

Introduction

Regimes of Responsibility in Africa

Towards a New Theoretical Approach

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This edited collection of essays analyses the transformations that discourses and practices of responsibility have undergone in Africa since the early 1990s. This period has been marked – among other things – by the return of electoral politics, the eruption of violent conflicts, the introduction of neoliberal reforms and increased foreign investment, the multiplication of religious movements, the exponential growth of migration fluxes, the emergence of new media, and the explosion of the AIDS pandemic. The core assumption of this book is that, even though they have not affected the continent's different countries in the same way, these changes have contributed to multiplying discourses around responsibility, which have transformed the way in which it is imagined, discussed and organized in African societies. The concept of responsibility has indeed become one of the key moral ideas through which these societies think about, and act upon, their present and future configurations.

To discuss this central hypothesis, the book's contributions examine the discourses and practices of responsibility in nine different settings, and they reflect on the broader changes in the regimes of responsibility in which they take part. In each chapter, these changes are studied from at least one of the following angles:

- (a) The manner in which responsibility is enacted and conceptualized by different institutions (such as international organizations, Pentecostal churches or multinational corporations) or categories of actors (such as witch doctors, government officials or researchers)

- (b) The mechanisms through which responsibility is generated, imputed or claimed by institutional and non-institutional actors (such as divination, judicial hearing or development programmes)
- (c) The links manifested between practices and discourses of responsibility, and the different (shorter and longer) durations in which they are entangled.

The book's overall objective is to study the economic, political and social changes that have taken place in Africa over the past three decades through the lens of the concept of responsibility. By testing the relevance of this concept in different African contexts, this collection of essays makes it possible to better understand the interweaving of moral practices and discourses in the transformations that the continent is undergoing. At the same time, it offers the opportunity to bring the existing scholarship on responsibility – which is based on the history of Western Europe and Northern America – into dialogue with African case studies and theoretical perspectives, in order to question the significance of the neoliberal moment in this continent, as well as the relevance and status of anthropological and sociological research on these issues.

In the rest of this introduction, we return to the literature on responsibility in order to lay the ground for our analytical approach, which allows us to study the practices and discourses of responsibility in a concrete way. At the same time, we will highlight the interest of studying responsibility 'from' Africa and we will provide some insights into the reasons for the recent proliferation of responsibility discourses throughout the continent.

New Directions in the Study of Responsibility

Developing a theoretical framework for the analysis of responsibility is a difficult task because this concept covers a very broad semantic field: it can concern our actions, those of others of whom we are in charge, or of the goods of which we have custody. Responsibility can be oriented towards the past or the future; and it is part of the relationships that give rise to the expression of different expectations or normative requirements. As a result of its polysemic dimensions, the concept of responsibility has nourished traditions of thought that do not communicate easily with one another. The scholar who examines the literature on the subject quickly understands that authors do not exactly talk about the same thing: some deal with responsibility for our past actions; others with the

responsibility we have towards our loved ones; still others, about the responsibility of states and companies for their citizens and employees.

To better organize the analysis of responsibility, it is useful to return briefly to the semantic history of the concept. Following Paul Ricoeur (1994), we may consider that the meaning of the concept has gradually expanded from its relatively precise original legal core. Derived from the Latin word *respondere*, the term originally implied a person's obligation to answer for his/her actions and for those over whom s/he has custody. This refers to the requirement to impute a specific damage to a person, and to put her/him under the obligation to make reparations for it (civil law) or to suffer a penalty as a result of it (criminal law). From the end of the eighteenth century, the meaning of the concept rapidly spread to the political domain and it acquired a new, broader meaning. In this context, responsibility was no longer considered only as a process of imputation *ex-post*, but as a mandate that gave political leaders the power to make decisions on behalf of the constituencies that they represent, while making them accountable for the consequences of such decisions. In this second sense, the concept of responsibility is very close to that of accountability. It is associated with trust, freedom, control and evaluation. From the nineteenth century, but especially in the twentieth century, the meaning of the concept of responsibility further expanded to stand for an ordinary ethical judgment that is central in the relationship that human beings have with themselves and others. The use of the term thus moved beyond the domains of justice (the imputation of damage) and politics (a mandate that makes someone accountable) to which it had been initially confined, to embrace a wider range of social relations, spanning from the very concrete circle of close relatives to the whole of humanity, and even to future generations.

The semantic evolution of the concept reflects the institutional and political transformations that have marked the West's history in recent centuries – in particular, the secularization of justice, the extension of electoral democracy and the development of the insurance system (Mc Keon 1957; see also Ricoeur 1994). It also echoes the way in which thinking about responsibility has developed in philosophy. At first confined to legal thought, and centred on the problem of fault imputation, the concept has taken on a new meaning in social contract theories, which take it as a starting point from which to think about the limits of government. Finally, the understanding of responsibility as being part of everyday ethics can be associated with more recent essays in moral philosophy such as those of Emmanuel Levinas (1981), Charles Taylor (1976) and Bernard Williams (2008 [1994]).

This turn towards the analysis of ordinary ethical practices echoes the one that took place in anthropology through the 2000s (Lambek 2000, 2010; Faubion 2001, 2011; Laidlaw 2002, 2013; Zigon 2008; Fassin 2012). Drawing inspiration from the work of Aristotle, Friedrich Nietzsche, and, more distinctively, Michel Foucault, these authors proposed moving beyond the old anthropology of morality, which tended to reduce the ethical field to the respect (or lack of respect) of rules of conduct, to open a new field of enquiry on ethics as practices of freedom through which human beings constitute themselves as moral subjects in their relationship to others. However, this anthropological scholarship studies ethical practices (conceived as techniques of the self) in their general manifestations. With the exception of James Laidlaw (2013), that we will briefly introduce below, it pays relatively little attention to the notion of responsibility and is thus of limited relevance for the argument that this collection intends to develop.¹

In recent philosophical studies, the moral meaning of the concept of responsibility is often contrasted with its more traditional use in the judiciary tradition: the first (i.e. to care for) is forward-looking, positive and rooted in the relationship(s) with others, while the second (i.e. to be guilty of) is retrospective, negative and focused on the subject and its actions (Ricoeur 2003). As part of this book's aim to develop an overarching theoretical framework for the analysis of responsibility, however, it is preferable not to oppose the different meanings that the concept has acquired throughout its history: fault, trust, freedom, virtue, control and sanction.² Rather, we suggest studying how the practices and discourses of responsibility play with these different meanings – how they place them in different configurations of power, horizons of expectations and temporal orientations – and how they relate to each other.

In social sciences, the first attempt to formulate an anthropological theory of responsibility can be traced back to one of Émile Durkheim's students, Paul Fauconnet, and his book, *La responsabilité: étude de sociologie*, published in 1928. In this book, Fauconnet proposes that responsibility ought to be studied as a 'social fact', thereby distancing himself from previous studies in philosophy and law, that considered responsibility an 'idea' to be analysed in abstract terms, drawing inspiration from the Western tradition of thought (see Lévy-Bruhl 1884). Fauconnet, on the contrary, considers responsibility as the product of a judgment that is based on a series of moral and legal rules that are shared within a specific society in order to punish an individual for committing a crime. By analysing the process through which a specific sanction is produced, the researcher can empirically observe the dynamics by which responsibility is defined, and then compare them to those of other societies.

On the basis of this comparative study of responsibility, Fauconnet shows that the responsibility for a specific act or event may be allocated to a variety of actors, including human beings, the dead, animals, things, collectives, children, or even madmen. In this sense, if responsibility is often directly connected to principles of causality, intentionality, or psychic capability, it cannot simply be reduced to them, and it needs to be analysed on its own terms. As the result of collective emotions and representations, responsibility, in Fauconnet's understanding, becomes a symbol that stands for a specific crime, and provides a target for the application of a moral or legal sanction. Responsibility thus produces a particular kind of emotional and cognitive transfer, which has as its main function that of liberating a society from what its members consider a 'crime'.

Following Fauconnet, numerous social scientists developed similar approaches and considered responsibility as a process of moral imputation (Gluckman 1972; Chateauraynaud 1991; Williams 1993; Laidlaw 2013: chap. 5). This is essentially a forensic approach to the study of responsibility that analyses the discourses and practices of accusation that are related to (real or imagined) past wrongdoings. This approach focuses on the study of the institutions that produce responsibility, the techniques that they adopt in order to do so, and the emotions, values, or ethical judgments underlying them. A recent example is Laidlaw (2013), who proposes to study how people attribute responsibility for the damages they have suffered in everyday life. Drawing on Williams (2008 [1994]), he suggests that four factors are taken into consideration in this process of moral imputation: the cause, the intention, the psychic state, and the capacity to respond. Although he does not cite Fauconnet, he follows him in considering that the crucial factor is neither the cause, nor the intention, but the capacity to respond – that is, to be punished, or to compensate for the damage. In contrast to Durkheim's student, however, the allocation of responsibility is for Laidlaw a complex ethical process, which can in no simple way be reduced to the application of the moral rules shared by the entire community. He thus calls attention to the variety of techniques that produce and distribute responsibility in human societies, from Zande divination to statistical reasoning. Far from the confusion that often surrounds the use of the concept of responsibility, this type of approach gives this concept a precise, unequivocal meaning, and proposes a method to study it, which consists of analysing the mechanisms through which responsibility is allocated. It allows us to take into account the way in which responsibility is conceived in different societies and thus to escape from the ethnocentrism that is implicit in many reflections about responsibility in the West, which tend to implicitly refer to

the responsibilities of adult human beings in full control of their mental and moral capacities. At the same time, by omitting the other meanings of the concept of responsibility, this forensic approach seems to unnecessarily limit the scope of analysis. It tends to neglect the way in which responsibility is used in specific relations of power and domination, the way in which it is acted out (claimed, demanded, recalled or challenged) as a (positive) moral virtue in everyday practices and interactions, and the way in which it is oriented, not only to the past, but also to the future (Guyer 2014).

Taking Foucault's work as a starting point, another tradition of research in the social sciences considers responsibility as a technique of government that is grounded in liberal thought (Ewald 1986; Rose 1996; Shamir 2008; Shore 2008). For François Ewald, individual responsibility is the key principle of nineteenth-century liberal thought, a principle that suggests that every individual has to take care of her/his own existence. In Ewald's view, liberalism does not refuse assistance to the poor, but views such assistance as a moral duty that is grounded on charity, rather than being a legal obligation: the poor are thus deemed responsible for their own destiny and they have no right to assistance. The welfare state, which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, resulted from a completely different political rationality, one based on the calculation of probability, social insurance, and collective rights. Within this framework, the social management of work accidents, job losses, or workers' aging is no longer based on individual responsibility and charity, but on the calculation of potential risks and on their collective coverage, according to legal rules.³

For several authors (Rose 1999, 2001; Shamir 2008; Shore 2008, 2017), responsibility is today being reasserted in a new guise, as a key principle of government – a government that uses the ethics of responsibility as a medium to engender a society founded on entrepreneurialism, competition and autonomy. This 'responsibilization' of individuals, organisations and communities is encouraged through the development of various governmental techniques (such as audits or participative management) and techniques of the self (such as career coaching or personal development training). According to Ronen Shamir (2008), such techniques tend to blur the distinction between the 'market' and 'society' as they lead simultaneously to a moralization of the market – market players are driven to becoming socially responsible – and to a commoditization of morality – the moral domain is increasingly comprehended in the context of a cost–benefit analysis.

Instead of making responsibility the product of a judgment that can be found in different forms in all human societies, this literature proposes to include the analysis of responsibility in the history of the development

of liberal governmentality. In so doing, it calls for a more historical and political approach, one that broadens the analysis to include the different power techniques that generate responsibility independently of the imputation procedures, in order to consider how responsibility may work as a regime of truth, discipline and subjectivity. It is in this sense that we intend to resort to the concept of the *regime of responsibility*. Taken as a heuristic tool, this concept aims to grasp what it is that responsibility, as an apparatus of power, does.

At the same time, by not fully taking into consideration the extent to which subjects appropriate, transform and resist government policies, Foucault-inspired work on responsibility tends to overestimate the influence of neoliberal government strategies. In our opinion, the problem lies in the fact that these works narrow down the issue of responsibility to the analysis of the power techniques linked to (neo)liberal governmentality. As a result, they tend to neglect the diversity of the practices and discourses of responsibility with which these power techniques are interlocked: those related to family ethics, citizenship or religion as well as those that underlie ordinary social relationships between parents, friends or colleagues. The analysis of contemporary regimes of responsibility should therefore be extended in order to better grasp the plurality of existing ethics of responsibility, their reciprocal relations, and the way in which individuals deal with them (Trnka and Trundle 2017). Here, we come to the second, broader meaning that we would like to give to the concept of the regime of responsibility. It is intended to identify the different registers through which responsibility is expressed – including those that are silenced by the neoliberal discourse of responsibility – and to highlight their possible interactions: conflicts, alignments, or the compromises that can develop among them. A regime of responsibility thus presents itself as a particular historical configuration of practices and discourses structured by one or more apparatuses (*dispositifs*) of power, but which, at the same time, outgrow these same apparatuses in multiple and unpredictable ways. The analysis of regimes of responsibility thus allows us to go beyond the narrow conception of the individual that is implicit in neoliberal governmentality in order to give serious consideration to the processes by which the practices and discourses of responsibility create their ‘own distinctive kinds of interconnectedness’ (Laidlaw 2013: 201).

The concept of a regime of responsibility can be briefly illustrated by coming back to the paternalistic policy that Union minière put in place in the Congolese copperbelt in the colonial period. In a nutshell, this policy has consisted in building mining camps to take in charge, and at the same time, control, every details of workers’ life. Far from only resulting from the company’s labour requirements, its development over the colonial

period was also a response to pressures from the colonial administration, and to workers' demands for better living conditions. It also involved the participation of various professional bodies (such as missionaries, social workers or doctors) with their own standards and sense of duty. One can identify here the formation of a regime of responsibility: as a form of corporate social responsibility, Union minière's industrial paternalism was closely associated with the emergence of new responsibilities for the colonial government (to 'develop' the colony), the various experts it employed (to meet professional standards) and its own workers (to raise a 'modern' family). The aim of this power apparatus was to transform workers into entirely new subjects, responsible for themselves (their health, their work, their moral conduct, their future), and for their wives and children.

But that is not all. As Benjamin Rubbers (2013) shows elsewhere, this paternalistic policy – which was continued in a different format by Gécamines into the 1980s – had a profound influence on how workers came to see themselves as men, husbands, fathers, relatives, or citizens. Today, to be responsible ('être un responsable') remains a very strong normative expectation for adult persons, especially men, and what is understood by this is very close to what colonial moral entrepreneurs had in mind (see also Pype, this volume). However, workers' subjectivities, and the forms of responsibility that were attached to them, cannot be reduced to mere effects of paternalism. This is because workers' social and cultural life was never completely controlled by the company's power apparatus. Even in the colonial period, workers could develop various types of social ties both inside and outside company camps (for example with women or relatives) that involved ethics of responsibility irreducible to the type of responsible subject envisioned by the company.

At first sight, the foreign companies who have participated to the boom of mining investments in the Congolese copperbelt since the early 2000s have broken with the industrial paternalism of Union minière and Gécamines. Following Dinah Rajak (2011; this volume), it is however possible to make the hypothesis that their labour policy has not so much broken with industrial paternalism, as given it a new direction.⁴ There are several possible reasons for this. First, these companies must comply with the Congolese labour law, which has remained almost unchanged since the colonial period. Secondly, they operate in areas where the state plays a marginal role in the deliverance of social services. Hence, they are expected to take up this role, in accordance with the principle of 'discharge' that has prevailed in central Africa since the colonial conquest. Finally, the paternalism of Union minière and Gécamines continues to serve as a reference to which the labour policy implemented by new

mining companies is compared. From this point of view, these companies are expected to provide stable jobs, to support workers' families, and to deliver public services for the community. In other words, the conditions with which new mining investors are confronted in Congo are not completely different from those that allowed for the development of industrial paternalism in the twentieth century. Hence the challenge is to understand how these investors adapt their managerial models to the constraints that they face in Congo and how, in so doing, they reinvent the tradition of industrial paternalism, and contribute to the emergence of new regimes of responsibility.

As this example suggests, the presumed inflation of responsibility discourses in Africa that was mentioned earlier in this introduction cannot be understood as the mere result of neoliberal policies of 'responsibilization' (such as corporate social responsibility, good governance or micro-credit programmes). It is also the consequence of what Georges Balandier (1971) called 'dynamics from inside' the African continent: the deterioration in the living conditions of a large number of African people, which has increasingly obliged them to act in response to the pressing needs of their families and the responsibility to satisfy them; the liberalization of political life and media development, which has given rise to new forms of political participation, and to scandals questioning the accountability of governments and corporations; and the intensification of African interactions with the rest of the world (for example through migrations, religious movements or trade networks), which has given rise to the expression of new expectations of responsibility. These processes carry different discourses that do not play on the same register, but which make the concept of responsibility a privileged tool for the many actors who are involved in ongoing attempts to change the balance of power across the continent.

In African studies, the issue of responsibility is implicitly discussed in numerous works that focus on topics as diverse as the colonial past, contemporary armed conflicts and social interpretations of disease and misfortune. By focusing on such a diverse set of phenomena, these works highlight the variety of social relationships through which the discourses and practices of responsibility take shape and transform over time. They rarely, however, have responsibility as their main object of analysis. The researches on witchcraft, to begin with Edward Evans-Pritchard's classical ethnography (1937), provided particularly relevant observations for developing an anthropological analysis of responsibility as an imputation process (Gluckman 1972; Douglas 1992; Laidlaw 2010, 2013). The literature on African politics has also highlighted the plurality of responsibilities that leaders must meet. Emphasis has been placed on the

opposition between their legal obligations, as representatives of the state, and their redistributive obligations in patronage networks, as 'big men' (Medard 1992; Bayart 1993; Daloz and Chabal 1999). More recently, in an article on forestry officials in Senegal, Giorgio Blundo (2011) proposed going beyond this opposition by addressing the way in which these state representatives navigate among the various forms of accountability (such as bureaucratic, representative, corporatist or nepotistic accountability).

As these examples suggest, Africa offers us a particularly fertile ground from which to analyse ongoing transformations in the practices and discourses of responsibility. Wage labour has remained marginal, and social protection weakly institutionalized, in most African countries. In these conditions, the ways in which most African citizens live are largely conditioned by the relations of dependency that they are able to mobilize and instrumentalize (Berry 1989; Ferguson 2015). This situation stresses the need to decentre the Foucauldian focus on the 'social', which is built on the analysis of western countries' experience, to give closer consideration to the ways in which discourses and practices of responsibility take shape in the everyday experiences of African people. This is best achieved through analysis of the relationships in which they engage, the movements they join, and the ways in which they imagine their present predicament in terms of their relationships to both the past and the future.

As John Lonsdale (1986) shows, the complex networks of economic and political dependency that link African countries to the rest of the world have made responsibility a central political issue, as both rulers and subjects attempted to define the term in various ways throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: 'one of the moving forces in history, as in contemporary politics', he argues, 'is the constant dialectic between the claims of rulers to be responsible and the critical attempts of the governed, or of some of them, to hold rulers to account' (1986: 130). As we suggested above, this is a problem that has acquired a new importance with the transnational processes that have marked the continent in the course of the last three decades, be it the World Bank's programmes of good governance, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes of mining investors, or the flows of money that migrants send to their families.

The Spaces and Times of African Regimes of Responsibility

This book exemplifies the formulation of the concept of regimes of responsibility sketched above through a number of case studies from different

regions of the continent (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo). The case studies are framed by both an introductory and a conclusive chapter which focus, respectively, on the historical dimensions of regimes of responsibility in Africa (Bayart), and on the often taken-for-granted issue of the researcher's own responsibility vis-à-vis the knowledge s/he produces about the continent. This is an issue that the recent increase in migration fluxes toward Europe, and the anthropologists' new role as legal consultants called in to evaluate the 'cultural plausibility' of asylum seekers' life stories, has made somehow more urgent for European Africanist scholars (Beneduce).

The introductory essay by Jean-François Bayart takes on from Lonsdale's preoccupation with the transformations of political accountability in African history that is cited above and demonstrate how regimes of responsibility in today's Africa can be better understood by applying a Braudelien perspective that brings to light the imbrication of the long, medium and short *durées* of precolonial, colonial and post-colonial African societies. As Bayart emphasizes, a society is constituted by a multiplicity of space-time dimensions that underlie different, and sometimes contradictory, moral economies, as, for instance is shown by the frictions between the different regimes of responsibility that apply to corporations, religious institutions, civil society, the State, or the family, in a specific historical moment, for example, in post-Structural Adjustment Africa. Then, it is only by producing a detailed comparative analysis of the historicity of conflicting regimes of responsibility across Africa that we can prepare the ground for a more specific, circumscribed investigation. In Bayart's words (in this volume), it is the lack of an understanding of these historical configurations 'that leads people to imprison African societies in evolutionist and culturalist clichés, with a certain condescension as to the alleged irresponsibility and greed of its leaders. The continent suffers from too much responsibility, rather than from a lack of it'.

This thesis constitutes the starting point for the following chapters, which attempt to disentangle the complex historical and geographical landscape that is portrayed in Bayart's contribution through an analysis of a number of specific space-time settings. In the second chapter, Stylianos Moshonas proposes studying the processes of the historical 'co-production' of African regimes of responsibility in relation to DRC post-war politics. In particular, Moshonas's chapter focuses on the practice of invoking 'responsibility' in the relations between the DRC's political elite and the country's external partners. Focusing on the transitional period between 2003 and 2006, which paved the way for the presidency's consolidation of power, the chapter analyses how, since 2001, the issue of 'responsibility'

has been thrown back and forth between the government and donors. Indeed, among the latter, responsibility vis-à-vis the effectiveness of their programmes tends to be eschewed, and the core responsibilities of the state are highlighted. Equally, a similar discourse is at play among governmental actors, who alternate between the defensive invocation of state sovereignty and the offensive denunciation of donor responsibility and their inability to respect their engagements. This complex game has created a situation in which the discourses of responsibility are deployed in a strategic manner, thus leading to cyclical processes in the discharge of one actor's responsibilities over the other, and these are dictated by the changing fortunes of the country's economic and political situations.

If Moshonas's analysis focuses mainly on the discursive dimension of responsibility, Rozenn Nakanabo Diallo's chapter brings us closer to the life trajectories of those individuals who happen to occupy an intermediate position between African governments and international donors, in her case, Mozambican high officials working in foreign-funded programmes in the conservation sector. National parks in Mozambique are managed within the frame of public-private partnerships, and special units funded by donors are created within central ministries to conduct specific policies. The high officials whose experience Nakanabo Diallo analyses find themselves in an ambiguous, in-between space whose existence points to the intricate, overlapping nature of regimes of responsibility in today's Africa. Indeed, for whom do these people actually and ultimately work? While they are either partly or entirely paid by international organisations, Nakanabo Diallo argues that their ultimate loyalty rests with the State, whose responsibility is, paradoxically, renewed and even reinforced by such dynamics.

Armando Cutolo and Giulia Almagioni's contribution moves the focus to the more intimate sphere of the family, and looks at how international organizations' discourses and policies have shaped recent transformations in the conception of responsibility and family care in Sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in Côte d'Ivoire. Since the Cairo Conference of the United Nations' Population Fund in 1994, population policies have witnessed an important shift. Downplaying their former focus on the urgent reduction of fertility, new demographic discourses have started to address the role of individual responsibility in the promotion of the health and the well-being of both children and mothers. A new concept of 'reproductive health' was formulated, connecting procreation to individual choice and the care of the offspring, of the female body and of the self, and hence with new forms of social citizenship. The discourse on reproductive health in Côte d'Ivoire was sponsored by governmental and non-governmental organisations which actively engaged the audience with

images of a new 'modern family', promoting women's empowerment and stimulating new forms of moral subjectivation in the private sphere. This discourse promoted the endorsement of new individual and social responsibilities in the domain of reproduction. However, as Cutolo and Almagioni demonstrate, in the same years, this discourse was implicitly adopted and reversed within the 'ivoirité' ethno-nationalist ideology, in order to target the 'irresponsible', 'traditional', 'backward' reproductive behaviour of those northern 'strangers' whose number, according to the 1998 census, had grown to the point of reaching nearly a third of the country's population. Here, we observe how responsibility discourses and practices that are introduced by international actors and respond to neoliberal principles of governmentality, are reframed and reformulated locally in order to accommodate some specific political factions over others in the context of an intense struggle over the control of the country's economy, territory and population.

Health and family care policies are also the focus of Dinah Rajak's contribution, which analyses these issues through the prism of corporate programmes for HIV prevention in South Africa. Rajak centres her attention on the corporate HIV programmes that are enforced by one of the largest mining companies in the world, Anglo American, and reveals the impact they have on relations between employer and employee. The dispensation of corporate care creates connections between the personal realm of sexual conduct and family life, and the political economy of global corporate capitalism. Within this context, corporate social responsibility becomes a mechanism through which the company consolidates its authority over its workforce, conflating the exigencies of human care with the interests of capital. Through analysis of the historical transformation of Anglo American programmes throughout the early 2000s, Rajak's analysis thus demonstrates 'the violence of corporate responsibility as an instrument of benevolent tyranny (or tyrannical benevolence?) that enables companies to give and withhold benefits as techniques of control used in undermining worker agency'.

If Cutolo and Almagioni's and Rajak's chapters highlight how national institutions and multinational corporations formulate health care and family policies and navigate different regimes of responsibility in order to favour their interests, Marie Schnitzler's contribution moves the focus closer to the dynamics taking place within families themselves in order to analyse how specific welfare programmes are reinterpreted by people with disabilities and their relatives in the Cape Flats area of Cape Town (South Africa). The chapter shows how people with disabilities negotiate their responsibilities within a complex social landscape that is defined by contradictory claims and expectations from family members and

institutions. On the one hand, people with disabilities have the possibility of receiving a state allowance, which raises expectations from family members and generates dependency networks around them. On the other hand, however, they continue to depend on others, especially their loved ones, for much of their everyday life needs. Schnitzler's contribution thus highlights the web of social tensions within which specific regimes of responsibility are played out in the everyday practices of people whose lives are marked by severe economic and physical vulnerability.

Importantly, these practices are also influenced by religious and moral principles, a dimension which forms the object of analysis of the following three contributions. Katrien Pype's chapter focuses on the conflicting regimes of responsibility within which people find themselves in the predominantly Pentecostal city of Kinshasa. Discussing ethnographic examples that come both from her fieldwork research and the content of the Pentecostal television serials that she observed in Kinshasa, Pype highlights the way in which the politics of allocation of responsibility intervene in the subjectivation processes of Born-again Christians. In particular, she analyses the role of confessions, soul healing and deliverance rituals in the construction of responsible, Christian subjects, and she explores the depiction of responsibility in one of the evangelizing television serials that are produced by the company with which she worked during her research. This allows her to demonstrate how crucial the process of the 'moral movement' one makes in order to become a Christian subject is in 'becoming responsible', a movement that implies the creation of a distance from the web of social relations one used to live in before one's conversion, and the taking up of one's own responsibilities in the definition of a specific life itinerary.

Peter Geschiere's contribution moves away from Pentecostal Christianity to bring to the fore the equally complex and constantly-transforming regimes of responsibility that are conveyed by witchcraft image-ries and discourses among the Maka of the south-eastern forest region of Cameroon. Geschiere guides us with a detailed, historical analysis of the transformations of local definitions of the 'witch' among the Maka in order to highlight the ambivalence of the concept of '*djambe*' (or witchcraft) itself. At first sight *djambe* seems to be a concept positioned at the antipodes of traditional, morally grounded conceptions of responsibility, as it implies a betrayal from within the group, which unsettles the safety of the house. However, as Geschiere demonstrates through a number of examples, the *djindjamb* (a person who has developed his/her *djambe*) can also turn out to be a sort of a martyr, who refuses to give up a relative to his/her fellow witches and sacrifices him/herself instead. The ambivalent moral dimension of witchcraft among the Maka and the 'inherent capacities of

these imaginaries to graft themselves unto other discourses, drawing their resilience from their diffuseness and elasticity, can be enlightening for the understanding of present-day confusions about the intertwinement of different regimes of responsibility in a neo-liberal context' (Geschiere, in this volume). Indeed, as Geschiere demonstrates, the discourses and practices of responsibility make the object of the constant processes of renegotiation and reinvention similar to those that characterize the historical evolution of the discourse on witchcraft itself, a discourse that, as Geschiere has shown elsewhere, constantly incorporates elements of its social and cultural surroundings to reinvent and adapt itself in accordance to the changing scenarios of post-colonial 'modernity'.

Witchcraft discourses not only travel across time, they also move across space and along the complex networks of contemporary migration fluxes to Europe and other destinations. Roberto Beneduce's concluding chapter analyses the disruptive epistemological force of witchcraft discourses when they enter the territorial commissions and tribunals in charge of evaluating asylum seekers' demands for refugee status in Italy. Anthropologists and Africanist scholars are regularly consulted for expertise in these cases, an experience that directly puts into question their responsibility and the knowledge about African epistemologies and realities that they produce. What, then, Beneduce asks, is the role of anthropological knowledge when asylum seekers speak of mystical weapons, mysterious deaths and spiritual enemies? When the reason for escaping from their country is the fear of witchcraft or 'voodoo' rituals? In such cases, the anthropologist faces a twofold question. On the one hand, s/he is asked to 'translate' and to give sense to 'strange' experiences, this time not in his/her field notes, but in front of judges and lawyers, who are loyal to a specific bureaucratic rationality. On the other hand, s/he is faced with the task of distinguishing between true and false narratives in a context in which the truth about migration has become almost unspeakable because of an institutional framework that confers the right to mobility only to those who are able to demonstrate their condition of victimhood (and are thus entitled to the refugee status). In this context, trickeries and lies are adopted as a tactic of survival, and the anthropological knowledge is pushed into the murky field of politics. In this epistemological and ethical conundrum, specific dynamics of 'ethnographic complicity' between the anthropologist and the asylum seekers can emerge, which Beneduce makes an attempt to analyse in relation to wider debates about the issue of responsibility in anthropological theory and practice.

By focusing on the responsibility of the anthropologist, Beneduce's chapter acts as a conclusion to the volume, producing a meta-commentary

on the other chapters included in the collection, and offering a number of final thoughts about the role of anthropology in contemporary social and political contexts. In particular, Beneduce identifies those he considers as fundamental priorities for anthropologists to 'make good use of their knowledge' in a contemporary world 'vitiated by innumerable contradictions'. His focus of attention are the practices and discourses connected to immigrants and asylum-seekers, but his analysis offers the elements to outline the contours of a critical self-reflexive anthropology; one that takes the issue of responsibility seriously and makes it a central concern of the discipline.

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Notes

1. The principal reference to the notion of responsibility in the reviews of the anthropological literature on ethics and morality (Zigon 2008; Fassin 2012; Massé 2015) is the distinction between the outcome-oriented ‘ethics of responsibility’ and the value-oriented ‘ethics of conviction’ found in Max Weber’s lecture on Politics as vocation. Probably made for the sake of clarity and simplicity, this ideal–typical distinction is of limited interest for the kind of approach to the study of responsibility that is developed in this book. Although to varying degrees, responsibility always involves a concern for both moral considerations values and a concern for actions’ outcomes.
2. Take the example of the corporate social responsibility agenda in the extractive industry. Depending on the circumstances and the actors, responsibility is sometimes enacted as a moral commitment (in the context of meetings with state representatives or focus groups with local communities), sometimes as a formal mandate involving procedures and controls (during impact studies, annual reports or external audits), and sometimes as a dialectic of prosecution and defence, in relation to the damage caused by extractive companies in the past (in advocacy groups’ reports, during protest marches, in court cases).
3. This interpretation has been given nuance by Francis Chateauraynaud (1991), who shows that the development of the welfare state did not lead to the pure and simple evacuation of the problems of fault and individual responsibility in debates about workplace injuries. Nikolas Rose and Filippa Lentzos (2017: 31–32) also note that the welfare state did not imply the withdrawal of all responsibilities from individuals. Even in the most developed welfare states, various measures were taken to push them to take charge of their own future.
4. This analysis is currently being developed in the WORKINMINING research project (www.workinmining.ulg.ac.be).

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