013; Mama 2014). Post-independence in most of Africa has, as a result, seen the bourgeois concept engulfing national liberation movements and their ideologies to the extent that they ignored the apparent contradictions in the operations of globalization in the erstwhile colonies (Amin 2001; Bond 2002; Mbeki 2009; Desai et al. 2011; Biko 2013). The ANC in South Africa has not been an exception to the norm (Vale and Maseko 1998; Mbeki 2009; Desai et al. 2011; Qwabe 2013). The present paper concedes that policies associated with glo-

balist modernization philosophy have commonly perpetuated poverty and inequality in developing countries (Mbeki 2009; Biko 2014; Netshitenzhe 2014). The twenty years of libertarian globalist modernization in a democratic South Africa provides further evidences of the concomitance of societal poverty and inequality with such development practices.

From RDP and the New Growth Path to Gear and NDP 2030 Vision

In South Africa, the growth-oriented development philosophy has gained currency simultaneously as the humanistic approach became mere political stunt and rhetoric, apparently in keeping with a continental trend wherein national liberation movements have uniformly mimicked without understanding and emulated without controlling, western democratic principles and globalist modernization policies in the post-independence era (Simon et al. 1995; Amin 2001; Ramutsindela 2001; Mbeki 2009; Desai et al. 2011; Biko 2013). South Africa too has devised various plans in a period of just 20 years which are virtually grounded in the globalist modernization development philosophy. As has already been stated, this country started with the RDP in 1994 then flirted with GEAR since 1996, embracing several reflexive developmentalism moves to incorporate its critiques, such as through the Accelerated and Shared Growth in South Africa (AsgiSA) in 2006 and the 2012 NDP 2030 Vision (Alloggio and Thomas 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013). The notion of “South Africa in GEAR” has sought to signify a vision of growth, employment and redistribution, which heftily buttressed and sustained hopes of economic recovery and prospects of “a better life for all”, that were occasioned by the 1994 “miraculous spectacles” of democratization (Marais 2001; Alloggio and Thomas 2013; Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013). Democratically elected leaders have consistently grounded the rationale underlying all policies that came to define the capitalist development trajectories over the past twenty years within the goals of the reduction of poverty and inequality through, among other things, job creation (Bhorat et al. 2001; Netshitenzhe 2014). In practice, state action was eroded and the ability to wage domestic struggles against deprivation curtailed

through reverence of neoliberal globalist modernization philosophy.

Whereas GEAR was portrayed as the instrument for the realization of the RDP objectives, its vision was articulated and operationalized in ways that rendered it an act of puerile faith that is utopian. By adopting GEAR, a democratic South Africa had, if we could borrow from Simon (1995: 35), essentially “accelerated and broadened the process begun under structural adjustment conditionalities, of rolling back the state almost everywhere by reducing its direct and indirect economic involvement”. Indeed, the 7 June 2003 Growth and Development Summit organized by government, labour, business and civil society conveniently avoided questions concerning the evident failure of GEAR and globalist perspective (Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Parsons 2013). The GEAR Vision draws from the longstanding “foundational beliefs” and logic of the liberal globalist modernization philosophy, which has been heavily criticised for failing the developing economies across the world (see Simon et al. 1995; Harvey 1996; Ndulu and Ndungu 1998; Abdulai and Huffman 2000; Bond 2001, 2002; Sow and Abdallah 2001; Abdulai and Jaquet 2002; Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Parsons 2013). The “New South Africans” should not have become too excited about that old vision of growth, employment and redistribution because, as Marais (2001: 1) asserts, the “likelihood of fulfilment” of hopes carried in that GEAR Vision “is hardly hale”. GEAR essentially addressed itself to the external world, pressures, agendas and forces, thereby (re)positioning South Africa in ways that circumvent concerns with domestic strictures of poverty and inequality. Unsurprisingly, one of the basic limiting factors to government action in the past twenty years has been the budget and fiscal austerity that curtailed the state capacity to carry germane civic responsibilities (Bond 2001, 2002; Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Parsons 2013; Netshitenzhe 2014).

Inevitably, South Africa’s twenty-year life story came to be riddled with capitalist reflexive plans that were barely allowed time for their implementation and maturation. Following the 1994 RDP, the 1996 GEAR was overshadowed by the 2006 AsgiSA, which was itself tempered with the 2010 New Growth Path and then the presently contested 2012 NDP 2030 Vision (Mbeki 2009; Alloggio and Thomas 2013; Biko 2013; Habib

2013). Such other plans have involved more continuities than discontinuities (Parsons 2013; Mama 2014). Perhaps, Parsons (2013: xvi) has a point in that “both the publication of the New Growth Path in 2010 and that of the subsequent, more holistic National Development Plan in 2012 have demonstrated how new elements can enter into the public arena of discussion and action”. But it is clear that the New Growth Path failed to attain the necessary popularity because it was not acceptable in the global settings where the liberal globalist modernization development philosophies predominate.

In a democratic South Africa, just like in any other former colony, matrices of coloniality have reflexively endorsed reinvention of globalist modernity and orthodoxy (Maldonado-Torres 2007; Mbeki 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013; Mama 2014). The most common denominator over the past twenty years for South Africa is that its marriage to neo-libertarian globalist modernity has remained strongly associated with persistent poverty and inequality, increased dependence on social assistance and highly skewed distribution of national income. Unsurprisingly, South Africa’s 2012 NDP 2030 Vision identifies unemployment, poverty, inequality and lack of social cohesion as key challenges (NPC 2012a; Alloggio and Thomas 2013). That is, there is tacit acceptance that development trajectories pursued over the past twenty years have failed to resolve the strictures of societal poverty and inequality.

The hyperbolic pronouncements of a “new” South Africa have in the early years of democratization, been deeply puerile as to defy cognitive epistemological questioning of the “oldness” of the globalist modernist perspective. South Africa had the opportunity to adopt an Africanist perspective, but the pre-eminence of the neoliberal modernization theory in the global settings pre-empted such an option. South Africa virtually sacrificed its African social values, cultural self-esteem and authentic humanist vision that have always been the driving force behind the numerous liberation movements in the continent, in favour of the globalist modernization philosophy (Desai et al. 2011; Biko 2013; Mama 2014). The ultimate test of South Africa’s development trajectory is in “the impact it has on the poorest segments of society” (Cassim 2006: 55; Netshitenzhe 2014: 8). GEAR’s holds to a delusional presumption of wealth genera-

tion, job creation and trickle-down economics took a hegemonic presence over the past twenty years (de Coning 2006; Padayachee 2006; Alloggio and Thomas 2013; Netshitenzhe 2014). Far from the RDP goals, GEAR conceived economics as “the logic of a system”, rather than a “servant of humanity’s development”, unambiguously proposing “a pro-growth strategy entailing fiscal prudence, trade reform and public-sector reform with the aim of creating a more market-friendly, efficient economy” (Cassim 2006: 56). Contrary to the RDP’s redistributive propensities, GEAR was perhaps an embodiment of the TINA paralysis. With GEAR, South Africa implemented market reforms that brought the model of state governance closer to the “Washington Consensus”, which that has never been consistent with the civic virtues of economic equity and social stability (Nattrass and Seekings 2001; de Coning 2006; Padayachee 2006; Biko 2013; Calland 2013).

The South African state created democratic structures and institutions of “governmentality”, which have in practice served as key sites in state-society conflicts associated with subjectivation and centres for the diffusion of alien cultures and ideologies (Desai et al. 2011; Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013). Practices of appropriation and/or rejection of alien cultures and attendant “moral economy” are traceable throughout the history of South Africa’s colonization and subjection to apartheid rule, as well as in the past twenty years of democracy. Indeed, “governmentality” relates to “historical experience(s) in which people create (and recreate) themselves into subjects” (Bayart 2000: 264). During the last quarter of the 20th century and the first two decades of the 21st, all manner of prescriptions that are touted as “new” have uniformly been “circumscribed by the prevailing circumstances” (Mkandawire 2011: 6), prompting questions of “oldness” in “newness”. That is how the ongoing quotidianism of “newness” in “oldness” of the globalist modernist development trajectories in a democratic South Africa’s twenty years of persistent societal poverty and inequality should be understood.

A Twenty-year Life Story of Poverty and Inequality

Under GEAR’s pro-market Vision, the progressive ambitions and promises of “a better life

for all” increasingly evaporated for the majority of South Africans (Bond 2001; Mbeki 2009; Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013). The same structural inequalities that were identified by Khosa (2002: 28) in the first decade of the twenty first century have remained intact; and, precarious “financial and economic conditions of the majority of the poor Africans ... and rural residents” have persisted (see also Mbeki 2009; Biko 2013; Calland 2013; Habib 2013; Mama 2014; Netshitenzhe 2014). Domestically, South Africa has not engaged in the necessary struggles for “more lasting transformations of the structures of politico-economic inequality, poverty and underdevelopment” (Simon 1995: 36). Consequently, the life story of the past twenty years is of a country that “stands revealed as an engrossing but perilous mix of the old and the new ... (and of) “the many, stout historical trends and continuities that, far from having been erased by the ‘miracle’ of 1994, persist” (Marais 2001: 1). This observation remains relevant to the present day South Africa (Mama 2014; Sesanti 2014). In this respect, the Marikana tragedy of 16 August 2012 (Sesanti 2014) and the ongoing public violence serve as evidence that the state-society confrontation about issues of poverty and inequality continue unabated amidst unending pronouncements of “newness” in the “oldness” of globalist modernization. A variety of objective statistics would demonstrate that poverty and inequality have persisted over the past twenty years. Hence, the National Planning Commission’s (2012b: 24) recent analysis of South Africa’s health in respect of poverty and inequality provides serious testimony of the perilousness of the twenty years of democracy for the majority of South Africans:

“Poverty and inequality remains one of the major challenges facing South Africa. While there has been a decline in poverty over time, inequality remains high. There are huge income inequalities with 68.1 percent of income accruing to the richest 20 percent and the poorest 10 percent getting less than 0.57 percent. Over the period 1994 to 2009, the richest 10 percent of the population became significantly richer; however their percentage of total income has reduced. The poorest 10 percent are better off in absolute terms, but relatively worst off”.

The picture painted in this analysis is however incomplete because it does not show that the semblance of improvement of the conditions

of living for the poorest 10 percent is a direct result of the provision of state social welfare grant (see Netshitenzhe 2014). Whereas in 1996/97 there were 2 408 742 beneficiaries, this number increased to 11 983 141 in 2006/07 and to 14 877 419 in 2012/13 (Table 1). Evidently, the twenty years have been associated with increased societal dependence on state social welfare; and, this trend is not ideal because the promise of a better life for all cannot be predicated upon dependence. The most disconcerting aspect of this increasingly dependent society is in the proportion of children-related (child support, dependency and foster) grants, which in 2010/2011 made up 74 percent of the total number of beneficiaries of social assistance support. With this trend, it has to be concluded that the twenty years of neoliberal globalist modernization has not created the possibility of a better future for all, especially for children who are born and socialized into dependence.

Table 1: South Africa’s social assistance support grant beneficiaries, 1996–2013

Year	Number of beneficiaries
1996/1997	2 408 742
1998/1999	2 540 998
2000/2001	3 773 998
2002/2003	4 913 275
2004/2005	7 869 143
2006/2007	11 983 141
2008/2009	13 026 104
2010/2011	14 004 128
2012/2013	14 877 419

Source: National Planning Commission 2012b

Even with this gloomy scenario, Hsing (2011: 12) encourages South Africa to deepen the globalist modernization policies of “economic growth, fiscal prudence, a higher ratio of the money supply to GDP, a lower real interest rate, depreciation of the rand, and/or a lower inflation rate”. As evidence show, these policies are associated with the twenty years of enduring societal poverty and inequality. It can be stated that South Africa’s twenty years of governance of economics has not served the interests of the majority of the poor; and, it is Nattrass and Seekings’s (2001) contention that the globalist development trajectories are to blame for a democratic South Africa’s inability to resolve societal poverty and inequality. It could be that the globalist modernization policies paradoxically as-

sisted government to generate increased revenue because state expenditure on social assistance grant grew from R36 982 million in 2003/2004 to R89 368 million in 2010/2011 (NPC 2012b).

The employment trend too confirm that South Africa's twenty years of neoliberal globalist modernization has merely invoked the "oldness" to create facades of "newness" and to sustain the strictures of poverty and inequality. The narrow official unemployment rate has remained persistently high, at a decade average of about 24 percent between 2001 and 2011 (NPC 2012b). During the same period, the labour force participation rate and absorption rate have both declined, demonstrating the incapacity of the economy to accommodate the adult working age population (Table 2). These conditions cannot justify the insinuation that a democratic South Africa's development trajectories provide for "a better life for all".

Where as the globalist modernization policies arrested inflation rate, as measured through the Consumer Price Index, from 8.9 in 1994 to 5.0 in 2011 to please foreign private capital, the balance on current account as a percentage of GDP remained strongly negative over the same period (NPC 2012b), creating a lose-lose situation for both state and society. That is, whilst South Africa's development trajectories hoped to open

Table 2: Labour absorption and participation rates, 2001-2011

	<i>Labour absorption rate</i>	<i>Labour force participation rate</i>
2001	42.4	57.4
2002	42.5	57.9
2003	41.8	55.6
2004	42.2	54.8
2005	44.1	57.6
2006	45.3	58.2
2007	44.7	56.7
2008	44.5	57.9
2009	41.3	54.8
2010	40.5	54.2
2011	40.9	54.6

Source: National Planning Commission 2012b

floodgates of foreign direct investment (FDI) by sacrificing the necessary societal struggles for redress, the results show that net FDI was highly unreliable as it fluctuated between lows of virtual capital flight in 2006 (-R44.625 billion) to highs of R100.291 billion in 2008 and then R9.546 billion in 2010 (NPC 2012b). These poor trends in the performance of neo-liberal globalist modernization policies is also evident in the twenty years of growth rates in GDP, per capita as well as budget surplus/deficit before borrowing and balance on current account as percentages of GDP (Table 3). These trends show that during

Table 3: Growth rates in GDP, real per capita, national accounts, balance on current account, depth and severity of poverty, and Gini-coefficient, 1993/1994-2009/2010

	<i>Balance on current account as % of GDP</i>	<i>Budget surplus/deficit as % of GDP</i>	<i>Real per capita GDP growth rate</i>	<i>GDP growth rate</i>	<i>Gini-coefficient</i>	<i>Depth of poverty</i>	<i>Severity of poverty</i>
1993	-	-	-	-	0.672	0.24	0.148
1994	0.0	-5.5	1.1	3.2	0.665	0.24	0.144
1995	-1.7	-4.6	1.0	3.1	0.674	0.27	0.171
1996	-1.2	-4.5	2.1	4.3	0.678	0.26	0.162
1997	-1.5	-4.6	0.5	2.6	0.674	0.25	0.157
1998	-1.8	-3.8	-1.6	0.5	0.683	0.25	0.155
1999	-0.5	-2.3	0.2	2.4	0.685	0.26	0.157
2000	-0.1	-2.0	2.1	4.2	0.682	0.25	0.154
2001	0.3	-2.0	0.8	2.7	0.685	0.26	0.166
2002	0.8	-1.4	1.9	3.7	0.670	0.24	0.149
2003	-1.0	-1.1	1.3	2.9	0.686	0.23	0.134
2004	-3.0	-2.3	3.1	4.6	0.678	0.22	0.127
2005	-3.5	-1.4	3.9	5.3	0.683	0.21	0.127
2006	-5.3	-0.3	4.2	5.6	0.685	0.21	0.124
2007	-7.0	0.6	4.3	5.5	0.66	0.18	0.101
2008	-7.2	0.9	2.4	3.6	0.67	0.15	0.089
2009	-4.0	-1.2	-2.6	-1.5	0.64	0.16	0.095
2010	-2.8	-6.6	1.9	2.9	-	-	-

Source: National Planning Commission 2012b

the past twenty years the globalist modernization policies did not generate the promised wealth for South Africa. Instead, the country has been in a virtual perpetual red, especially in respect of the balance on current account as a percentage of GDP. As a result, the meagre wealth created has been used to finance social assistance dependence and income for the rich. In fact, the total national income has declined for both the rich and the poor.

The quotidianism of “newness” in “oldness” of the globalist modernization policies in a democratic South Africa is evident in the apparent state tolerance of stark inequalities for over twenty years. Whereas it is evident that the decline in poverty headcount index from 50 percent in 1994 to 34.5 percent in 2009, the NPC (2012b: 28) accepts that the depth and severity of poverty declined marginally due to “government interventions like roll-out of the social grants”. The poverty line of R422 per month is itself exceedingly conservative given the soaring cost of living in South Africa, dictated to by the global commodity prices and the price parity index. To this extent, the marginal decline in the depth and severity of poverty based on the R422 per month poverty line should not overshadow the persistent societal inequality as measured through the Gini-coefficient (Table 3). The latter measure has remained steady above 0.6 during the past twenty years (NDP 2012b), reaching a high of 0.67 in 2012 (Trading Economics n.d.). The share of national income by all sectors of the population has dropped, indicating the overall poor performance of the globalist modernization policies.

The effects of social assistance grant are confirmed by the rise in the number of people in the Living Standard Measure (LSM) 4-6 (monthly income of R1 596 to R3 625) simultaneously as that for the LSM 1-3 (R804 to R1 200) dropped. That is, the public stunts about RDP, GEAR, AsgiSA and the New Growth Path are all exposed in these statistical trends that show poor overall economic performance and persistent societal poverty and inequality. Even with this solid evidence of the total failure of the neoliberal globalist modernization development trajectories, the same philosophy is re-invoked in the 2012 NDP 2030 Vision and the ruling party is again asking “new” South Africans to demonstrate their puerile excitement with “newness”

in “oldness”. The observation to be drawn from this review suggests that South Africa does not show the necessary potentiality to achieve economic growth for resolution of societal poverty and inequality within the context of globalist modernity. The “old” globalist perspective, whose roots are in mercantilism and imperialism, cannot be expected to suddenly change and be beneficial for South Africa just because this democratic state is perceptibly “the most civil-minded” in Africa.

CONCLUSION

The present paper substantially investigates and demonstrates with statistical evidences that the enunciation of “a better life for all” for South Africa has been retorted with puerility over the past twenty years. Following the short stint of the RDP, GEAR was undemocratically ushered as unnegotiable in 1996 and its failure to lift all “poverty and inequality” boats was met with AsgiSA in 2006 as a capitalist reflexive developmentalism move. In a somewhat socialist inclination, the New Growth Path was announced in 2010, but quickly overtaken by events given that the global settings supported the neoliberal modernist development trajectories. Following the 2011 National Planning Commission’s diagnosis of poverty, inequality and social fragmentation as the key challenges for South Africa, a so-called “new” development trajectory was enunciated in the NDP 2030 Vision. The latter confirms that almost twenty years later South Africa continues to be gripped by matrices that define societal poverty and inequality, which have evidently become quotidian wherein “newness” has come to be blurred with “oldness” in the continuities and reflexivity of the “globalist modernist development” paradigm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the analysis provided in this paper, three potential recommendations can be made. Firstly, the state should avoid capitalist reflexive developmentalism wherein it shifts endlessly from one policy, plan or strategy to the other whilst maintaining the core economic philosophy that has always proven to sustain inequalities across the world. Secondly, the state should be carefully measured in its application

of the welfarist philosophy on the poor because it is increasingly inseminating societal dependence syndrome. Finally, the state has to take urgent measures to address the escalation of societal despondence, frustration, anger and trust-deficit against the national government's ability to deal with poverty and inequality. The latter recommendation is framed in order to ensure that the apparent consequences relating to violence, crime, instability, illegality and disorder are eschewed. There are no simple straightforward solutions to adoption of these recommendations. For instance, social assistance grants cannot just be withdrawn overnight despite being unsustainable. This paper envisages further studies that would frame alternative courses of action as alternatives to the present status quo as the three recommendations entail.

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