



Call for contributions: number 1

Future Africas, Lifeworlds and Knowledges

Global Africa (GA) is a new pan-African journal of global studies and a multilingual forum for ideas and knowledge transmission. As an international public space for debates around the place and situation of Africa and its diasporas, *the journal aims to address all the aspects of the political, social, religious, economic, ecological and technological issues of our globalised world, with the African Continent as the vantage point*. Central to its operations will be to: (re)problematise global challenges and their governance from Africa; to explore the discourses, practices and representations of the continent regarding globalisation; to think about solutions to the global problems of our times; and to debate the future(s) of Africa. In doing these, *Global Africa* intends to be a venue for debate and for pluralist, critical and emancipatory intellectual production on Africa and its encounters with the world.

To take up this challenge, we keenly invite contributions - from the social sciences and humanities, natural and applied sciences, as well as other disciplines/fields- and from African voices in all their diversity.

This first issue of *Global Africa* aims to address the key epistemological, conceptual, thematic, theoretical, methodological and political questions through which we can (re)consider Africa in the world. This programmatic issue invites seminal articles that illustrate and develop this perspective and present the overall editorial line of the journal. In thinking through these foundational issues, we are inviting both seasoned academics/thinkers and young researchers alike, from various disciplines and from around the world to propose stimulating standpoints that will not only establish the journal internationally, but also have the potential to become reference material for future conversations.

The first issue will engage in a critical analysis of the idea/notion/concept of “*Global Africa*” as a compass and guide to elucidate globalisation understood as a project, a process and a field of discourse and struggles. It will ask how and in what way Africa and its diasporas can rethink the foundations of a globalisation that is fluctuating in its direction and still in the making, in order to prepare the ground for essential discussions on concepts and themes, as well as theories and methods.

Concepts.

The operation of refocusing globalisation is accompanied by a necessary conceptual reorganisation and pluralisation of perspectives capable of eliciting new knowledge. It consists, for



example, in thinking more broadly and differently and even breaking with the usual lexical field of globalisation (market, circulation, flows, internationalisation of capital and law, technologies, information, security, innovation), subverting it, adding to it and revealing its boundaries and aspects not previously thought of. In the same way, the “universal” construction of the **issues on the international agendas** (health, safety, education, environment, equality, democracy) will be analysed and insight offered on the effects in terms of the dissemination of values and objectives in particular, but also of the organisation of power. Proposals will be expected on how concepts from social science can help us understand what is *still* hindering access to a decent way of life for millions of people across the continent and the world at large, from without and within.

Fields.

In order to understand the relationship to oneself and the African world and make the events taking place there intelligible, identify and appreciate current or emerging dynamics, and re-define obsolete or imported categorisations, the topics need to be opened out to take account of all the diversity of contemporary science. The corpus of **themes lying at interfaces** (with health or environmental science) will be associated with topics that relate directly to the **Fourth Industrial Revolution**. This is where proposals are most eagerly awaited. What knowledge, imagination, alternatives and meanings can the Continent bring to this singular page in history dominated by artificial intelligence, big data, transhumanism and genetic manipulation, etc.? In other words, does the idea of *Global Africa* provide us with a way of elucidating the scientific, ethical, political, economic, social and corporal issues related to the digital revolution?

Another major topic is that of **encounters and the possibility of “being with”** others in a shared world. For example, we will be looking at ways of incorporating social and political alternatives (care) and utopian ideals (conviviality, commonality and cosmopolitanism) into concrete historical action in contexts marked by the rise of nationalism and nationalist ideas of identity. What is the role (and future) of African cultures (values, beliefs, heritage, ethics, aesthetics, ways of life) in these shifts brought about by globalisation?

Last but not least, the journal will provide a focus on questions that revive the **critique of the political economy of African research** and its dissemination, the roles of universities and research centres in the production of useful knowledge about lives, institutions and their functioning and the relationships between researchers, policy makers and actors in international development.

Leading on from words, objects and inaugural epistemological questioning, the issue of defining theoretical and methodological implications will also be addressed.



Theories.

Examining these challenges posed by and to research requires the construction of theoretical models capable of nurturing fruitful conceptual developments. It is true that the space of theoretical constructs mobilised in particular by social science in Africa has widened considerably in the wake of post- and decolonial studies, subaltern studies, intersectionality and sustainability science. Articles taking stock of these theoretical positions will be appreciated, as well as reflections on the new theoretical fields explored by social science that consider the continent's trajectories.

Methods.

Although today's new social sciences are necessarily transdisciplinary, combining in particular social science, digital science and sustainability science, the routes and methods by which exchanges between disciplines should be operationalized remain to be determined. Reflecting on the depth of events also entails shifting the focus and reinventing comparative approaches, including transcontinental ones, starting out from the complex specifics of the continent without sacrificing anything to empirical study and the robustness of methods.

This also implies rethinking the relationship to the field and empirical study. Restoring the diversity of ways of considering oneself and the world entails methodological reflexivity, including on the way in which institutional and financial conditions affect implementation. The use of digital technology both demands and makes possible new methods of investigation.

These are (a few) questions that allow us to develop the possibility of a social science that is critical of globalisation and simultaneously "global" by its capacity to describe, compare and interpret the very large diversity of relations and configurations, "situated" in its finesse in interpreting the multi-scale articulations between global issues, local dynamics and individual experiences, and "pragmatic" in its focus on theoretical work while producing **practical responses** in the face of the planetary challenges and giddy transformations that humanity is undergoing.

Proposition

The proposals for papers submitted to *Global Africa* must be no more than 1,500 characters including spaces in length, and may be submitted in English, Arabic, French, Swahili (or another African language) and sent to the following address: redaction@globalafrica.ac by 30 April 2021 at the latest.