26 *Tame, erode, rupture, or exit: Strategies for transformative change*

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Overview

Erik Olin Wright described four kinds of transformation: anarchic change, which occurs when people choose to *exit* an existing system; *ruptural* or revolutionary change through protest or seizing power; interstitial change, which happens in the soft alternatives to existing policy and has the effect of *eroding* societies' harms for some; and symbiotic or negotiated change, which depends on *taming* existing systems, usually through legislative change. Transformative leadership aligns with the latter – bringing about change in social policies to alleviate the suffering of many rather than just a few. This chapter reflects on Wright's and others' theories and compares these with the strategies for change described in this book, and more broadly on the African continent. Drawing inspiration from both Desmond Tutu and Julius Nyerere, it challenges change-makers to focus on negotiated, policy-driven efforts to ensure that people's suffering is alleviated and that conditions encourage thriving.

Introduction

This book began by making a case for transformative change that needs to do far more than merely help people beat the odds. Instead, it argued, real transformative change needs to deconstruct and reconstruct social and structural systems that ultimately help people to change the odds of thriving in life. This 'changing the odds' rather than 'beating the odds' kind of leadership needs to allow *most* people the opportunity to succeed and to thrive. This means that transformative change is at its heart political – it has to engage with laws, policies, people, and practices that cause suffering, and enact new ways of being and doing that allow the opposite: that is, thriving instead of suffering. This is not party politics, but politics in the sense of dealing with *polis* – a body of people in society. Transformative leadership needs, therefore, to be about courage, vision, and expertise. It requires *courage* to take on entrenched injustices, *vision* to know what can be done, and *expertise* to bring about deep systemic change. Leaders need to be able to see clearly what must be in place to achieve this goal of human thriving, must have the courage to address that which prevents it, and must have the skills, ability, and expertise to marshal these skills to effect change.

Chapter 1 of this book presented a working framework towards transformative leadership, one that included action motivated by an ethical and moral purpose to bring about just solutions and social changes and one that placed people at the centre of its way of leading, so that African thinkers, in the words of Stephen Bantu Biko (1987, p. 47), can offer a final gift to the world from the African continent: 'giving the world a more human face'. This people-centred framework of collaboration, consultation, and empowerment in leadership encourages both individual and collective agency. Such an understanding of transformative leadership needs to act at the levels of institution and organisation, social system, and systemic structure. Of course, it is possible to lead among friends, peers, family, and in local communities, but it is only when leaders bring about change at organisational, institutional, system, and structural levels that widespread, deep change becomes possible.

The change needed on the African continent

In Chapter 19, De Kock and Nyamnjoh address the notion of 'a crisis narrative' that seems to dominate accounts of leadership on the African continent. To be sure, there is much wrong on the continent, from corrupt and self-serving leadership to multiple examples of sexism, patriarchy, homophobia, ethnic favouritism in politics, and the impoverishing tale of aid and charity, among many others. Much has been written about these issues. This book has engaged with these issues as contextual, as part of the history of the continent, and, while not glossing over them, has offered something different – ideas and strategies for new ways of acting based on a moral understanding of transformative leadership.

The chapters in this book are more than correctives; they represent an attempt by African scholars to address the failures of leadership without resorting to perpetual crisis narratives or Afro-pessimism. Each chapter also represents an approach to leadership that seeks to go beyond superficial Band-Aids to consider how the many institutions of our public and private lives need to change. Each chapter offers analysis and questions for further reflection so that thinking around which institutions and systems must change is deepened and further contextualised. How should the structures of courts, the gendered location of power, the overwhelming presence of transnational companies in our economies, and the policing of private relationships be restructured? All these domains, and many others, require transformative action. There is much to be done, and transformative leaders need to take action in every institutional, organisational, and structural aspect of our common polity. This book aims to inspire further analysis that addresses these issues in greater detail, and to offer strategies for change in multiple areas. Change, however, is complicated, and theories of change have a long and rich history.

A brief history of change and its theories

There are several theories of change that have been proposed across the disciplines of psychology, sociology, and political science. Charles Darwin's (1871) evolutionary theory shows that change happens gradually over time through a process of natural selection, with the organism or, in this case, ideas that are best suited to their current environment thriving. Kurt Lewin (1947) describes how change happens only when it is actively managed and when opportunities to begin and embed change are taken. Social learning theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977) postulates that change happens as actions are observed and emulated over time, and when actions become normalised and 'everyday'.

Most change theorists agree on one foundational principle – change is complex, seldom linear, and takes time to become embedded in social practices and systems. The popular aphorism 'Change happens gradually and then all at once', arising from Ernest Hemingway's book *The Sun Also Rises* (and referring to how bankruptcy occurs), is often quoted to show how change is chaotic and unpredictable (Gleick, 2008). Kauffman (1996) has popularised the notion of complexity in change in what he calls 'complex adaptive systems theory' – change involves multiple interactions *between* agents in a system that may lead to changes *within* the system as a whole.

Around 30 years ago, the term 'theories of change' began to be used in the social sciences (Bickman, 1987; Connell, Kubisch, Schorr, & Weiss, 1995). In simple terms, theories of change are conceptual representations and theoretical assumptions that explain how and why activities of an initiative (such as projects, programmes, organisations) generate particular changes (Mason & Barnes, 2007). Popularised by those attempting to evaluate research, community, and policy initiatives aiming to bring about change, theories of change have enabled activists, researchers, and policy-makers to move beyond *hoping* for change to *acting* to bring about change.

Recent contributions to 'how change happens'

Four books, all entitled *How Change Happens* (Crutchfield, 2018; Green, 2016; Krznaric, 2007; Sunstein, 2019) address the debate from various vantage points: Sunstein (2019) from the point of view of behavioural economics, predominantly in health; Crutchfield (2018) from the perspective of social activism and social movements in development contexts; Green (2016) by foregrounding the role of power as a central player in change; and Krznaric (2007) by focusing on the process of change by asking a series of processual questions.

Cass Sunstein (2019) is probably best known for his work on 'nudge theory' (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008): the idea that through small actions people can be

moved or 'nudged' towards 'doing the right thing' – that is, adopting behaviour that is healthy and in their best interest. Examples of nudge theory in practice include removing unhealthy foods in grocery checkout queues and adding nutritional values and warning labels on food and tobacco products. Sunstein (2019) also shows how these various nudges can lead to tipping points in behaviour – when shifts in attitudes occur that tip the scale in favour of new behaviour or actions. Examples of these shifts include a global decrease in smoking that was thought impossible a generation ago, the growing uptake of vegetarianism due to growing awareness of environmental degradation and climate change, and decreased use of plastics globally. Sunstein (2019) shows how change often happens in small, incremental steps until a tipping point is reached. These incremental steps can occur through legal action, social movements, and grassroots activism, and the most effective change often comes from a combination of these different strategies. He also examines the role of decision-makers and institutions in bringing about change and argues that change is often driven by individuals or small groups who are able to mobilise others to support their cause. One criticism of nudge theory is that it aims at bringing about change without the consent of the actors involved.

Development expert Duncan Green (2016) addresses the issues of power and interconnected systems in his take on how change happens. He argues that since systems are interconnected, multiple issues need to be addressed simultaneously for meaningful change to occur. He describes various development contexts in which social activism fails because it focuses on a single issue rather than on the ecosystem of the struggle. He draws attention to how social change happens frequently when individuals mobilise others to support their cause. He describes various examples of successful social movements across various parts of the world and highlights the importance of decision-makers in bringing about change – both those who are social activists and those with whom activists engage in institutions where change is required. Green (2016) also addresses the difficulties associated with maintaining change and overcoming resistance from powerful actors once change has begun, as well as the need to build coalitions to ensure that change 'sticks'. He offers some ways to engage those who benefit from the status quo (doing nothing) so that change efforts have a better chance of success.

Leslie Crutchfield (2018) also considers the role of social movements in bringing about change, but focuses on the importance of 'changing hearts' rather than using only rational argument to bring about change, including with policy-makers. She addresses some of the serendipitous drivers of change, such as timing, luck, and cultural shifts, that affect the likelihood of social movements succeeding. She contends that social movements that create and leverage power *with* others rather than exerting power *over* others are more likely to succeed. Like Green (2016), she lauds the role of coalitions and alliances with a wide

range of stakeholders to achieve change. Crutchfield (2018) further emphasises the importance of strategic planning and the use of evidence-based tactics, such as data-driven decision-making and experimentation, to achieve change. Finally, she examines the role of technology and social media in social movements, arguing that they can be powerful tools for organising and mobilising people, and diffusing change through communication.

With a focus on the process of change, Roman Krznaric (2007) practically invites those who would be change-makers to ask a series of questions when embarking upon action to bring about change:

- What was the situation before the change, and what is the desired outcome?
- Who needs to be involved in the change if it is to provide alternatives that endure? (individuals, social groups, institutions of state, institutions of society, global governance institutions)
- What strategies should be used to bring about the change? (changing individual behaviour, reshaping understanding, grassroots participation, approaching people of influence, creating alliances, forming a movement, mobilising, communicating)
- How might the current context affect the desired change? (power, freedom, inequality)
- What is the process or pathway of change?

These four books draw on real-world experiences in the fields of health, development, and business to show how change can be effected. The missing element in these practice-oriented books, and the many theories that Darwin, Bandura, Lewin, Kauffman, and others propose, is a more overarching mechanism of change. Are there multiple ways in which change happens? What are the key drivers in each? What are the outcomes for each strategy? Here, the late Berkeley sociologist Erik Olin Wright offers a framework that answers these questions and bridges the divide between practice and theory to show how different strategies can drive change producing various outcomes – not all transformative in nature.

Engaging the work of Erik Olin Wright to decide on strategies for change

Wright (2010) differentiated between the aims of *critical* social science and *emancipatory* social science. Critical social science pinpoints and diagnoses how human suffering has come about due to existing institutions and structures, he argues, whereas emancipatory social science offers ways in which these existing institutions and social structures can be transformed to alleviate human suffering. This latter aim, that of emancipatory social science, maps most easily onto the notion of transformative leadership, the notion with which this book has engaged extensively. For Wright, transformation is emancipatory – it brings about freedom.

Transformative leadership too is emancipatory in nature. It seeks to offer people freedom and a respite from suffering, and invites them into a life where flourishing is possible.

Over the course of his career, Wright has written extensively on class and inequality (1997, 2005) and how change happens in a capitalist society (2010, 2013, 2019). His theory of change emphasises the importance of developing and strengthening democratic alternatives to existing structures. He argues that instead of focusing solely on overthrowing the capitalist system, social movements should work to build alternative institutions, such as worker cooperatives and community-controlled organisations, that can gradually replace capitalist ones.

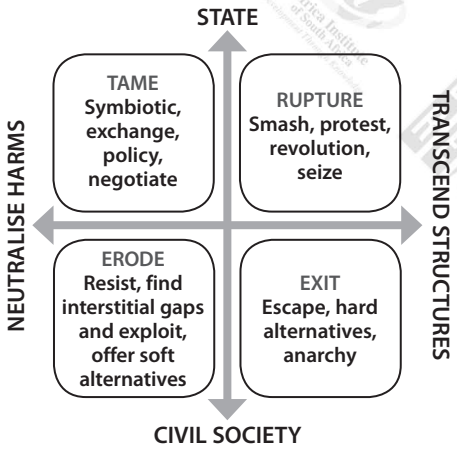
His work analysed multiple institutions in Northern and Southern contexts, asking the questions many continue to ask: How is this other world that we want possible? What are we aiming for and how are we going to get there? Central to Wright's thinking is the need for a vision, or a utopia (Wright, 2010, 2013) to guide change. For Wright, this utopia is a realisable rather than impossible dream; something towards which change efforts can aspire.

Wright (2010) identifies four key strategies to bring about change and build these alternative institutions to transform society (Figure 26.1). According to Wright, the outcome of change must be to address harm. This can be done along a continuum of neutralising the harms of existing structures and institutions that cause suffering, to, at its best or most utopian, transcend and replace these institutions and structures. This is the horizontal axis indicated in Figure 26.1.

Wright also speaks of the actors involved in change which range from civil society, with limiting outcomes, through to involving the state and its primary actors – the vertical axis in Figure 26.1. For Wright, change is always collective, never individual, because it is within collective systems that human suffering and flourishing occur.

Within these broad parameters – of aims and actors – Wright describes four strategies for change: taming, rupturing or smashing, eroding and resisting, and exiting or escaping the system. Taming and rupturing the system relies on engagement with the state, while resisting and exiting the system rely on civil society action. Taming and resisting tend to have the effect of neutralising the harms of systems and structures, whereas rupturing and exiting the system have the potential to remake the systems and structures that cause suffering in society. Each will be considered in turn, not to place them in opposition to each other, but to ask how each may be used productively to bring about social and systemic change on our continent, in our communities, and in our specific contexts.

Figure 26.1 *Four strategies for how change can happen*



Source: Author, based on Wright, 2010

Taming the system – negotiated, symbiotic change

According to Wright, taming the system is a change strategy through symbiotic relationships between people and the state working towards policy change in a negotiated manner. Ultimately, this kind of change aims to create regulatory frameworks that limit the power and excesses of institutions that have the potential to result in suffering. Examples of these symbiotic relationships of change include labour laws, environmental regulations, and consumer protection laws. This change is often also called symbiotic change, because not everyone gets what they want, but there is agreement about actions that neutralise harms for those who are suffering and ensure some incentives for those who depend on the status quo (or current legislation). Competing agendas are thus accommodated in what could be called exchange-based transformation. Market regulations, media regulations, the provision of some health and education services (some free and some paid for), and some social support all form part of taming the system. Here, change for the powerless depends on some reward for the powerful. In the case of social grants, for example, this occurs with some form of guarantee to limits in taxation for the wealthy. Social democracies around the world frequently operate on this system of compromise.

Eroding and resisting the system – interstitial change

Resistance to the system, according to Wright, can result in erosion of these systems and the successful creation of alternatives:

> Interstitial strategies have the capacity to create alternative institutions that weaken [the power of existing institutions]…existing constraints can be softened to the point that a more accelerated process of

> interstitial transformation can take place…There will thus be a kind of cycle of extension of social empowerment and stagnation as successive limits are encountered and eroded…In effect, the system-hybridization process generated by interstitial strategies would have reached a tipping point in which the logic of the system as a whole had changed in ways that open up the possibilities for continued social empowerment. (Wright, 2010, p. 235)

In this way, interstitial change can transform the systems that cause human suffering and in best-case outcomes results in the creation of alternative institutions. Examples of these new institutions include worker cooperatives, community-controlled organisations, and public banks. Often driven by NGOs and social movements, further examples of eroding the system include how regimes of social grants have been transformed into unconditional basic income grants in countries such as Brazil, and in more limited ways in India, Iran, Finland, and Namibia.

Wright describes these kinds of change as initially happening in the interstices – the spaces between our cells filled with fluid that make it possible for us to grow, for dead skin to be replaced with healthy cells, and for healing to occur when damage takes place. His metaphor is apt, since working at resisting the system by eroding it is, for Wright, neither violent nor disruptive. Instead, it occurs when civil society takes opportunities to propose alternatives and models them by finding gaps in the system, achieving small successes that can then be used to transform the current systems and institutions through policy and legislative change. Wright contrasts these 'soft' alternatives with 'hard' alternatives that aim to produce change by smashing or rupturing existing systems.

Rupturing or smashing the system – disruptive or revolutionary change

Rupturing the system takes the form of sudden, often violent change, and refers to the many examples of protest and political pressure used to bring about regime change. According to Wright (2010, p. 235), '[the] revolutionary anarchist strategic scenario argues that eventually hard limits are encountered that cannot themselves be transformed from within the system'. To rupture the system is to smash or tear down what was and remove the structures that keep it in place. Sadly, the outcome of rupture is seldom the immediate reduction of suffering, since violent rupture takes time to produce stable change. Examples of violent rupture include the communist revolution, multiple socialist revolutions, frequent overthrowing of governments by military dictatorships, and wars of decolonisation.

Sometimes revolution is non-violent and takes the form of a quantum leap or shift in ideology, such as has been experienced in the application of technology

and in environmentally friendly technologies. The blockchain revolution and the green revolution are examples of non-violent rupture. On the African continent, the revolution in mobile money technology has helped those previously held hostage by exchange control rules, exorbitant charges incurred in moving money, and the inability to send and receive remittances globally. This rupture also leapfrogged several stages the rest of the world had to traverse due to slow incremental changes in technology – from moving from the gold standard in finance, to cheques, to credit cards, to moving money through encrypted apps and blockchains. Similarly, during the recent Covid-19 pandemic, the world experienced a revolution in online, virtual communication. The world went from communicating virtually sometimes, to only communicating virtually. Of course, this sudden transition exposes the huge inequalities across the Global South and the African continent, not just in technology, but in access to data and the electricity needed to power technology devices. Ultimately, the aim of smashing the system is to quickly transcend the harms of the systems and structures of society. The change, however, is seldom felt immediately nor universally, because new forms of governance (or technology) take time to implement and frequently fail to reform existing systems.

Exiting the system – escape or anarchic change

Wright's (2010) final strategy refers to those who exit or escape the system. This involves creating spaces within society that operate on a different basis, such as alternative economic models or intentional separatist communities. For some who exit the system, it is a quiet departure, while for others it is accompanied by rupturing the system. Examples of those who exit the system are religious, cultural, and ideological collectives such as the Amish of Pennsylvania, the hippies of the 1960s, nomadic farmers, or high-earning individuals who move to tax havens. Exiting the system is frequently accompanied by establishing new conventions for the group or espousing anarchy. It could also be argued that exiting the system does not bring about change or reduce human suffering, except for a select few. This form of change invites the question of whether change that only affects a select few, rather than maximising flourishing for the majority, is real transformative change. While Wright refers to 'exit' in his *Envisioning Real Utopias* (2010), it is clear that he does not view it as a legitimate strategy for change, despite the fact that some choose it.

Evaluating these strategies for change in multiple contexts

In the opening chapter (Swartz, this volume) the distinction was made between transactional, transformational, and transformative leadership. It was argued that transformative leadership takes as its unit of influence wider social, political, and material issues. Key in each of the chapters in this book has been the argument

that transformative change, drawing on the influence of Paulo Freire (1970) and Carolyn Shields (2010), is change that must always and ultimately be concerned with changing the systems that result in human suffering so that human beings may flourish. Drawing on Archbishop Desmond Tutu's injunction that 'there comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river and find out why they are falling in' (cited in Ledwith, 2015, p. 134), each chapter has tried to show how systemic change, while difficult, is possible.

Bringing together Wright's (2010) framework and the quest for systemic change, the next section of this chapter attempts to show how transformative change is linked to each of Wright's strategies for change (see especially his 2019 book for a fuller explanation of strategies for change) as well as how each modality is interlinked with others. For example, revolutionary change can bring about systemic change, but it is also linked to anarchic exit. Erosive legislated change, while bringing about symbiotic and systemic change, can also lead to revolution. In fact, multiple permutations are possible. The following analysis uses three cases: the documentary *The Spirit of Kanju*, written about in Chapter 4 (Mahali & Paramoer, this volume), this book, and the current state of leadership on the African continent. The analysis explores what avenues for change are pursued and asks which strategies are more inclined to bring about systemic change.

The Spirit of Kanju *documentary*

The documentary *The Spirit of Kanju: Leaders Transforming Africa* (Mahali, Swartz, Cook, Paramoer, & Alumni Behind the Lens Team, 2022) features research participants from the Imprint of Education research study (Swartz, Mahali, Juan, & The Imprint of Education Research Team, 2022). Nineteen young study participant filmmakers were tasked with showcasing leadership on the African continent, both by telling their own stories and by interviewing those they knew and admired and who portrayed some aspect of transformative leadership. The elders, artists, religious leaders, educators, community leaders, business leaders, politicians, and activists they chose to interview all had compelling stories to tell. Looking at each leader's actions and strategies using Wright's framework presents a clear pattern.

Of the 15 leaders interviewed in the documentary, 6 can be classified as attempting to erode or resist the system. Ann Tasamba is a university lecturer in environmental energy in Uganda who spends her time outside the university engaged in helping community members acquire land, sustain biodiversity, and learn the financial skills necessary to make a success of their projects. Ann, in the words of the young filmmaker who interviewed her, offers a 'bridge that will cover the knowledge divide' in her work. This is clearly an example of eroding the current system while not yet offering alternatives to the policy that makes land acquisition difficult or impossible in the first place. Reverend Canon Gideon

Byamugisha, a protestant minister and the first religious leader in Africa to publicly declare his HIV status, has set up an NGO that offers support for people living with HIV and AIDS and has been instrumental in changing attitudes towards the illness from both church and community perspectives. Others, through the NGOs they have founded, tell positive stories about the African continent in an effort to erode negative stereotypes (David Boanuh, Beautiful Stories, Ghana), use dance and play to teach life skills to youth in Nairobi slums (Francula Odhiambo, Cheza Cheza, Kenya), have set up a model farm to make agriculture attractive to youth (Joseph Male, Avale Group, Uganda), and have founded a school specifically aimed at empowering girls (Victoria Gichuhi, Daraja Academy, Kenya). These are all examples of creating soft alternatives to diminish human suffering and advance flourishing. It is clear, however, that this erosion does not bring about systemic change, but more often individual and sometimes community change.

Four leaders in the documentary could be said to be working towards taming the system, bringing about policy shifts, and promoting negotiated change. Boniface Mwangi from Kenya has been advocating for clean politics and has spoken out for justice and fighting corruption. Cynthia Ablordey, a 17-year-old high school prefect in Ghana at the time the film was made, has been advocating for and achieving changes in her school around physical sanitation facilities and menstrual hygiene supplies for young women. Prince Adu-Appiah, the CEO of a non-profit organisation in Ghana, advocates for 'connecting to our history as an African people' in order to build self-esteem and change people's lives. Sabella Kedir is a fashion designer and model in Ethiopia who lives with severe physical disability, which she does not allow to get in the way of her ambition. She has advocated for inclusion of people with disabilities across multiple industries. Their advocacy has resulted in some policy change in their respective countries.

Four other leaders in *Kanju* can be said to be disrupting the system. Their revolutions are all environmental or technological in nature: Freda Yawson in Ghana is championing young women's involvement in robotics; Puleng Tsie from South Africa is championing girls' involvement in science and technology (STEM) education; Tawana Kupe, the former vice chancellor of the University of Pretoria in South Africa, is promoting the digital revolution for students; and Malassen Hamida leads the Kibera Green Movement in Kenya, carrying out projects and advocacy on solid waste management, and public education on environmental conservation. While these disruptions remain modest, they have smashed the glass ceiling for young women often excluded from STEM education and helped to enable access to both the green and tech revolutions for those living in slums. These examples could be said to be bringing about systemic change, and are thus transformative by definition – even though they are not national initiatives.

In *Kanju*, there is only one example of change that represents an exit from the system. Zumra Nuru is the leader of the Awarambe community in Ethiopia that focuses on self-sustainability through a number of enterprises, and runs a school and farm. His mantra is one of love, humanity, and self-sufficiency, values that Nuru believes sets the community apart from those from whom they have exited. While exit benefits those within its embrace, it has little impact on the suffering or flourishing of those outside its community.

It is more difficult to place Emmanuel Niringiyimana's actions. He is a 25-year-old unemployed man who dug a 7 km road single-handedly to connect two villages in rural Rwanda, so that people from his village could get quicker access to medical care. It would seem that he is both working to erode the system and tame it. His work has come to the attention of local political leaders and may result in government getting involved to build on his initiative. Now, while his work is laudable, it is alleviating suffering for some, but not changing the system of roads or access to health care.

What is clear in all 15 examples of leaders making change happen is that when 'state-driven social welfare, and economic opportunities have failed to materialise, ordinary people – everyday leaders – take ownership of their fate' (Mahali & Paramoer, Chapter 4, this volume, p. 60). Furthermore, these young filmmakers were keen to show that 'African leaders work to *solve* their own problems, that they *create* their own things, and that they *serve* others' (Mahali & Paramoer, Chapter 4, this volume, p. 64). While Niringiyimana's digging of a 7 km road, and then planning to build a lake and ensure electricity for an entire village, does not engage the key question that Tutu admonishes people to ask – why people are without roads, healthcare, and water in this case – his actions have brought about change for many in his community. A key question is whether Niringiyimana's leadership is transformative. The answer is that it has the potential to become transformative if his advocacy with local political leaders succeeds.

So, while many examples of leadership in *Kanju* could be labelled as only reducing suffering for individuals and communities, rather than achieving the large systems change characterised by transformative leadership aimed at unearthing, problematising, and dismantling those structures of power and privilege that act against equity, justice, and freedom (Swartz, Chapter 1, this volume), they remain useful. As Mahali and Paramoer (Chapter 4, this volume, p. 71) conclude, '… leadership is complex. It is everyday and exceptional, human and extraordinary, innovative and responsive, and requires working together, but *also starting alone*' (emphasis added). Furthermore, returning to Wright's (2010) classification of change strategies, it is taming and rupturing actions that tend to have the most transformative potential. Eroding actions have a place since they alleviate suffering, but they are not transformative by definition.

In this book

In many of the chapters in this book, authors integrate past practices and consider the cultural heritages that animate action as well as the political heroes, villains, and historical thinkers that have encouraged current leadership practices and warned against others. Through a series of nuanced case studies, the authors set out how contemporary leaders on the African continent navigate complexity, chaos, struggle, temptation, controversy, and roadblocks, in a context that is both emerging from colonial exploitation and domination, and suffering from a myriad of postcolonial ills and aspirations. Many shine a spotlight on the anticipated challenges facing leadership in the future. These include the rapid social, technological, and cultural shifts, and struggles around gender, mobility, and commercial practices already sweeping the continent. Multiple chapters offer markers for the way ahead, based primarily on the notion of ubuntu, for a new generation who must lead and find their own path to the future. How does Wright's framework for change map onto these chapters?

Several chapters show how working at the interstices can bring about change in, for example, scholarship and leadership programmes (see Klugman, Chapter 15; Mwamelo, Chapter 16; Adigun, Chapter 17; Chikane & Atouguia, Chapter 18); in a forward-looking ethics of leadership (Odora Hoppers & Soudien, Chapter 25); in critiquing traditional forms of leadership (Mnqwazi, Chapter 7); in the work of Maggie Barankitse who worked tirelessly in Burundi through an NGO she created to resist current systems (Birantamije, Chapter 6); and in an autoethnographic account of how one student resisted patriarchy in an international educational institution (Mwale, Chapter 10). These chapters can be said to be describing eroding and resisting strategies for change, and while having the potential for transformative change, are not yet achieving the systemic change at which transformative action aims.

Five chapters address policy change in some form. Three deal with education: Oanda (Chapter 11) calls for policy reform around higher education access, and resourcing to promote greater diversity and inclusion; Pusumane and Auerbach Jahajeeah (Chapter 14) offer strategies to renegotiate relationships between students and faculty members in light of the decolonial turn; and Juan and Hannan (Chapter 12) reflect on the role of fee-paying versus no-fee schools in driving school reform.

One chapter deals with the role that could be played by the African ethic of ubuntu in bringing about legislative change (Chivasa, Chapter 8), and another critiques what Ellen Johnson Sirleaf both was able to do and failed to do to bring about change in Liberia during her presidency (Badaru & Adu, Chapter 20).

Six chapters address the strategy of rupture, whether through revolution or protests. While the African continent has a history of violent revolution, both

as a result of struggles against colonial domination and in struggles for power in postcolonial times, few chapters referred to these political revolutions (see for example, Ampomah, Chapter 21, on Jerry John Rawlings from Liberia). This topic is definitely an important one and ought to receive further attention. However, other chapters show how student leaders have attempted to bring about change through protest (Oyori Ogechi, Chapter 13) and, through radical ideas, to address inclusion for people with disabilities (Muzite, Chapter 22). By far the most significant contributions in this book concerning disruptive change address those in technology. Chetty (Chapter 5) shows how blockchain can be used to disrupt existing systems of banking and bureaucracy to secure financial inclusion for many, while both Mokoena (Chapter 23) and Biljohn (Chapter 24) address the disruptive role of ubuntu in dealing with technological innovations.

Finally, four chapters address multiple strategies of change, as Wright describes them. Mahali and Paramoer (Chapter 4) describe the outcome of students' understanding of leadership in the documentary *Kanju* – as previously described. De Kock and Nyamnjoh (Chapter 19) describe multiple manifestations of political leadership on the African continent – the good, the bad and the ugly – and warns against 'crisis narratives' and single stories. Makgamatha (Chapter 3), shows how precolonial leadership cannot be uniformly valorised or criticised, but can be shown to resist, tame, and rupture the status quo. Moletsane (Chapter 9) shows the many strategies women have used in bringing about change, which can also, according to Wright's framework, be described as encompassing all four strategies of taming, eroding, rupturing, and exiting.

None of the chapters in this book addresses the issue of exit or escaping human suffering. Such a strategy, as described above, has limited potential for transformative change, since it operates in a closed community rather than aiming for systemic change.

On the African continent

In 1989 Julius Nyerere, then president of Tanzania, produced a report called *The Challenge to the South* (1990), the result of a lengthy consultation with leaders of Global South countries (most of which were formerly colonised countries). The report outlines a number of features that needed to be in place for countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to take their place as equals in the world. His charter made it clear that while Southern countries frequently lag behind in terms of development, the South needs to take responsibility for its own development, since it is the South that suffers in the absence of change. To do so, he argued, Southern countries needed to learn from each other, strengthen their capacities for change, promote their own well-being, and find their own solutions to their problems. Nyerere was adamant that Southern countries should not wait to be

given opportunities to bring about change: they needed to create these change opportunities for themselves. In order to create these changes, it is critical that people who consider themselves to be transformative leaders step up, speak out, are not spoken for, and engage in considered ways in order to bring about the change they envisage. To do so requires confidence, good communication, and a large amount of hard work.

Krznaric's (2007) questions, described previously, invite reflection on past campaigns for change and also offer guidance for future action on the African continent and beyond. They expand Wright's ideas of four kinds of strategies for change (his question #3 especially: 'What strategies should be used to bring about change?') and bookend them with questions about what the expected outcome is and who needs to be included in these strategies, how context will affect the envisaged change, and what steps are needed to bring about the desired change. Krznaric also echoes Nyerere's call for solidarity across contexts and taking responsibility for change.

There is much to learn about processes of change. Change seldom proceeds in a straight line; instead, it is frequently convoluted and deeply dependent on circumstances. Change depends on contested values and goals, unforeseen contingencies, and emergent system interactions. Social activism (Crutchfield, 2018), behavioural 'nudges' (Sunstein, 2019), and being able to interpret and anticipate the ebbs and flows of power (Green, 2016) are all critical components of transformative change. Krznaric (2007) alerts us to the importance of communication in processes of intentional change: how to diffuse change (see also Rogers, 2010), ensure its longevity, and grow the circle of those involved in it. Here the communication skills required of transformative leaders, at multiple levels, cannot be overstated. Communication done with humility, creativity, compassion, and excellence is critical.

Conclusion

Transformative leadership is not content to change the lives of individuals without also unearthing, problematising, and dismantling those structures of power and privilege that act against equity and freedom and that necessitate the need for change or help in the first place. To 'stop just pulling people out of the river and find out why they are falling in', as Desmond Tutu put it (cited in Ledwith, 2015, p. 134), is to pursue transformative leadership – leadership concerned with systemic rather than local or individual change, leadership directed at just rather than self-serving outcomes, and leadership that intentionally seeks to address institutional and systemic challenges. In Wright's terminology, while exiting and eroding bring about change for some, it is through taming and rupturing current systems that deep change is experienced.

This chapter (and this book) has offered multiple examples of how change happens and can happen across multiple fields. It has traced pathways across history and various academic disciplines, and noted with some enthusiasm the four ways in which Erik Olin Wright describes how change can be achieved. In doing so it becomes clear that there are multiple pathways to change, that change is complex, and that change includes various kinds of actors – from individuals, to organisations, institutions, and systems. Overall, Wright offers a conceptual framework through which to both conceive strategies for change and analyse change that has occurred in the past. While Wright does not prescribe a particular form of action, he is clear that emancipatory social scientists ought to employ strategies for change that ultimately alleviate human suffering on the one hand and transform the institutions and systems that cause this suffering on the other.

The examples cited in this book and *The Spirit of Kanju* documentary show very clearly how strategies for action frequently accumulate around eroding the system – for some, bringing about change in interstitial spaces. While eroding the system is laudable, these efforts at change do not go far enough to neutralise the harms of systemic oppression. The task of taming or rupturing the system is far more easily spoken about than achieved. In addition, both taming and rupturing require alternative models to inform and inspire the policy change and disruption necessary to change people's lives. Clearly, understanding the many ways in which change happens is important. Ultimately, however, it is the courageous and skilled action of transformative leaders that is needed to negotiate change in systems of suffering and oppression or, where necessary, to rupture existing practices. Ultimately, even rupture requires the next step of implementing negotiated change.

#ChangeHappensTameErodeRuptureExit

Transformative leaders bring about change through modelling alternatives and negotiating new ways of doing things through policy change, as well as by rupturing the existing status quo.

Questions for discussion

1. What are the linkages between erode, tame, rupture, and exit as forms of change?
2. Think about a project you in which you are currently involved. How would you describe it? Is it revolutionary and disruptive, eroding and symbiotic, or does it offer soft or hard alternatives?
3. Think of a current problem you can see in your country or community. What approach might best bring about the change that is needed?

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