The Welfare State Within the Context of Liberal Globalisation in Africa: Is the Concept Still Relevant in Social Policy Alternatives for Africa?

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Abstract

Africans are struggling to reclaim their rights to wealth, liberty, and democracy as mechanisms of articulating social progress. Is the concept of the welfare state still relevant within the existing dominant paradigms of liberal globalisation? In this study, using a historical-structuralist framework, I examine the nature of the arguments about the welfare state. I categorize three types of regimes, namely, social welfare state, liberal welfare state, and transitional democracy and I compare their performances in selected sectors. My main objective is to search for correlative explanations between the ideological foundation of each regime and its social program policy. Based on the data used, it was demonstrated that global liberal democratisation has not yet created any conditions for greater social development and equity in Africa. In all sectors, transitional democracies have performed poorly as compared to other democracies. Liberal democracies have performed lower than social democracies. And social democracies have been systematically ranked higher in the selected social indices. It was concluded that the concept of welfare is still relevant, and thus should provide the epistemological and social basis for rethinking African democracies.

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Résumé

Les Africains se battent pour la reconnaissance de leurs droits à la richesse, à la liberté et à la démocratie comme mécanismes d'articulation du progrès social. Le concept d'état-providence est-il encore pertinent dans le cadre des actuels paradigmes dominants de mondialisation libérale ? Dans cette étude, en utilisant un cadre historico-structuraliste, j'examine la nature des arguments portant sur l'état-providence. Je dresse des catégories de ces trois types de régimes, notamment l'état-providence social, l'état-providence libéral et la démocratie de transition, et je compare leurs performances dans des secteurs choisis. Mon principal objectif est de chercher des explications corrélatives entre la base idéologique de chaque régime et l'orientation de son programme social. Sur la base des données utilisées, il a été démontré que la démocratisation libérale mondiale n'a pas encore créé en Afrique les conditions requises pour un plus grand développement social et d'avantage d'équité. Dans tous les secteurs, les démocraties de transition n'ont donné que des résultats médiocres comparés aux autres démocraties. La performance des démocraties libérales est moindre que celle des démocraties sociales. Et les démocraties sociales se sont systématiquement montées dans les indices sociaux choisis. Il en est conclu que le concept de bien-être social est encore pertinent et doit donc constituer la base épistémologique et sociale d'une nouvelle réflexion sur les démocraties africaines.

Introduction

In search of, and in struggle for, building a better African society for the majority of the people, how should Africans reclaim their wealth, their liberty, and their democracy as mechanisms of articulating social progress? As reflected on the existing socioeconomic and political conditions, Africa needs to invent or adopt new paradigms and a new policy base to be able to progress beyond the Millennium Development Goals of 2015. Within the context of both contradictions derived from, and the optimism related to, the dynamics of liberal globalisation defined in a dual-reform framework, namely liberal economics and its laissez-faire and political reform and its liberal democracy, my main objective is to explore how we should adopt and/or create a new form of governance that is humanly democratic, economically productive and sustainable, environmentally friendly, historically and culturally relevant, and which ought to promote gender and social equality in Africa.

Although some historical experiences in African societies are projected into the analysis, this article is more of a critical reflection rather

than an empirically-based study. In short, I have focused on two related aspects of this work, namely (i) the dynamics of the liberal global context and (ii) the discourse on welfare state and its forms of democracy.

There are three major functioning types of welfare state in the contemporary world, namely (i) liberal welfare states dominated in Western Europe for hundreds of years before the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and the creation of the Euro (2001), (ii) the social welfare states expanded in the Nordic European countries in the twentieth century, and (iii) the ad hoc model welfare state in the United States. The main focus of this article is not about their differences. However, their interpretations of human nature within these political systems are different as well as the origins of the foundation of their ideas, their social agencies, and their embodied visions of society. Thus, they produce different types of societies, democratic processes, citizens' behaviour, expectations, and political participation.

My main objective is not to extend much on historicity of welfare state and policy institutionalisation. I am interested in the welfare state firstly as a political concept. Despite major substantial philosophical, political, and ideological differences between them, conceptually, welfare states do have some common 'ideal characteristics' which focus on democracy. I will examine briefly the origins of the ideas of the welfare state in its limited descriptive manner without claiming its universal acceptability. And I will ask the question of what we can learn from the dynamics of this concept. How is democracy prescribed within the welfare state? Here, I will discuss the core principles of both liberal democracy and social democracy as being part of the welfare state paradigm. And I further examine how these principles and their policy base are reflected in some calculated trends in social and economic indicators using the database of the World Bank.

Many well-intentioned researchers, policymakers, and well-read scholars in social sciences with different ideological persuasions like Claude Ake, Samir Amin, Jagdish Bhagwati, Amiya Kuma Bagchi, Joseph E. Stiglitz, Martha C. Nussbaum, Amartya Sen, Jeffrey Sachs, etc., including those who have advocated the Marshall Plan kind of solution (Stephen 2005; Chollet and Goldgeier 2005–2006) or Tony Blair's approaches, do agree that some types of globalisation can be part of the solution to human miseries and poverty. The question is: What kind of globalisation, based on recent empirical and historical experiences, can genuinely advance human progress, especially in Africa where 'Afro-pes-

simism' has been rooted in many contradictions of the current dimensions of globalisation policy, politics and development models?

The search for new paradigms that can explain Africa to itself first, its cultures and its socioeconomic and political conditions more effectively and objectively, is the main motivation for writing this paper. Furthermore, despite its dysfunctionality, its apparent incompatibility and lack of innovativeness within its procedures, multipartyism has brought a new energy base and created a new space which can be captured by the progressive or nationalist forces in order to propose an alternative option of the systems of governance in Africa. However, as is well documented, recent political discourse and the functioning of the dominant social paradigm (DSP) reflected in the name of dual liberalism both in economics (free market) and politics (multipartyism) have become the most important factors which led to the acceleration of reversal ideological and political tendencies to authoritarianism and militarism. Recently, these tendencies have developed and manifested themselves in civil wars or violent power struggles, human right abuses, extreme poverty, and wars of invasions in parts of Africa.

The persistence of the deep deterioration of the African conditions (Agyeman 2001) which is reflected in the acceleration of underdevelopment in most parts of the continent and in most social domains are among the important motivating factors for exploring other models of systems of governance. Although this is not my objective in this particular work, it is necessary to recall that we should continue to address the issue of the nature of the causal relations between Africa, its social systems, its cultural diversity, its people, its geo-location, and its contradictory ideological-political foundation. It is no exaggeration to state that despite many efforts by some African social groups, including members of some African political elite, organic intellectuals, working classes, and peasants, all the models of economic organisations and governance have failed to significantly improve the socioeconomic and political conditions of the majority of Africans. Furthermore, the general consensus has been that the contemporary economic reforms in Africa, which descended from the Bretton Woods institutions since the early 1980s which focused mainly on economic growth, free market, and debt, even if and when they had produced limited positive outcomes elsewhere, have not succeeded.

Have the mentioned African conditions, elements of political economy and political culture, and the systems of governance become

singularly or uniquely unexplained or unexplainable and isolated from the human history, the reason, and the activities of human race? In searching for possible paradigms to analyse the African conditions at large, are Africans themselves operating from the classical logic of trying to 'put all their eggs in one basket' (electoral liberal democracy) or are we using the World Bank's principle of one measure fits all (homogenisation of universal liberal market)?

It is agreed upon that in the past 30–40 years or so, most parts of Africa have been economically and politically at an impasse. While other parts of the world have economically been growing up in the past decade, Africa is the only continent which has been growing down. What are the main reasons for explaining the nature of this impasse? Is this impasse due to the fact that theories used to analyse and understand the African conditions, the African social and cultural systems, and African people have been irrelevant and inadequate? Is it due to the nature of the weaknesses about, and the lack of imagination of, African political elites, which have been considered in most cases not to be visionaries or are politically uneducated? Is it so because the remedies provided to Africa from the outside have been wrong or unfitted to the African maladies? Is it so because of the implications of the imperatives of structural global conditions on Africa? Or is it so because the international water that Africa has been swimming in has been too polluted or too contaminated with the toxic waste (or acid rain) in its economic and political form?

The issues raised in the above questions have been summarised in *Africa Renewal* by the assertion of Jeffrey Sachs, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Special Advisor on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

> While substantial progress has been made in some regions of the world, 'Africa on the whole has not achieved progress and has experienced significant regress in many areas.' The continent is the epicentre of global poverty, he continued. The reasons for Africa's halting progress are numerous, including poor soils, the effects of climate change and shortages of basic transportation and communications. But these problems have been worsened by the donor community's insistence on market mechanisms, inadequate and poor targeted aid and a tendency to blame Africa. The continent's problems 'cannot be folded under the rubric that poor Africa just doesn't govern itself properly,' Sachs observed. 'Blaming the poor will not solve the problem. Nor is it an accurate, analytical picture' of the obstacles to Africa's development (2005: 5).

Since African countries gained their nominal political independence, there have been many international, national, and regional declarations, efforts, policies, and foreign initiatives similar to Tony Blair's Commission on Africa, about what should be done about Africa's debts. Some of them were relatively well coordinated and others not so well coordinated depending on their origins and the nature of the actors involved in them. However, it is intellectually and historically undeniable that despite the efforts mentioned above, which were supposedly intended to improve African conditions, high level of political corruption and instability, deep poverty, social desperation, and profound gender inequalities continue to decline in an alarming way. African organic intellectuals and a few of their institutions, social movements, grassroots organisations, and some progressive elements within some civil societies have been searching for new paradigms to deal with the African objective conditions.

Is globalisation real or a myth? How is it functioning? What are its structures and its agencies? What forms have globalisation taken in different parts of the world? What social and cultural values does it represent? What factors internally and externally have shaped it and/or have been shaped by it? Within the context of the domination of globalisation, its imperatives, policy implications and social consequences, what kinds of values does democracy articulated in a welfare state represent?

Is, for instance, Nicholas Negroponte's plan (he is the chairman and founder of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab) to provide affordable laptop computers for developing communities and do it at a cost of $100 each (Staedter 2005) a simple myth? As Staedter reported: 'Negroponte's goal is ambitious. He wants Third World governments to provide one laptop per child in entire regions. Several governments have shown interest. Brazil is expected to purchase one million machines, and China has discussed ordering three million. Additional funding may come from the World Bank and private foundations, Negroponte said' (ibid.).

Although Africa has not manifested interest in this specific project yet (as at 2005), one can speculate about how the global implications of such a project could be in formal education, technological development, and communication in a rural African context, for example.

We have to acknowledge the existence of globalisation in its multi-dimensional forms in identifying and examining its main characteris-

tics, attributes, its social and political meanings. This acknowledgement is an intellectual effort to localise the discourse of the welfare state within the existing schools of thought of globalisation at large and within what Bent Flyvbjerg (2001: 134), using Foucault's expressions, has called 'the regular, daily practice'. We have to challenge this acknowledgement both theoretically and empirically in interrogating the global values as proclaimed by theories of liberal democracy. How much financial and economic resources have liberal democratic and social democratic regimes historically invested or spent in social programmes or in human development programmes?

With the rise of liberal democracy or multipartyism since the early 1990s in Africa, despite disagreements among people about its content and how it can be produced and maintained, it is noted that the concept of democracy in itself has become a global aspiring value and an ideal concept. Within the current logic of liberal globalisation and its mandate to further liberalise, privatise, and universalise the market, the concept of liberal democracy has also been seriously challenged in Africa.

Is there any single theory of globalisation that can define more comprehensively and/or more accurately the current African conditions? Probably as discussed later, there isn't such a theory. Then what do all the multiple dimensions of globalisation have in common? Is it possible to produce or to imagine a theory of globalisation that can maintain in its praxis form its global colours or attributes and still be accepted or acceptable locally?

Issues About Globalisation

Do we live in a global world of illusion or of reality? Historically, we cannot construct a functioning global world without utopia. Within the puzzle called the world of the states, actors have always played different roles to pursue their interests and maintain some equilibrium within the system. Although in the year 2005 social forces and institutions of a functioning world appeared, to a large extent, to be closer to one another in geographical, technological, and selected cultural terms, and in cyberspace politics, in reality, on political and economic grounds, those elements were continuously distancing themselves from one another more than ever in parts of the world. In the past 25–30 years or so the gaps between poor and rich countries and between poor and rich social groups and the political regimes have increased.

It should be emphasised that there is no single approach that has been philosophically autonomous and self-contained in studying globalisation. Because of its complexity it is imperative that I clarify and also justify my intellectual perspectives, the foundation of my philosophical claims.

What are the substantive meanings of globalisation and their manifestations in different social and political contexts? Although the useful expressions related to various forms of globalisation have been invented and perfected in many languages the world over, the concept is still ambiguous. Its various meanings and multidimensional implications must be located historically within the logic and structures of the geopolitics. Globalisation and its various epiphanies have become the properties of faulty prophets, of demagogue politicians, and of institutions, which claim to be emancipatory or enlightened.

Globalisation means different things to different people. However, no one or state can build a wall around themselves like in the ancient periods in Africa, Asia, and Europe. Autarky cannot be a functionally productive approach. The first atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was unfortunately made with the uranium from the Democratic Republic of Congo. About 1.7 billion people as of 2002 (The World Watch Institute 2004), members of the global consumer class, can watch the actual wars through their television sets from their living rooms while they are having dinner. It should be noted that sub-Saharan Africa's consumer class, the smallest in the world, has just 34 million people while in Japan it is about 120 million and the US and Canada have about 270 million. What does globalisation mean in the daily understanding of the world and in the relationships between the consumer class and other people through wages, labour or products, the Internet, cell phones, and CNN? Democratically, we have the right to know how these products which have become part of our identities are produced. How many parts from various countries of the world are used to make a single car? We also can be inspired by what is going elsewhere. Yet we are related differently to the products we use. What are the living conditions or the quality of life of the people who produce them?

As expanded in this context, globalisation is a movement of goods, ideas, information, services, and political, cultural and economic activities (like production, distribution, and consumption, as well as trade and investment) and their implications at the individual and societal

levels across political boundaries. At large, globalisation means international integration. Over the years, especially in the twentieth century, this integrative international movement has been accelerated by the power of technology, for instance, the improvement in aeronautic science and technology, the telephone, the Internet browser, etc. Different parts of the world-nation-states and social groupings—have been integrated into the world economy differently. As Charles W. Kegley states: 'Globalization is leading to simultaneous integration and disintegration of states, to the growth of some states' power and the erosion of many other states' authority, and global actors know how to adaptively respond to the force of globalization's changes' (2004: 262).

Approaches Within the Existing Perceptions of the World

Humans embody the germ of the past and build the present on the past. But the past, the present, and the future each has its own specific distinctive moment, space, and time. The present should not sacrifice the past and vice-versa. From this perspective, a social progress agenda is perceived as being essentially a teleological and synthetic conscious effort.

I use a historical-structuralist approach and its philosophical assumptions and claims with a dose of systems analysis as articulated by the advocates of the world system. The way social classes, states, and societies function in the world system is a result of the internal and external dynamics of their locations. But these locations are far from being historically fixed or static. The world is a system and an organic whole, whose behaviour is conditioned by the actors' locations and how they came to be in the system.

One of the most important manifesting characteristics of the world system at the end of the twentieth century was the movement of states and people's struggles to redefine themselves. This redefinition is taking different forms and shapes, some tragically like in the Balkans, many parts of Africa and the Middle East, and others more gradually and peacefully, but the substance of the content of this redefinition and its intellectual quality depends on the dynamics of the local political configurations, how a given people and state have become part of the world system; the location of these actors in the international political economy; what they are bringing into the global market; who the actors

are; and who their alliances are. This process of redefining themselves is facilitated by the following attributes of globalisation:

i. The level of solidarity, which is being characterised as anti-nation state, among institutions, grassroots organisations, and professional organisations across nation-states, has been increasing. This solidarity is partially due to the relatively high level of consciousness or awareness about the relevant issues. The rising consciousness is the product of the level of interdependence among the actors.

ii. Search for new identities: In most parts of the world people are struggling to redefine themselves by using history and culture, while others are attempting to reconstruct new ideologies or even mythologies through accommodation to the global system. This struggle and processes it creates lead to the various types of clashes of values between what can be or are perceived as the nationalistic values and those which may be considered either as chosen or imposed global values by the global market forces. Since the Westphalia Treaty of 1648 in Europe, the transatlantic enslavement at a large scale, and the colonisation of the world, the common policy of the dominant powers has been to make and re-define national identities in ideological, geo-political and ethnic-linguistic terms protected by the states. Their policies have been the instruments used for systematically weakening individual and collective cultural and ethnic values, as they were often perceived as 'pre-modern' and 'irrational' or primordial forces, the impediments to the building of nationhood.

iii. The nature of new information and communication technologies and the role of the media and the Internet diplomacy in challenging the old national and individual identities and creating new ones in a new international relations context.

iv. And finally, the nature, level, and quality of the world distribution of resources, which are characterised by new opportunities, unequal competition, and social inequality, are essential elements of the discourse of globalisation.

Globalisation is shaped by a multiplicity of actors in world politics. For instance, in 1909, there were 37 officially recognised intergovernmental organisations. By 1994, the number increased to 263. In 1909, there were officially only 176 international non-governmental organisations. And by 1994, the number had increased to 4,928 (Yearbook, 1994/95, pp. 1738–1739). The challenges from multinationals or multilateral and transnational organisations to the state or the centralised authority have obliged the state to make accommodations in order to survive.

In most cases, the state did not make reforms by its volition. It was forced to do so.

Main Characteristics of the Current Globalisation

Globalisation is one of the most complex and difficult concepts to define with precision. However, structurally and historically, it is possible to identify its major characteristics and the processes of its reproduction. Globalisation is not new. Why is it that within the existing principles and policies or politics of liberal globalisation, namely the dynamics of liberal economic restructuring and electoral processes, that multipartyism has produced more conflicts and contradictions in Africa than what was anticipated? Is this due to the fact that the African nation-state was built with a birth defect associated with colonial negativism located in the history of the international political economy? I am in agreement with Wil Hout when he states:

> The literature on globalization, and possible ways to counter this trend, has unmistakably boomed ever since the end of the Cold War revolutionalized international political and economic relations. Many counts of the causes and consequences of globalization evoke reminiscences of the writings on interdependence that were produced some fifteen to twenty years ago (Jones 1995). Unfortunately, contemporary accounts of globalization share some weaknesses of the interdependence literature, such as the absence of clearly defined concepts, imprecision about causal effects and consequences, and mystifications concerning the overall significance of the phenomenon for international political and economic relations. Moreover, much of the literature on globalization is highly ideological.

In the *Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, globalisation is defined as a shift in power relations as follows: 'The process whereby state-centric agencies and terms of reference are dissolved in a structure of relations between different actors operating in a context which is truly global rather than merely international' (1998: 201). David Held et al., define globalisation as 'A process (or set of processes), which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions—assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity, and impact—generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity' (1999:16).

The contemporary form of globalisation has its origins in the pre-nineteenth century capitalist economy. This capitalism was developed in Europe after its inception in the Mediterranean region, not as a national force. After the Industrial Revolution in England, the American Independence Revolution, and the French Bourgeois Revolution, capitalism started to consolidate its global exploitation. That is to say, from the point of view of labour and market, that capitalism was from its inception international with the potential of becoming global. 'Labour for sale' was its motto. It was built on the foundations of a slave economy, of power and class struggles and militarism. As Amiya Kuma Bagchi (1998: 2-3) stated:

> Internationally, capitalism evolved as a system of competitive conquest of markets, and sources of labor and raw materials, and arms often decided the conquest. Britain, the first nation to industrialize its economy fully (in the sense that industry provided the major fraction of national income and employment) also became the biggest formal empire the world over has ever seen. In the twentieth century, as the most powerful nation became the top capitalist nation, it also became militarily the most powerful nation on earth. For instance, the military expenditure of the United States as a proportion of global defense spending increased from 30.4 percent in 1985 to 33.3 percent in 1996. Furthermore, the combined defense spending of the United States and the other members of NATO, as a proportion of total global spending, has increased from 50.8 percent to 62.8 percent in 1996.

It should be noted that the movement of global capital started to be slowly consolidated later by enlightenment and liberalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe as reflected in the writings and political thoughts of Adam Smith, Thomas Malthus, and David Ricardo as they emphasised the doctrine of ethical hedonism (the doctrine that stipulates that ordinary desires were natural and good, not things to be denied or ashamed of), values of individual liberty as a dominant political value and property rights as the foundation of 'rudimentary' capitalism. These grand ideas challenged the system of mercantilism, which prevented the import of most goods from other countries, protected the infant industries, equated wealth with money and judged nations by the balance or size of their balance-of-trade surplus or deficit. Globalisation entered its current global phase after the Second World War when production systems, and even social classes, became trans-nationalised (Ninsin 1998: 25). Since then, the world has

been bound together by unprecedented volumes of trade, capital, and financial inflows (Amin 1990: 85). As Hilary French also stated:

> Growth in trade has consistently outpaced the global economy since World War II. The world economy has grown six-fold since 1950, rising from $6.7 trillion to $41.6 trillion in 1998. But exports increased 17-fold over this period, reaching $5.4 trillion in 1998. While exports of goods accounted for only 5 percent of the gross world product in 1950, by 1998 this figure had climbed to 13 percent (2000: 5).

In the past 50 years or so, globalisation has been popularly used to depict the extraordinary scale and intensity of the world's economic transactions, aided by the revolutions in science and technology. Between the 1940s and 1970s, various roles played by the United States government, the United States-based multinational corporations and banks, its military science and technology, its foreign policy, and the modernisation school of thought after the end of the Second World War, were central in the process of defining globalisation. The principles and policies used for the reconstruction of Western Europe after the war with the Marshall Plan (1947), private US banks, the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and the creation of the International Bank for Reconstruction (the World Bank), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), testify to the vital role that the United States has been playing in re-conceptualising globalisation. The 'dollarisation' of the world market, followed by 'coca-cola-isation' of the world has been playing an important role in this new globalisation in which the United States has been the major agent. Today, globalisation has reached even the domains of social and cultural aspects of individuals and communities such as arts, popular music and culture, and food as its processes have also been facilitated by the liberalisation of the world economy and financial resources.

Two important aspects of globalisation, which have been projected by the World Bank and the IMF as complementary policy perspectives, are the privatisation of the market and political liberalisation of the public domain. These two dogmas have become the most important forces of globalisation. The rules of the World Bank and the IMF have become the international rules used by the local/national, regional and multilateral financial institutions. Not only have privatisation and liberalisation become global in their content, but the processes of their

implementations were also intended to produce common or similar effects.

The objectives and the mission of the IMF and the World Bank have already been well defined and established. However, despite the claims of universalism associated with their programmes, their objectives are diversified, and their programmes have not been uniformly adopted at once in all countries as they claimed in the past. They can only be summarised by the following points: to implement measures to stop economic decline and improve the general performance of a country's economy and to assist in assessing budget deficits and imbalances in import/export terms of trade through packages of corrective measures.

Most of the adjustment programmes in Africa and South America, for instance, contain varying degrees of corrective policies focusing on devaluation of the currency, interest rates, reduction of government expenditures to line up with real resources, privatisation, liberalisation, and institutional reforms. Exchange rate policy is supposed to act to devalue currency so that those export commodities can become cheaper and more attractive to foreign buyers. Terms of trade are expected to be fully liberalised and to improve the movement of goods and fiscal policies by removing tax and tariff barriers. And interest rate policies are undertaken to encourage the population to save money and to tighten credit so that people borrow less. The government is encouraged to cut spending on subsidies and other services. In short, adjustment programmes include reforms to:

- Establish a market-determined exchange rate;

- Bring fiscal deficits under control;

- Liberalise trade; and

- Improve the financial sector, the efficiency of public enterprises and the coverage and quality of social services.

Finally, what are the major attributes of the global system? Despite the inconsistencies and incoherence in the ways in which the global system operates, expands and reproduces itself, the world has become a real functioning machine. This system is composed of many different parts and subsystems. But the system is larger than the sum of its parts. For the purpose of this discussion, the following attributes and characteristics of the world can be summarised:

- The growing interdependence and interactions among the actors;

- An explosion in the number of actors;

- A relatively high level of consciousness about the role of the actors;

- The diminishing classical significance of the meanings of systems of boundaries both at the state and international levels as well as at the personal level;

- A relatively high level of inter-personal and cross cultural relations among people belonging to different orbits of powers and cultures;

- Tendencies toward homogenisation of cultures;

- The weakening of the notion of sovereignty of the state;

- The liberalisation of the market; and

- The privatisation of the state.

From policy points of view, globalisation also means that more and more decisions taken by governments, companies, trade unions, the non-governmental organisations (NGOs), learning institutions, and professional organisations in civil societies, for instance, are influenced by events happening elsewhere in the world.

Liberal Democracy as a Global Phenomenon

One of the issues to examine here is the meaning of the electoral democracies that have taken place in more than 180 countries. As of 2006, elections have been repeated more than twice in about 122 countries, which are considered as democratic countries. Since the early 1990s, the principles and dogmas of liberal democracy are part of the welfare state equation. In a classical sense, liberal democracy embodies a combination of political rights and civil rights, which go beyond electoral democracy's more limited attachment to civil freedoms and minority rights. What does that mean in a global context after September 11, 2001?

After September 11, 2001, when the United States was furiously attacked by very angry young people mostly from Islamic and Arab origins, in the name of national security, new measures and policy articulated by the Homeland Security Agency have been adopted in most countries. These principles of liberal democracy and their values such as individual right, freedom of thought and of religion, freedom of expression and freedom of movement have been seriously challenged. The notion of national security has become more important than that of

individual right. In fact, the militaristic concept of national security has become global. However, people also have been intensifying their struggles to redefine this democracy and/or appropriate it depending on the local and regional conditions, political history, the dynamics of their culture, and the geo-political location of the actors in the world.

While the adoption of the new security laws and policies by the states are producing on the one hand almost semi-military regimes in terms of their behaviour and policies camouflaged in elections, the people on the other hand have intensified their demands for democracy. Furthermore, despite the decline of party politics among the industrial countries in the past 20 years or so, liberal democracy or procedural democracy has become the dominant play in the opera of world politics. It has become the rule of the game. It has been even attempted by the United States administration to impose it militarily.

One of the difficulties in studying democracy at the global level is that despite the fact that it has become a global desirable end of many social, economic and political pursuits among many peoples the world over, no model of democracy can claim universal acceptability. Different regions, sub-regions, and countries have produced their own democratic experiments. Each democracy among the liberal democratic societies in Western Europe, the United States, and Japan, for instance, has its own technical mechanisms and procedures that define its uniqueness and particularities. People's attitudes, expectations, and responses to democratic institutions, and the nature of the democratic institutions and their values in those countries, also all vary from country to country. However, in a broad sense, for Robert Dahl (1971), democracy can be defined by the following characteristics:

i. an extensive competition among individuals and organised groups;

ii. a highly inclusive level of participation in the selection of leaders and policies;

iii. a high level of civil and political liberties (with all kinds of freedoms); and

iv. it is 'a political system, separate and apart from the economic and social systems to which it is joined' (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1999:6).

Diamond, Linz, and Lipset refer to democracy as a political system that supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the govern-

ing officials, and that permits the population to influence major decisions by choosing the holders of political offices.

What factors associated with the electoral democracies have been globalised? Have the demands of democracy and the processes of producing democracies become global? Through a new wave of democratisation, democracy has been claimed by most people. Theoretically, the demands have become global.

Although most African countries gained their independence by building or borrowing from the dogmas of liberal democracy and fragile institutions such as chambers or assemblies, in general, for the majority of people the struggle for democracy was not perceived as a political rights issue separate from the overall strategic struggles for total independence. The discourse of self-determination at the international level, which was articulated and promoted by the United States, was essentially adopted in many countries as a national liberation objective or nation-state building dogma. The priorities of most movements and/or political parties that led to political independence in the majority of countries were more on building nation-states and promoting the ideas of constitutional rights and political sovereignty than on procedural democracies and the pursuit of individual political rights. The rights of the nation-state were perceived as more important than those of the citizens.

During the Cold War era, the polarisation of the world by the ideological, military, and power struggles between the Soviet Union and the United States did not contribute to the development of fully fledged liberal democracies. On the contrary, these struggles inhibited it, in controlling the agencies of social changes including the people, in the name of state ideologies and security. Wherever liberal democratic models were introduced, in most situations, they were used as instruments of control and manipulation. In most cases, state apparatuses, especially the ruling political parties and executive branches of government, essentially served as national intelligence agencies for the super-powers to collect information, to recruit, to intimidate progressive forces and to maintain the status quo. Both categories of rights, namely social rights and political rights, which are considered to be the foundation of democracy, were limited and constrained by the dictum of the dominant ideologies. In fact, this international conflict created a non-democratic world, heavily armed and policed by the United States and the Soviet Union and their clients (or cronies).

Between 1999 and 2000, for instance, there were electoral democracies in about 180 countries. This movement has swept over every region of the globe. In the 1970s, one-party regimes and military dictatorships of various sorts, supported by multinationals, the World Bank and the IMF, the US and the USSR, held power over Africa, South America, Asia, and Eastern Europe.

The new electoral democracies have produced new presidents and members of parliaments or national assemblies. Not only have the claims of democracy become global but democracy is also being perceived and appreciated itself as a global value. There are high expectations about what these electoral democracies should do. Electoral process is being equated to the development process. According to the survey conducted by James Holston of the University of California in San Diego, in 1972 there were 52 electoral democracies, constituting 33 percent of the world's 160 sovereign nation-states. By 1996, the number rose to 118 democracies out of 191 nation-states, or 62 percent of the total, for a net gain of 66 democratic states. Among the larger countries, those with a population of one million or more, the number of the electoral democracies nearly tripled during the same period. Significantly, the number of non-democratic states has declined by a third since the early 1970s, after rising steadily from the beginning of the century. As James Holston stated:

> If it took almost 200 years of modern world history to produce fifty democratic states by 1970, it has taken only 10 years of political change since the mid-1980s to yield the same number of new democracies ... In 1975, only four countries in all Latin America had democratically elected national leaders, namely Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela. Of the 36 countries that gained independence in Africa between 1956 and 1970, 33 became authoritarian at the birth or shortly after. The exceptions were Botswana and short-lived electoral democracies in Ghana and Nigeria (2000: 4).

By the end of the 1990s, among 35 states that compose the Americas, for instance, 31 had electoral democracies (89 percent). In South and Central America, of 20 nation-states, only Peru and Mexico would not be clearly considered democratic despite some partial elections. However, Mexico and Peru also had moved away from the list of countries with current tendencies of reversal. In the 1990s, for instance, Botswana, Mauritania, and Nigeria had some important forms of democracy, Senegal, and Zimbabwe had substantive elements of functioning

multipartyism. Of 53 countries (including Western Sahara) in contemporary Africa, the number of defined electoral democracies increased from 18 percent in 1992 to almost 50 percent in 1999. However, between 1999 and 2005, several democratic reversals have occurred in different periods in countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, and Sierra Leone. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, the process of liberal democracy was altogether stopped by the war of invasion. Islamisation of the Sudanese state and the recent movement of Islamisation of the state in Northern Nigeria, for example, are seriously threatening the new electoral democracy. However, as of 2005, there were at least 12 retired presidents in Africa who had completed their constitutional terms and handed over power peacefully after elections (Lumumba-Kasongo 2006). In the Asia-Pacific region, for instance, 24 of its 38 nation-states are now politically democratic (63 percent). Within the new nation-states of the former Eastern Europe, out of its 27 nation-states, 23 have become formally democratic (75 percent).

Although democratic debates and local democratic projects were not absent in the 1990s in the Middle East, it is the only region of the world that was comparatively stagnant in terms of engagement in the pursuit of liberal democracy. Until recently, only Israel and Turkey (14 percent) have had solid formal political debates on democratic and systematic elections and functioning democratic institutions.

The Contemporary Welfare State, Its Claims, and Policy Implications

Localising the debate of democracy and democratic processes within the context of the discourse of welfare state at large is an important dimension of this article. Thus, in this section I will identify and examine the major characteristics of the welfare state and explore how it defines democracy.

It is the activism of labour parties, socialist/communist parties, leftist groups, and unionists at large that promoted the welfare state. And in a few cases, historically, the imperial regimes' struggles for legitimacy led to the promotion of the elements of the welfare state. There are various views in the ways the welfare state has evolved in its definition, reproduction, its performance, and in its political claims and intellectual arguments. In contemporary societies, these arguments touch more directly on human, individual, or collective rights than in any forms of

states among the industrial nations. However, the analysis of concrete policies based on the welfare principle needs to be further explored in order to find similarities and dissimilarities among the states advocating welfare programmes. No attempt is made in this section to universalise the characteristics of the welfare state. Its claimed or projected achievements/performances will not be assessed by some universal ethical norms.

In general terms, the concept of the welfare state as practiced in the twentieth century in Western Europe can be defined in terms of the existence of strong or extensive public intervention of the state on behalf of the society or citizens in regulating market behaviour and rules and economic performance and in defining social security and social regulations of the society at large. It also promoted equality between the gender in terms of the job market and distribution of resources. It also tended to subordinate ethnic arguments and regional location over citizenship or social right. In general terms, the welfare state put emphasis on collective developmental or social agenda. Behind this agenda, there was a normative objective of society to be achieved, that is, the 'collective good', or 'common good' or a 'good' society. However, this concept of common good or social good has been better articulated in social democratic regimes than in liberal democratic ones. And social democracy within the social welfare state tends to advance the ideal of 'ontological equality', which articulates that all humans are born equal.

It is argued in this section that the functioning of the welfare state has to be essentially democratic. The welfare state in its contemporary form, whether it is a liberal, nationalist, or socialist/social oriented system in terms of its philosophical foundation, embodies some general elements of 'social' democracy. As Robert Elgie stated: 'The welfare state is more than just a set of static institutions. It takes potent political forces to create and maintain it. In the Western European context, one of the major political supporters of the welfare state has been social democracies' (1998: 78).

Many contemporary nation-states and governments in various periods of their development or evolution have produced various forms of welfare states and programmes to deal with the inclusiveness of their citizens, to address the questions related to social distribution of resources, and to solve social inequalities at a given time. For instance, the formal discussion on the welfare state in India goes back to the writings of Kautilya in his theory of prince as the safeguard of the social

order based on the Varna and Ashrama system (Kohli 1995:36). In many parts of Africa, the philosophical idea of the welfare state can be located in the notion of traditional 'harmonious' organised or divine cosmology and communal ethos. However, as stated earlier in this section, I am interested in what we can learn from the contemporary debates and policies of the welfare states and not in prescribed science.

Within the current logic of liberal globalisation and its mandate to liberalise, privatise, and universalise the market, the concept of a welfare state has been seriously challenged in many parts of the world, as reflected in recent years in Western Europe and North America. Welfare reforms in Canada and Western Europe were the central issues of debates in the past decade. In developing countries, especially in many African countries, most of the partial welfare programmes associated with the euphoria of national political independence were dismantled as results of various economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s, for instance, indebtedness, inequalities in the market place of the primary commodities, oil crises, mismanagement, etc.

It should be emphasised that many African leaders and their political parties in the 1950s and the 1960s strongly articulated elements of welfare states in their political ideologies such as African socialism, African humanism, Afro-Marxism, African capitalism, and African nationalism including pan-Africanism. To a certain extent, the struggles for independence embodied, in theory, some ideas of making the state the major agency of social change. In addition to the question of the degree and the nature of state intervention, in Africa as well as in Europe, within the perspective of global economic reforms, since the 1980s (with the influences of Reaganism and Thatcherism) there has been a declining interest in the part of the governments to promote and sustain the ideologies of welfare states.

However, it should be noted that the civil societies in many European cities have been waging multidimensional wars against their governments over the question of the welfare state and programmes and the possibility of dismantling them all together based on cost analysis, profit arguments, and free market premises. These struggles, in different forms, are also taking place in popular movements in the developing world.

However, despite the continuous organised global protests in the past several years (1999–2004) from Seattle, Washington, to Washington, DC, Prague, Quebec City, and Paris against policies and politics of the global institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, and

the summits of the Americas, some scholars argue that this 'war' has, to a certain extent, been partially and legally won by the states with the establishment of the European Union and its common currency, the Euro. Since 2001, the summits of the G-8 have also been meeting vigorous protests by thousands of people who represented hundreds of organisations the world over. The World Social Forum is the most important among the protest movements in terms of the number of people who have been participating in its meetings and its capacity for capturing the attention of the world toward its agendas. Furthermore, the recent rejection of the European Constitution by a referendum in France and the Netherlands is making some governments in Europe rethink the so-called victory of the global liberalisation and the need for re-structuring their welfare state.

The concept of the welfare state in its most current popular usage was born out of the liberal philosophy in Western Europe. It was in the seventeenth century that the philosophy of liberalism appeared in England and it dominated thought in Western civilisation by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The paradox is that while European states were pursuing their interests in Africa and other regions through colonisation, in Europe itself the debate on liberal philosophy, which is the foundation of welfare states, was emerging. As Sankhdher and Cranston state:

> In explaining the liberal concept of the welfare state in England during 1889 and 1914, we should begin by a precision of its symbolic representation at the point of culmination in Lloyd George's mind. The Liberal philosophy, which had its origin in John Locke's ideas, was given a new turn by the philosophical Radicals and the Utilitarians. In practical politics, however, liberalism in this period, though rooted in individual liberty, extended the meaning of liberty to incorporate the idea of welfare state (1985: 245).

Thus, political representation as the key characteristic of liberalism has been one of the most important forces of welfare state. After the French and industrial revolutions, the attributes of liberalism were expanded from individual quest for freedom to societal struggle against 'undemocratic parliaments' and despotic monarchs. Of course this was not done without bourgeois power struggles and proletarian struggles as well. As stated earlier in the nineteenth century, both classical liberalism and later Marxism were distrustful of the state. The classical state was conceived as an instrument of coercive forces and thus it was perceived as

anti-individualism. In England, liberalism was articulated by such philosophers as Edmund Burke, Herbert Spencer, T.H. Green, William Berridge, J.M. Keynes, Ludwig von Miesse, etc. They were against the exercise of unlimited power by the state and monopolistic law of capitalism. Thus, the main characteristics of liberalism include: the ideology of representative democracy, based on the Rule of Law, the notion of limited government, and the concepts of individual's rights of life, liberty and property (Sankhdher, op.cit., 1985: 245). As Mimi Abramovitz said:

> Classical liberalism originated in seventeenth-century England, took root in the eighteenth century, and with the rise of industrial capitalism, became the dominant political theory of twentieth century Western societies. Reflecting new views of human nature which placed selfness, egoism, and individualistic self-interest at the center of human psyche, liberalism held competitive pursuit of individual self-interest in a market free of government regulation would maximize personal and societal benefits (1989: 14).

Struggles against the feudal economies, monarchical and strong states in their militaristic and personalised forms contributed to the creation of the welfare states in Europe. The industrial revolution of the 1700s and early 1800s led to the development of social insurance in many parts of Europe as most of the workers received low wages and were also working under hazardous conditions. Thus, many workers did not or could not afford to live a relatively productive life. For instance, in 1883–1889, Germany was the first nation-state in Europe to institute national welfare programmes and mandatory workers insurance. Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, who instituted the welfare programmes, was trying to accomplish two objectives: (i) to remove the workers' impetus for organising a possible revolution (or a revolt) and (ii) to ensure that the cost burden of the programmes would not be borne by the local governments. Even during the years leading to the Second World War, social welfare programmes continued to expand, as it is stated in Article 20 (1) of the Basic Law that Federal Republic of Germany is a 'democratic and social federal state'. The nature of the relationship between other nations has partially been determined by the effort of the government to provide the basics for all Germans. As Krasner indicates:

> In addition to attempting to control the flows of capital and ideas, states have long struggled to manage the impact of international trade … Depression and plummeting grain prices made it possible for German

> Chancellor Otto von Bismarck to produce the landholding aristocracy into a protectionist alliance with urban heavy industry (this coalition of 'iron and rye' dominated German politics for decades) (2001: 24).

In France also since the pre-revolutionary times, entrepreneurial timidity was partially compensated for by the role the French government played in technological innovations and economic development as indicated by Henry W. Erhamm (1996) that the royal fermiers, Jean-Baptiste Colbert's mercantilism, and the way in which Napoleon III's entourage interpreted the doctrines of Claude-Henri Saint-Simon, created the traditions. As Britain's Keith Windschuttle (1999) stated:

> The reforms Bills of 1867 and 1884 extended the franchise to males in virtually all social classes. The new concept of the state sanctioned the existing political parties to abandon laissez-faire and to appeal to these new voters with the promise of social legislation and welfare reform. Whereas classical liberal regarded the state as necessary evil, the new liberalism saw the state as a necessary good that was capable of removing or alleviating the insecurities and misfortunes of newly enfranchised lower orders. It was the Liberal Imperialist governments of 1906–16 that went furthest in delivering tangible legislation to back these ideas: the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1906, the Old Age Pension Act of 1908, the Minimum Wage Act of 1909, and the National Insurance Act of 1911. The welfare state of the later twentieth century was largely an unfolding of principles and measures introduced in these years (pp. 82–83).

The welfare state in the twentieth century was also characterised by the principle of limiting constitutionally the power of the governing political elite. It also promoted the intervention of the state on behalf of individuals to create the conditions that should allow the individual the ability to maximize self-interest and to secure liberty, equality, and justice. Most of the welfare programmes or packages that were produced in Western Europe include laissez-faire doctrine that restricted the responsibilities of the state without eliminating its regulatory role as protector of capital, property, and national security (Abramovitz 1989: 15). Pragmatically, Sankhdher and Cranston describe the welfare functions as follows:

> The key functions of a welfare state were, in addition to police responsibilities, promotion of economic development and social welfare by providing full employment, equal opportunity, social security and insurance of a minimum standard of living for those downmost of the

social ladder. Such an idea materialized largely in the Beveridge plan which prescribed, within a liberal democratic framework, provision of basic needs, and also remedies for problems of disease, ignorance, squalor, and idleness. It was the application of collectivist methods for the individualistic aims of laissez-faire (1985: 246).

The idea that the government ought to protect minimum standards of income, nutrition, health, housing, and education assured to every individual as a political right, not as charity (Abramovitz 1989: 16), can be generalised as the universal claim of a liberal political thought. Within the Marxist traditions, the welfare state is to use the state power to modify the reproduction of labour power and to shift the costs of socialising and maintaining workers from the private capital to the public sphere (p. 17).

The concept of justice that has been the philosophical and social engine in welfare states can be summarized in the following statement of John Rawls:

> Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust. Each person possesses inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow the sacrifices imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many. Therefore in a just society the liberties of equal citizenship are taken as settled; the rights secured by justice are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests (1971: 3–4).

In addition to legalism, other related notions developed in the welfare states are those of equal citizenship and equal participation in the political affairs of the states. The liberal theory of politics allows social changes through legalistic reforms with the focus on individual rights. But not all legalisms can promote social justice as Alan Wolfe said in the case of the ad hoc welfare of United States. For instance:

> America's failure to contemplate, let alone redress, social injustice and inequality is another indication of its impasse, a backhand confession that ills are beyond the reach of human action to remedy them. For a 'can do' culture, such an intimation of impotence was found relatively easy to accept (1989: 81).

A selective approach to welfare programmes puts the case of the United States neither on the liberal crusade against injustice nor on a stand-path preference for the status-quo especially during the New Deal era (Wolfe 1989). But the social cost in choosing this approach has been heavy with the long-term impact that is extremely difficult to deal with for many generations in the era of globalisation. The principle of each according to her/his merit has retarded the discourse on the pursuit of social equality, including the gender relations in the United States. The major distributive principle that socialists used was 'each according to her/his needs'. Whether factually all socialist welfare states or welfare states within social democracies attempted to transform the social relations can be questionable, their theoretical principle of each according to her/his needs is worth pursuing.

Comparison of Selected Social Indicators within Liberal, Social, and Transitional Democracies

I am not interested in identifying causal relations between social indicators and the nature of democracies representing different types of welfare. However, I am interested in making correlative comments between democracies and social indicators. In the principle within the framework of welfare states, all democracies should be concerned with social policy issues, totally or partially. Thus, the major differences among them can be described in terms of the centrality of social policy in a given government and regime, and its importance in determining state-society relations, and in the way social policy is institutionalised and systematised. As Michael Newman states:

> 'Social Policy' is a term that may be defined precisely, and the EU has used it to cover a wide range of issues, ranging, from apparently technical 'health and safety' matters to 'quality of life' concerns, to much more politically sensitive areas, including industrial relations systems, and retributive policies covering health, education, housing and social security (1996: 77).

In the final dimension of this study, I am trying to capture comparatively in figures some aspects of the performance associated with, and/or spending patterns of, the types of groups of democracies articulated within welfare states at large examined in this work.

As discussed earlier in this work and also below, though the essence of this analysis is reflective, some general comparative criteria are used

to help contrast policy implications of the selected types of democracy. I should reiterate that the main objective here is not to find causal relations between democratic practices and their policy formulations and implementations but rather, to explain correlations and implications between the dogmas of three selected types of democracy and their performances. For the sake of this generalized theoretical reflection, a few selected criteria for categorizing democracies are considered. They are not historically fixed. Nor are they considered perfect and automatically verifiable all the time. The possible actualization, appreciation or measurement of these criteria varies from one regime to another and from one society to another. However, these criteria can be found and identified in all practical democracies in terms of political goals, political organization, and societal expectations. These criteria include the degree of: (A) regularity of the elections (B); the legal guardianship of elections; (C) stability of political regimes; and (D) the social foundation of the outcomes of the electoral process.

Based on studies of comparative constitutions (for instance, Lumumba-Kasongo 2005), in general, liberal democracies are categorized as having higher level of A, B, C and less for D than other types of democracies. Liberal democracies tend also to emphasize individual rights, individual liberties and merits, legal procedures, and political representation. Social democracies embody all the above criteria and also a special emphasis on social and collective rights and programmes, distributive justice, and public interests. Transitional democracies are relatively new. Thus, they tend to be less stable in their functioning and less predictable in terms of the feasibility of their actions. However, though at a lower level, they also embody some aspects of A, B, C and D. It should be noted that there are vast differences in practice among the liberal democracies, for instance between the United States' model and the European ones. Furthermore, the countries with transitional democracies also tend to have more differences among them because of lack of, and/or weak, political culture of democracy, less legal guardianship of the electoral process, and the high level of political *amateurism* vis-à-vis the respect to democracy and its values. The social foundation of democracy is weakest in the transitional democracies because of combined factors such as the level of economic underdevelopment, the low level of education, and «impracticability» of the existing forms of democracies. For further information about the behaviours of the transi-

tional democratic regimes in Africa in relationship to elections, see my article (Lumumba-Kasongo 2007).

The lists of the countries selected are:

- Selected Liberal Democracies: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, United States, Spain, and Italy.

- Selected Social Democracies: Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland.

- Selected Transitional Democracies: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Demo-cratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa.

It should be noted that my choice of the countries selected in this section is generally personal. It is mainly due to my own areas of interest, the visibility of the countries in either the struggle toward democracy, the deepening of the crisis of democracy, or the positive evolution of democracy. What is important is to have a certain degree of representation in comparing governmental expenditures as they can inform us about either policy priorities or their possible commitment to respond to people's needs. I believe that the patterns of expenditures may inform us about responsibility of the governments, their commitment toward the improvement of human conditions and human and social rights.

The following selected sectors were incorporated in the study: (a) Education; (b) Health; (c) Agriculture; (d) Employment/Unemployment. The main source of the data used in this section is the World Bank, *World Population Data Sheet 1999-2003*, (Washington DC, Population Reference Bureau, World Bank).

It should be noted that comparatively proportional percentages of expenditures by GNI, GDP or GNP reflect only the total amount of money in a given country. Percentages of spending in a given sector in Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, have different significance than percentages of spending in the same sector in Japan or the United States. The size of the economy and the size of population are important variables that should be taken into account in understanding the significance of the figures elaborated in this section.

The differences in the proportions of GNI, GNP, or GDP that countries allocate to their respective social services in general do not reflect the actual amount of money, in raw numbers, that these countries

have for these services. Indeed, the total amount of money available for public spending is a reflection of each country's GNI, GNP, or GDP. For instance, even with a higher proportion of its GNI allocated to the health care services, a poor/developing country typically has a much smaller amount of money than an industrial country with a lower percentage of GNI allocated to its health care services. And yet, the needs for investment in heath care services are much greater in a poor country.

Table 1: Education Expenditure (% of GNI), 1970–2003

	Africa (TDs)	Liberal Democracies	Social Democracies
1970	3.67	4.52	4.97
1980	3.91	5.25	5.68
1990	4.21	4.81	5.73
2000	3.87	4.53	6.46
2003	3.87	4.55	6.45

As reflected in Table 1, while in every ten years since 1970 education expenditure in percentage terms of GNI has increased in social democracies, with relative slowing down between 1980 and 1990, in liberal democracies it has been constantly decreasing and it stabilised between 2000 and 2003. With the exception of 1990, where Africa reached an increased percentage of 4.21 less only 0.60 percent from liberal democracies, it has lagged significantly behind other democracies.

In the same periods, 1970–2003, Africa (transitional democracies) spent a higher percentage of money allocated to education in the tertiary sector by student, about 56 percent; then comes the social democracies with about 45 percent, and last are the liberal democracies which spent about 30 percent. When it comes to secondary education, both social democracies and liberal democracies spent approximately the same by student, 43 percent and 41 percent respectively. And the transitional democracies spent less than the above with only about 18 percent. In elementary education, the same trends continue to be reflected with social democracies spending about 21, liberal democracies 18, and transitional democracies about 12 percent by student. Although these figures do not tell much about the real distribution among various social groups, they reflect general trends in spending.

In the health sector, the figures of vaccinations of DPT and measles of infants (age 12–28 months old), for instance, combined with those of the infant mortality may also reflect the quality of the services that political regimes have provided at a given time. Although we do not have sufficient information about how much the regimes have effectively spent in different health and health-related sectors, the access to vaccinations is an important policy item as it deals with the future of the society, the children. It should be noted that percentages of the children vaccinated in the transitional democracies, liberal democracies, and social democracies have all been increasing. However, the percentages of the infants vaccinated have been consistently higher in social democracies than in liberal democracies. Although the percentages are also increasing in the transitional democracies in Africa, they are significantly lagging behind both liberal democracies and social democracies.

Table 2: Immunisation DPT (Diphtheria-Pertussis-Tetanus) and Measles (Percentage of children ages 12–23 months): 1980, 1983, 1990, 2000, and 2003

Immunisation	Africa (TDs)	Liberal Democracies	Social Democracies
1980			
DPT	42.33	76.50	93.75
Measles	36.00	67.75	88.00
1983			
DPT	45.00	86.71	94.20
Measles	47.00	55.67	83.75
1990			
DPT	65.82	90.30	93.17
Measles	66.45	80.30	92.17
2000			
DPT	69.73	93.00	97.00
Measles	70.18	89.50	91.50
2003			
DPT	72.27	94.40	95.67
Measles	71.73	90.90	91.00

Access to health services is a societal and state responsibility. It is expected that citizens' health or the health of the society at large ought to be considered as an important factor in assessing the meaning of any

Table 3: Health Expenditure in 1998, 2000, 2002. 2003

Category	Africa (TDs)	Liberal Democracies	Social Democracies
1998			
Public	3.36	2.80	6.54
Private	1.95	6.17	1.96
2000			
Public	3.20	2.82	6.52
Private	2.20	6.28	1.95
2002			
Public	3.19	3.00	7.25
Private	2.40	6.62	2.09
2003			
Public	3.36	2.80	6.54
Private	1.95	6.17	1.96

democracy. Health is a social right. Obviously, it implies that a healthy population should be happier, more productive, innovative, engaging, and ready to support the state's programmes and policies.

The figures in Tables 2 and 3 are consistent in the three different periods, 1998, 2000, and 2002 used in this research. In 1998, for instance, the percentages of the public expenditures in the transitional democracies and social democracies were higher than those in the liberal democracies, 3.36 and 6.54 as compared to 2.80 respectively. Even the developing countries in Africa, with very poor infrastructures and higher medical demands and costs, have been able proportionately to spend more in the public health sector than the liberal democracies. The private health expenditures in the transitional democracies were almost equal to those in social democracies. It should be noted that the private health expenditures in liberal democracies are almost the same percentages as those of social democracies in the public sector. In Africa with the recent privatisation of health services, the gap between the expenditures in private and public health is gradually diminishing. Social democracies spent more than 70 percent of the money allocated to health in the public sector while liberal democracies spent more than 65 percent in private health services. In Africa, although the public health

expenditures are still slightly higher, the gap is closing between the public and private expenditures.

Table 4: Female Adults with HIV (% of Population Aged 15–49 with HIV)

	Africa (TDs)	Liberal Democracies	Social Democracies
2001	48.77	22.9	24.89
2003	49.79	23.71	24.57

Table 5: Prevalence of HIV (% of Population Aged 15–49)

	Africa (TDs)	Liberal Democracies	Social Democracies
2001	5.7	0.31	0.18
2003	5.13	0.32	0.18

Table 6: Female Employment by Sector in 1980

Category	Africa (TDs)	Liberal Democracies	Social Democracies
Agriculture	67.81	14.81	6.50
Industry	5.38	20.89	18.8
Service	na	70.7	74.58

Table 7: Total Female Employment in 1990

Category	Africa (TDs)	Liberal Democracies	Social Democracies
Agriculture	69.56	11.90	3.95
Industry	5.70	17.28	15.15
Service	24.70	77.76	80.80

While the transitional democracies have almost double the general percentages of females with HIV, social democracies have slightly higher percentages than those of liberal democracies. However, within the total population, the transitional democracies have a very high percentage and the lowest are social democracies.

It is argued that employment is an important aspect of security protection, personal growth and social development. From a citizen's point of view, it is a democratic right. In this specific work I am not interested

in what kind of job was provided. However, these tables should inform us about what sector has the higher percentage or less employment. Furthermore, gender equality is an issue in all democracies.

Females have been, in most contemporary societies, marginalised by policies and politics of some regimes based on men's cultural dispositions and political ideologies of domination. The way a given political regime or society at large treats girls and women in the public sector is very much a reflection of the quality of such a system. A democratic system is a system that does not discriminate against anyone based on gender, social and national, or religious origins. Here I examine only the general patterns of the employment distribution in percentages in the agriculture, service, and industry between men and women.

In 1980 in Africa, the agricultural sector employed more than 60 percent of all workers, a trend that can be generalised in all other years. The industrial sector was the smallest area of employment with only 17 percent while the service sector represented about 23 percent. It is interesting to note that in both liberal democracies and social democracies almost 58 percent of employment was located in the service sector, about 34 percent in the industry, and only 8 percent in agriculture. The percentages of the distribution of employment in all three sectors—service, industry, and agriculture—are almost the same in both liberal democracies and social democracies.

When it comes to the gender distribution in these three sectors in 1980, in Africa about 90 percent of women's employment was in the agricultural sector and only 8 percent in the industry. Data were not available in the service sector. In both liberal democracies and social democracies, women's employment in the service areas was much higher than in other sectors, with almost more than 70 percent as indicated on the table of female employment. The only significant difference is in the area of agriculture with 14.81 percent of women in the agricultural sector in liberal democracies while it was only 6.50 in social democracies. The similar trends of female employment among the transitional democracies, liberal democracies and social democracies are reflected in the 1990s with the difference that female employment in social democracies significantly increased in the service sector to 80.80 percent as compared to 77.76 percent in liberal democracies. And the decline in the agricultural sector of women's employment is orchestrated with 3.95 percent as compared to liberal democracies 11.90 percent.

Concluding Remarks

It is argued that Africa will not produce any kind of genuine democracy within the existing socioeconomic conditions. Extreme poverty, which accompanies African economic reforms, does not or will not promote democracy. The situation is characteristic of what W. Alade Fawole (2005) has called: 'Voting without Choosing'. Recently, these kinds of elections in Africa have been creating a high level of violence in countries asuch as Ethiopia, Niger, Uganda, Tanzania (Zanzibar), Zimbabwe, etc. Furthermore, political space in Africa is a space of intense contest, an area in which the so-called opposition parties and the declared ruling parties are struggling mainly to gain access to material resources and not necessarily for articulating good governance.

Global liberal democratisation at the general level has not yet created any conditions for greater social development and equity among the majority of the African population, the primary aim of real democracy. Despite the rise of multipartyism, there is a high level of decline of citizen loyalty to the African state. The size of the gray space where state and citizens should meet and negotiate has significantly decreased. In most cases in Africa, electoral processes have been far from producing democracies. That is to say that many new proclaimed procedural democracies have not been able to convert global resources to satisfy domestic policies, job market, and the basic needs because within the framework of liberalisation and privatisation, the African states become literally the agencies of the multinationals rather than being the agencies of people's social protection. Thus, these states are losing the basis of their legitimacy and sovereignty. Within the existing paradigms of political pluralism, it has become clear that what is good for the market is not necessarily good for individuals and people.

It is clear that socially defined welfare states, until recently in Northern Europe, had a strong base for a collective citizenship perspective in dealing with the social needs and progress in contrast with the liberal democracy in the United States. In this case, individual rights and personal hard work ethic (the Weberian Protestant Ethic) are promoted as the most important means to social progress.

Although resembling other democracies, African transitional regimes are not all the same and do not exhibit the same kinds of behaviour in the circulation of power, the formulation and implementation of policies, or in the way people participate in them. Their political institu-

tions are still relatively new and fragile. However, they also have tendencies to monopolistic ruling parties. The rules of political games and the outcomes of the politics discourse are still less democratically predicted or predictable. And their political culture and civil societies are not sharply independent from the rules and dictum of the state power.

In short, in all sectors, transitional democracies have performed very poorly as compared to other democracies. At large, liberal democracies have performed lower than social democracies. And social democracies have been systematically ranked higher in the social indices used in this work.

In short, global capitalism has created a global apartheid system which consists of 'the established centres (European Union and NAFTA), the emerging peripheries (East Asia, South Africa), struggling peripheries (much of Latin America and the Middle East), and stagnating peripheries (much of the Sub-Saharan Africa)'. The bulk of global resource flows is confined to the dominant capitalist centre. According to Keet (1997:23):

> Fully 84% of all Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) originates within such countries, with a large proportion (of almost 40%) originating in just two countries, the USA and the UK, in 1996 ... (A)lmost 60% of global FDI in that year was still moving between the most developed industrialized countries of North America and Europe ... 98 out of the 100 largest TNCs, globally, originate in the OECD ... Fully 87% of all TNCs are headquartered in the EU, the U.S., and Japan; and in 1996, 88% of their 'foreign assets' were actually located in each other's economies.

While many African countries have produced new elected governments and parliaments, the level of poverty has increased. In early 2000, for instance, it is estimated that there were more than 1.3 billion poor in the world and that 13 to 18 million die annually of poverty-related causes. The population of Africans living below $1 a day was 44.6 percent in 1990 but rose to 46.4 percent in 2000. Resources are concentrated in the hand of fewer people, countries, and companies. For example, the African continent's share of the Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) which goes to the developing world has declined from an average of 15 percent in the 1970s to 10 percent in the 1980s, and to just 5 percent by the mid-1990s. Its share of global trade has also declined from 3 percent in the 1950s to barely 1 percent in 1995 (ibid.). While East Asia alone accounts for a quarter of total world trade (UNCTAD 1998: IV), Africa's exports shrank from 5.3 percent in 1950 to 1.5

percent in 1995, and her imports from 5.7 percent to 1.7 percent during the same period (ibid. 183).

In the search for democracy in Africa, vital issues of social and collective rights should be redefined and introduced in the debates of the existing framework of the electoral democracies. I am claiming that global liberal democratisation alone, in the way it is functioning now in terms of people's rights to elect their leaders, will not solve the problem of poverty in Africa. In fact, in many transitional democracies, which function under the imperatives of transnational corporations, certain types of 'autocratic multipartyism' have started to replace practices of liberal democracy, especially in relationship to the imperative of new security apparatuses.

I argue that limited political rights that Africans have gained in the struggles for global liberal democratisation will not be fully actualised and expanded until people also collectively gain their cultural and economic rights. That can be done either through social revolution, political and social reforms and activism, or massive political participation.

Democracy would be actualised if Africans first reclaim the states. The reclaiming is the process of transforming the state from within itself. It is through political education, human investment, political participation, and social movement that this reclaiming can be examined and actualised. Africans are capable of producing a globalisation that can have a human face; that is, one that may embody the following values: collective social justice for all, respect for diversity, an environment-friendly technology, and gender equality in the distribution of resources.

Finally, my perspective of democracy is reflected in the following quotation:

> Democracy is not a menu prepared from the outside of a given culture. It is a political means through which social contradictions, with respect to collective and individual rights, should be solved at a given time and in a given society. There cannot be real democracy if a concerned society does not have any consciousness of its own contradictions, does not allow political debate, and does not outline a social practice to provide rules for the society to manage its interests and objectives with equity and justice. Democracy should be a struggle against social inequality, injustices, exploitation, and social miseries. That is to say, democracy is more than formal political pluralism or the process of producing an electoral code or an electoral commission ... Democracy is both a process and a practice that involves equal economic and social opportunities for

> the citizenry. It is a corrective process in which a given society, especially a formerly colonized society, is born again (Lumumba-Kasongo 1998: 34).

In my view, the concept of welfare is still relevant, and thus should provide the epistemological and social basis for rethinking African democracies. It is only in a social welfare state that the kind of democracy described above can be fully actualised. The social welfare state has mechanisms for promoting genuine dialogues with all the segments of the society through social programme agencies and partnerships between the government, the society, and private corporations. It is characterised as being a highly inclusive system. In search of African models of development, it is necessary to articulate a state in which the concept of public good can also benefit from the benevolence and profitability of critically defined and socialised private corporations. This state should have as its priority to meet the basic needs of all its citizens. Within the context of these reflections on Africa's welfare state, the concepts of prosperity and good life should be redefined to encompass: the basics for survival, including food, shelter, and a secure livelihood, good health, social cohesion, and political freedom (OECD: *The Well-being of Nations* 2001).

Acknowledgement

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Central Challenges Confronting the African State: Rethinking Its Role in Development

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the central challenges confronting the African state in the context of the neo-liberal offensive to render the continent more vulnerable. Historically the African state was a creation of the colonisers to serve their interests. In the post-colonial condition it has principally served the interests of tiny, powerful circles and their foreign backers, rather than those of the generality of the African people. Prolonged authoritarianism on the continent has been maintained principally through the state. Only through popular democratic transformation of the state will the continent march towards development. Historically development in all spheres has never been attained anywhere independent of the central role of the state.

In the post-Cold War period America is on course to drag African governments, political leaders and the continent's economic resources into another phase of imperialist domination. The terms, terrain, politics and direction of the so-called war on terror are determined without consultations with the African people. This paper focuses on central issues of regional and continental integration, conflicts, citizenship, control and mobilisation resources, true democracy, managing pluralism, constitutionalism, participation, accountability and security. These require urgent tackling to ensure more forged unity and protection of the continent. The analysis delves into concrete realities and makes suggestions for ending the quagmire of the African state.

Résumé

Cette étude porte sur les défis centraux que doit relever l'état Africain dans le contexte de l'offensive néolibérale visant à rendre le continent plus vulnérable. Historiquement, l'état Africain a été créé par les colonisateurs pour servir leurs intérêts. En

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situation postcoloniale, l'état a essentiellement servi les intérêts de cercles minuscules et puissants et de leurs partisans étrangers plutôt que ceux de l'ensemble du peuple Africain. L'autoritarisme prolongé sur le continent africain a été maintenu fondamentalement par le biais de l'état. Ce n'est que par une transformation populaire et démocratique de l'état que le continent marchera vers le développement. Historiquement, le développement dans toutes les sphères n'a jamais été réalisé indépendamment du rôle central de l'état.

Dans la période qui a suivi la Guerre Froide, l'Amérique est en course pour entraîner les gouvernements africains, les dirigeants politiques et les ressources économiques du continent vers une autre phase de domination économique. Les termes, le terrain, la politique et l'orientation de la prétendue guerre contre le terrorisme sont décidés sans consulter le peuple Africain. Cette étude se penche sur les questions centrales d'intégration régionale et continentale, de conflits, de citoyenneté, de contrôle et de mobilisation des ressources, de véritable démocratie, de gestion du pluralisme, de constitutionnalisme, de participation, de responsabilisation et de sécurité. Ces questions exigent de s'y attaquer afin d'assurer une unité et une protection du continent plus élaborées. L'analyse s'attarde sur des réalités concrètes et propose des suggestions visant à mettre fin à ce bourbier dans lequel est plongé l'état Africain.

Introduction

At various historical eras of Africa's unequal relationships with the West, the continent suffered from many injustices, including slavery and colonialism. The crudest product of colonisation was white settler dominated, the last product of which was apartheid in South Africa. The continent was a major experimental theatre and concrete terrain for battles in the course of the Cold War. America and other Western allies stood as promoters and backers of apartheid. Furthermore they spearheaded the fuelling of authoritarianism and bad governance in many African countries, whether these regimes were led by civilians or military dictators. It was common for the leaders of the hegemonic nations to demonise African patriots and nationalists who were committed to charting an alternative course for the development of their countries and peoples. One practical side of this campaign was the fact that imperialism sponsored terror, either directly or indirectly, against anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist democratic movements and governments on the continent. As Mahmood Mamdani argues the continent was trapped in the web of the Cold War on terms set by foreign rival powers, and the people of Africa paid heavily for this (Mamdani 2004: 28).

Africa finds itself once more, in the contemporary phase of global hegemony, being led by an imperial superpower that lays claim to

democracy domestically but practices military aggression and dictatorship externally. After the September 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, America accelerated its unilateral drive for a Goliath-like domination that has been accompanied with armed-twisting of reluctant nations and threats and has involved dragging on board some African political leaders into what President George W. Bush calls the 'war on terror'. The terms of the war, its terrain, politics and direction, have been determined without consultations with the African people. Barely ten days after the September 11 attacks, Bush warned the rest of the world in unambiguous terms that all countries and segments of humanity are either with the USA or are with the terrorists (Wallensteen 2003: 229). The implications of this for Africa have to be dissected. Despite efforts made by some governments, regional and continental organisations and civil society movements, there are prevailing impediments towards defending Africa's interests and its true emancipation.

The Cold War and Terror

Very complex processes and promotion of proxy actors by modern hegemonies have contributed much to the germination, growth and expansion of state and non-state terror. In a fertile analysis of the present global context Eric Hobsbawm maintains that devastating armed operations are no longer monopolised by governments and their state agents. Another dimension is that the contending forces do not have commonality in terms of characteristics, status or objectives, but all have the willingness and determination to use violence (Hobsbawm 2002).

The issue of terror in Africa has witnessed this shift. In the history of the anti-colonial liberation struggles in Africa and the post-independence armed uprisings against dictatorial and despotic regimes, violence was directed at institutions and forces representing the state. Generally attacks were not directed at the civilian population. Many armed movements considered the latter as near sacred, and thus guerrilla fighters blended with the people and the civil society like fish in the water.

The most brutal shift was demonstrated in the wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, where the civilian population had to run from both the forces of the state and the rebels. The people either sought protection

in camps set up by international peacekeepers or in refugee camps across the national frontiers. Mostly both the state forces and rebels treated their fellow citizens as targets. Nowadays armed groups in Africa demonstrate loyalty only to the warlords and are committed to looting from the people. In the worst circumstances civilians are killed, while some have their limbs severed.

In the late Cold War years there was promotion of terror against some African governments that resisted the path the West wanted for all nation states. From the 1960s to the early 1990s the United States, leading the Western bloc, viewed and treated Africa as an ideological and political battleground within the Cold War contestation with the Soviet Union. The issue of democracy in Africa, in any variety, was not on the imperialists' agenda. Rather the US supported authoritarian regimes and opposed those that were nationalistic and socialist. Financial aid and loans were pumped to regimes that were proxies of imperialist interests, regardless of the repression of the citizenry by such authoritarian and undemocratic governments. Convert and overt operations were waged against African states that sought alternative development models at the political, economic, security and military levels. Thus America has a history of being at the head of external promoters of terrorist movements in Africa. This was the case in Angola, for example, where Washington backed UNITA to fight the MPLA regime.

In a parallel manner the United States sponsored the 'Contra' terrorists to carry out atrocities to show the people of Nicaragua that the radical development alternative embarked on by the Sandinista government has no future (Mamdani 2004:14). The Sandinistas were demonised by President Reagan as evil communists. Noam Chomsky stresses that when Nicaragua took the matter to the World Court in 1986, a judgement against the USA was passed for 'unlawful use of force', and part of the ruling demanded that America pay reparations to Nicaragua (Chomsky 1999). However, before the case was even heard, the USA had withdrawn from the court, and it subsequently refused to recognise the ruling. As Roger Burbach argues, this was a clear demonstration of American disregard and disrespect for international law (Burbach 2003). The US then proceeded to veto a UN Security Council resolution that called on all states, without mentioning any in particular, 'to adhere to international law' (Chomsky 2002).

During the Reagan administration America increasingly turned to the apartheid regime in South Africa, which unleashed proxy state ter-

rorism in neighbouring countries. The South African military and its agents actively fought on Angolan territory alongside UNITA. It was involved in acts of destabilisation and devastation in other frontline states. A key objective of the massive destruction of infrastructure and other social and economic targets in the region was to create traumatising horrors both physically and psychologically in order to maintain the racist position that Africans, on their own, cannot rule themselves without so-called tribal conflicts (Mamdani 2004). As in the case of Nicaragua many of the Southern Africa government's enemies were portrayed as communists promoting unworkable and disastrous development alternatives.

The Resistencia National Mocambicana (Renamo) in Mozambique was created in the mid-1970s by the illegal white minority regime in Rhodesia in collaboration with former Portuguese colonialists. The Rhodesian settler regime launched an undeclared war to cripple the FRELIMO government because of Mozambican support for the Rhodesian national liberation movement. According to Johan Leidi, after the independence struggle triumphed in Rhodesia and the country was renamed Zimbabwe, apartheid South Africa inherited Renamo (Leidi 2003). Coupled with the Reagan administration's policy of 'constructive engagement' with South Africa, the terror arsenal of the Renamo terrorists was oiled through the apartheid military. Mamdani stresses that in the process the havoc caused was to prove to the population that the Frelimo-led nationalist government could not assure law and order (Mamdani 2003). This devastating war virtually destroyed all the development efforts of the Mozambican government and lasted for over 16 years, until the peace accord of 1992.

Imperialist-backed terrorist movements in Angola and Mozambique targeted communities and infrastructure, causing enormous ruinous effects. In the course of the period 1980–1988 America and Britain supported state terrorism by racist South Africa and its military offensives in the region. In the process the violent aggression caused over $60 billion in damage and 1.5 million deaths. Inside South Africa there was large-scale state and related violence and repression that resulted in thousands of deaths (Chomsky 2003). Yet for the backers of apartheid, both local and international, it was the liberation movement that represented 'terrorism'. Never for once was apartheid South Africa classified by official America as a rogue state promoting state terrorism. Instead, as Chomsky points out, the apartheid regime was a valuable ally of the

West, and it was praised for its supposed role in 'constructive engagements' (Chomsky 2003).

To defy the dictates of hegemonic power was the criterion that qualified a country for being classified as a rogue state. In 1986 the Reagan administration bombed Libya and justified the aggression on the basis of self-defence (Chomsky 1999). This was the first direct modern American state terrorism in Africa. At no time did America declare war on Libya, and in due course it officially classified Libya alongside Cuba, Iran, and North Korea as rogue states. At the time of the initial declaration official America was celebrating secularist Iraq, as it was yet to be labelled a rogue state. The US government supported Baghdad in the war with Islamist Iran and provided Iraq with deadly weapons, including chemical ones, that were used against both external enemies and internal opposition. Saddam Hussein, then a worthy client of the West, was even used 'to train several hundreds of Libyans sent to Iraq by the United States so that they could overthrow the Qaddafi government' (Chomsky 1999).

Hegemonic Influences on Economic and Political Reforms

Across Africa, mostly from the 1960s, many nationalist regimes were overthrown. The West was linked with many coups that installed tyrannical dictatorships. Then, as Issa Shivji succinctly puts it, authoritarianism was not considered bad by 'today's champions of democracy and good governance' (Shivji 2003). The hegemonic neo-liberal Western political leaders and the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWI) portray the African people as helpless victims of bad leadership. For them African people are not the agencies of change and African societies are merely at the mercy of bad governance. This somehow implies that only the hegemons and the donor community—in collaboration with those they consider 'good' African political leaders—can save the continent.

From the early 1980s many African governments—regardless of the nature of the state, economic policies and political orientation—have been gripped by economic crisis and have responded by accepting neo-liberal structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) sponsored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. SAPs, in reality, promote a dominant role for market forces in the economy, deregulation, devaluation of national currencies, retrenchment of workers

in the public and private sectors, privatisation of public property, withdrawal of subsidies and government retreat in the area of social provisioning and welfare services (Bangura 2001; Beckman 1992; Mkandawire and Olukoshi 1995).

The beneficiaries of privatisation and commercialisation of public companies have basically been limited to key actors of the ruling classes and foreign companies, as they go about accumulating wealth and plundering the public sphere without the consent of the people. The health, education, water, electricity and other sectors have seriously declined. Many local industries, no longer able to afford foreign exchange or to 'withstand the imports of cheap goods' (Shivji 2003), have gone bankrupt. The capacity of the state has been weakened, and in the worst cases the state has degenerated or even collapsed. An analysis by Yusuf Bangura (2001) vividly depicts the ways in which the state has distanced itself from the interests of the people by retreating from the provision of public services, infrastructure and security.

Global political trends have also weakened the African state. With the removal of the Berlin Wall in 1989, followed by the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there was no longer any serious threat to the interests of imperialists. African governments lost room to manoeuvre in their relations with the West, and imperialism began to design and promote a neo-liberal political agenda for the continent. As Anyang' Nyong'o points out, a key component of the new strategy was to argue that time had run out for 'authoritarian' regimes in Africa and to promote a political project of 'democratisation' that included multi-party political systems, protection of human rights and promotion of 'good governance' (Shivji 2005).

It was as if nothing had been accomplished in Africa before this, yet the reality is that, despite all sorts of problems, some gains were made in the 1960s and 1970s in quite a number of countries, including the establishment and maintainance of institutions that the citizenry cherished. This honeymoon ended when economic and political crises deepened in the era of structural reforms. By the mid-1980s many states had sunk into deeper crises through the implementation of neo-liberal reforms. Many workers, peasants, women groups, students, academics, farmers and professionals became increasingly restive throughout Africa.

Thus, due to both the global context of the end of the Cold war and the internal dynamics of politics in Africa, popular forces and opposi-

tion parties could no longer be repressed. Adebayo Olukoshi argues that this new opening, however, had caveats for political forces that wanted to transcend what the global hegemons desired for the continent. First, the rise of global neo-liberalism not only meant that internal political reforms and changes were inaugurated in conditions of economic decline but also that elected governments had to reckon with 'the hegemonic political forces in the international system that had themselves taken on board the neo-liberal ideology of the market in dealing with the countries of the Third world in general and Africa in particular' (Olukoshi 1998). Second, the 'emergence in the post-Cold War international system of conditions favouring political reforms in Africa did not simultaneously produce conditions for the reversal, or even tempering, of neo-liberalism or structural adjustment' (Olukoshi 1998). Third, the post-cold war order did not 'produce a greater freedom of choice of economic policy direction for the countries of the Third World', especially in Africa (Olukoshi 1998).

Africa in the Post-September 11 Global Hegemonic Offensive

In 1998, Al-Qaeda bombs destroyed the America embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, killing hundreds of people, mostly innocent Africans. Three years later the offensive was carried to American territory when terrorists hijacked commercial airliners and crashed them into the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. About 4,000 people perished, mainly civilians, among whom were citizens of over 60 nations (Wallensteen 2003). Mamdani argues that these attacks, and the American response in the form of a 'war on terror', set in motion a new phase of state and non-state terror whereby 'victims are not necessarily the target; victims may as well be chosen by lottery' (Mamdani 2004).

The American unilateral course in international politics was soon spelt out. Addressing a joint session of the United States Congress on September 20, 2001, President Bush clearly defined how unlimited the scope of the frontiers and targets of the American war on terror were to be. He declared that 'our war on terror begins with al-Qaeda but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated' (cited in Wallensteen 2003). In all the subsequent American political and military actions the UN has

larely been disregarded, nor has the yardstick for qualifying groups as terrorist been defined.

Through this vagueness nationalist, patriotic movements and organisations can easily be labelled as terrorists and subjected to reprisals. It is also possible to use the pretence of terrorism to deal with states that either defer or resist unilateral US policies. Indeed Bush clearly implied that other nations should no longer exercise critical judgement or follow independent paths. They were warned to either accept the new American global commitment and involvement or be considered enemies: 'every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists' (cited in Wallensteen 2003). Since then many African governments have joined the bandwagon by depicting as terrorists all kinds of political opponents and rival groups that are in competition for political power (Mamdani 2004), and some of the political leaders on the continent have become completely subservient to the US.

What Bush's September 20, 2001 declaration means to the rest of humanity is that American interests have primacy over any other considerations in the international system. In effect only weaker nations, those of Africa included, have to abide by multilateral laws and decisions. This is dangerous for humanity. As observed on the eve of the military attack on Afghanistan in 2001 by the Spanish judge, Baltesar Garzon, 'lasting peace and freedom can be achieved only with legality, justice, respect for diversity, defense of human rights and measured and fair responses' in the global system (cited in Burbach 2003).

In its current hegemonic drive the US has 'spread carnage and war, violating civil liberties and human rights' in different locations around the world (Burbach 2003). The democratic voices of American civil society do not matter, and the world is increasingly sharply divided, with the interests of majority of humanity totally ignored by the neoconservatives in control of the White House. As Burbach (2003) observes, on the 'one side stands an arrogant unilateralist clique in the US that engages in state terrorism and human rights abuses while tearing up international treaties', while on the other side 'is a global movement that is determined to advance a broad conception of human rights and human dignity through the utilisation of law, extradition treaties and limited policing activities.' What is happening is a fundamental struggle over where globalisation in the context of state and non-state terror will take humanity. The big question is whether the powerful economic

and political interests of the hegemons, led by neo-conservative politi-
cal leaders, 'will create a new world order that relies on intervention
and state terrorism, or whether a globalist perspective from below based
on a more just and egalitarian conception of the world will gain ascend-
ancy' (Burbach 2003).

Oil and the Strategic Importance of Africa

At present the Bush administration maps out the control of the Atlan-
tic waters of the 'Gulf of Guinea as a zone of special strategic interest'
(Vanguard 2002). This is due to America's rethinking of its over-reli-
ance on Middle East oil in the post-September 11 context. In 2000
Bush, as a presidential candidate, declared that Africa 'doesn't fit into
the national strategic interests as far as I can see' (*Canadian Press* 2002),
but after coming to power, and faced with increased turbulence in the
Middle East, especially after the invasion and occupation of Iraq,
America has turned in the direction of Africa for strategic oil interests.

At one time African oil fields were thought to account for only about
6 percent of the world's known oil reserves, but in 2001 prospectors
discovered a further 8 billion barrels of crude oil reserves, seven billion
of them offshore from the Gulf of Guinea, far away from 'any social
and political troubles' (*Canadian Press* 2002) and a conveniently short
and safe journey from the United States, only half the distance from
the Persian Gulf. Current projections are that cheap, high-quality oil
from Africa will account for 25 percent of American oil consumption by
2020. With world consumption expected to rise by almost 60 percent
by 2020, African oil will reduce US dependence on Middle East oil
dramatically (*New York Times* 2002). Meanwhile new oil fields ranging
from Morocco and Western Sahara down the Atlantic coast to Angola
are being discovered. The island country of Sao Tome and Principe,
with a population of only 150,000, has given consent for a big US
naval base on its small territory. Despite earlier denials by some offi-
cials the American congress and the pentagon have discussed the mat-
ter. There are other American military exchanges with other countries
in West and Central Africa (Monbiot 2003).

Equatorial Guinea, hitherto perceived as an obscure enclave under
bloodthirsty dictators, has become a country of interest because of oil.
There are indications that suggest the existence of American military
observer stations in Nigeria, Niger, Mali and Senegal, all located in the

West African Sahel region, with obvious implications for future military policing by the superpower from the Sahelian region to the Atlantic Coast of West Africa.

The picture becomes clearer if one adds the ongoing American drive to play a role in the control of 1.25 billion barrels of known oil reserves in Sudan, which could even triple if the peace settlement between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) works out. The Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline is estimated to have cost $3.5 billion and has been used for moving oil from Chad to the Atlantic coast since the end of 2004. Chad is expected to produce 255,000 barrels per day. Equatorial Guinea is expected to produce 350,000 barrels per day starting from 2005 (*New York Times* 2002), while the projection is that Nigeria will increase its production from 2 million barrels of oil per day to 3.5 million barrels by 2007. With America having lifted sanctions and re-established diplomatic relations with Libya this former 'rogue' state's oil reserves, the largest in Africa, are currently a focal point of interest to the West.

Rethinking African Conflicts

In 1994 about one million people were killed in state-perpetrated genocide targeted at Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda. This was the peak of the history of Hutu versus Tutsi atrocities, especially since the 1950s. Also it is estimated that over 4 million people have been killed in the violent conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) from 1994 onwards. Figures on internally displaced and homeless people were put at about 4 million in 2004. This excludes refugees that exited from elsewhere, most especially people from other war-ridden neighbouring states that moved into the DRC. However because oil is not involved, America does not show concern (Chomsky 2003: 105).

In many of the countries of the African Great Lakes region the state is not in control of many zones. Diverse armed groups, militias and warlords operate in various enclaves in the most violent ways. In connivance with some multinationals, militias such as the Mai Mai of the eastern DRC forcibly conscript people and use them as slaves in illegal gold, diamond and other mining activities as well as in drug and human trafficking. In addition the vicious chains of intra- and inter-state wars seem to be conspiring against the UN's peacekeeping efforts. In any case the history of UN peacekeeping and other interventions has been

marked by dismal failure in both the DRC, right from the 1960s, and in Rwanda in 1994.

Linked to these conflicts is the problematic of managing the citizenship question in African countries, both within and across national boundaries (Adejumobi 2004: 4-8). The Great Lakes region has witnessed bloody internal and regional conflicts for decades, and it has been allowed to sink deeper into anarchy. In Côte d'Ivoire the question of citizenship, including belonging and exclusion, has given rise to violent xenophobia in which the state plays a central role in promoting the most divisive sectarianism that threatens security beyond national boundaries, with serious implication for the West Africa sub-region. If Africa is to leap forward, it must take the resolution of its numerous intra- and inter-state wars seriously.

NEPAD as Africa's Development Model?

Some African political leaders, for example, South Africa's Thabo Mbeki, seem to appreciate the historicity and political context of the present challenges confronting the continent. But it is baffling to find so many contradictions between ideals and practicability in what such leaders say. Mbeki enunciates the challenges facing African renewal and renaissance, which somehow influenced the formation of the African Union (AU) and its main development programme, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The dominant position of the political leaders is that Africa has to reform its political and constitutional systems to enable the people to govern and to ensure that Africa becomes a continent where democracy and human rights reign 'to enable every African to play a role in deciding the future of our countries and continent' (Mbeki 2003). Mbeki stresses the need 'to respect and promote the dignity of all Africans' and calls for an end to violent inter- and intra-state conflicts on the continent. In addition, because of Africans' interdependence and common destiny, he recognises that authoritarianism in governance is unacceptable and should be given zero tolerance and that neutrality, as enshrined in the non-interference clause in the former OAU charter, is unacceptable in situations in which the state commits crimes against its people (Mbeki 2003: 3).

In promoting NEPAD, Mbeki argues that Africans must 'act to end poverty and underdevelopment', think for themselves (by not allowing external powers prescribe to them what should be done) and create

their 'own development programmes and take responsibility for their success' (Mbeki 2003). The African state is seen to be at the centre of playing 'a developmental role, from the local to the national sphere of government' (Mbeki 2003). To achieve this, public servants have to internalise the idea that the people and their interests come first, which in turn means that political leaders must lead by example. Therefore a mechanism to fight corruption has to be entrenched that starts with the political leaders. Mbeki stresses that Africa has the human and material resources to confront the challenge of poverty and underdevelopment and build capacity for self-reliance. To him this does not mean repudiating mutually beneficial partnerships with developed countries, but Africa must not turn to slavish dependence on foreign aid (Mbeki 2003).

However, despite all these fine ideas, many analysts wonder whether NEPAD is an idea being pushed by the West. They point out that in many African countries the generality of the citizenry, trade unions, civil society, religious groups, opposition parties, academic and intellectual organisations and other democratic forces have not been engaged or formally consulted by the political leaders and technocrats that are constructing NEPAD (Akinrinade 2003; Bond 2003; Melber 2002). Moreover even some of the principal movers of the NEPAD project on the continent are no longer sounding optimistic. In 2004 President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, one of the leaders who spearheaded the creation of NEPAD, complained about the programme employing more staff from English-speaking countries than from French-speaking ones. At a 2004 Durban conference attended by African leaders, the media widely reported Wade's criticism of NEPAD's approach to economic integration in which he concluded that NEPAD is essentially a waste of time and money. Analysts provide ample evidence that NEPAD is an old pro-imperialist project repackaged in new clothes by the neo-liberals (Bond 2003; Bujra 2004; Shivji 2004).

Thus it is time for committed national and pan-African movements, organisations and groupings to intensify efforts and co-ordinate actions on charting the course for the future of alternative economic development for the continent. Africans can no longer wait for the elite to take the lead. Labour movements, the youth, community leaders, civil society organisations, environmentalists, political parties, women's organisations and intellectuals need to articulate alternative views and present them to the African people. The culture of debate in both state and

civic arenas has to be broadened. The political leaders and their consultants have not bothered to explain to citizens what happened to previous grandiose alternatives such as the Lagos Plan of Action.

Reflecting on Socio-Economic and Political Challenges

For Africa the debt crisis has been made worse by globalisation. In sub-Saharan Africa the overall total debt rose from $60 billion to $206 billion in the years 1980–2000 (Bond 2003). South Africa has the strongest economy in Africa and is rated in terms of purchasing power as the 21st biggest economy in the world (Monbiot 2004), yet many see the country's Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Strategy—introduced in 1996—as South Africa's self-imposed version of SAPs. A current problem is the South African government's attempt to run its social services, such as water and electricity, on free-market principles that the poor cannot afford. In 2000 pre-paid water metres were installed for the first time in Madlebe in KwaZulu Natal, and those who could not pay had their water supplies disconnected and had to resort to fetching water from streams and rivers. One result was one of the continent's worst-ever cholera outbreaks that 'infected over 100,000 people and killed 260' (Monbiot 2004). Although the Madlebe scheme was dropped, similar ones have continued elsewhere. In early October 2004 these were met with blockades, acts of sabotage and attacks on utility workers in some communities around Johannesburg.

For some years there has been a suspicion—even though the government denies it—that the IMF, Britain and the US have had advisers and consultants operating behind the scenes in South Africa from the time apartheid ended in order to promote the notion of 'market discipline' (Monbiot 2004). The proponents of market discipline argue that demanding 100 percent cost recovery is the only way to restrain wastage and will eventually help the poor to escape from poverty. A major consequence is that 'ten million people reported having had their water cut off…and ten million experienced electricity disconnections' in a situation where general unemployment rose from 16 percent in 1995 to 30 percent in 2002 (with youth unemployment at 47 percent) (Bond 2003). Meanwhile a 2001 survey by *The Economist* showed that AIDS is cutting the rate of growth of the most economically active population. Between 1994 and 2000 nearly 500,000 jobs were lost (*The Economist* 2001b).

On the other hand, compared with other countries on the continent, South Africa is a democracy with a viable electoral system. A war on corruption is ongoing in both the public and private sectors, and a vibrant civil society is playing a key role. There are viable opposition parties, political stability and a world-class legal system (*The Economist* 2001b), along with a growing economy. As a result many Africans from other parts of the continent continue to flock into South Africa, which they see as 'the continent's great hope' (*The Economist* 2001a). Many African nationalists have maintained that there should be unlimited movement for people on the continent. This should certainly be the ultimate target, but there is need to recognise the fact that the present context is different from the decades prior to globalisation. In many regions of Africa the youth have not been given a role within the various sectors of the system. Millions of citizens are sceptical about their future within their national frontiers. Several countries on the continent are marked by failure of governments to provide opportunities for the citizenry, as the ruling circles behave like foreign occupiers.

In this age of globalisation there is so much information about places having opportunities for migrants—real, deceptive and illusionary. The youth question has to be taken seriously. Images of Africans escaping from the continent across the Sahara desert, the seas and oceans to the West and elsewhere in search of so-called greener postures, with many dying in the process, while others are treated in the most dehumanised ways, are beamed all over the world. The situation cannot be justified on the basis that Africans are flocking to the West because the Europeans came to Africa during colonialism without any visas. Something more concrete has to be done about the existing internal conditions in several African countries in terms of the social, economic, political and other rights of the people (Aina 1997).

Free and fair elections are still like a fairy tale in several African countries. The electoral processes are ineffective, while corruption, inflation, insecurity, disintegrating social services, retrenchment of workers and high unemployment bedevil public life. Africa's most populous country, Nigeria, provides an illustrative case study. In the vital education sector, for example, state neglect of the public universities is glaring. In the 2005 budget the federal government allocated a mere 8 percent of total expenditure to education. In 2003 the country made $26 billion from the sale of oil in the international market, but the education sector was allocated a mere 3 percent in the national budget.

Meanwhile intra-state conflicts are estimated to have killed hundreds of thousands of people, and after more than 45 years of independence Nigeria is yet to have a constitution derived from a national democratic debate (Chafe 2003).

Instead the political process of never-ending democratic experiments has been guided by military regimes with the collaboration of some conservative lawyers and politicians. As Aina puts it, without mentioning the country, in less than 50 years the people 'have lived through colonisation, seen independence, experienced military coups, fought at least one civil war and have elected both a parliamentary style Prime Minister and an Executive President' (Aina 2003). Many years of the absence of gover-nance based on the consent of the citizenry and the resulting lack of an enduring democratic culture and practice have contributed to galvanizing various forces to pose challenges to the state and diverse factions of the ruling elite (Kazah-Toure 2004). As a result the emancipatory discourses on putting Nigeria back on a democratic course can no longer be restricted to a ruling elite that came to power through fraudulent elections, especially the most flawed, unfree and unfair elections of 2003 according to both local and international monitors (Bond 2003; Momoh 2005).

Conclusion

Africa requires a new internationalism led by anti-imperialist/anti-globalisation forces and pan-Africanist movements to challenge the present order. This has to be done if the African state is to be made more relevant in the development of the continent. In the history of the world no country has developed without the state playing a central role. As Patrick Bond maintains, a lot more needs to be done to shake off the 'debilitating economic and geopolitical aggression' in the present hegemonic and fundamentalists offensives (Bond 2003). The neo-liberal agenda on democracy, human rights, good governance, account-ability and economic policies has not been determined or agreed on by the African people.

Africans require conscious efforts to keep the memories of the past alive and enable them to shape their destiny for a better future. What Edward Said (2003) calls on the people of the Middle East to do is worth rethinking for Africa. Let Africans expand the frontiers of their memories and rethink the historical and other processes that have led

to their bondage, including the experiences of slavery, colonialism, racism, anti-colonial nationalism, post-colonial imperialism and proxy regimes that serve imperialist interests. In addition they have to reflect and rethink the scourges of coups and counter-coups, civil wars, inter-state wars and sectarian conflicts confronting the continent. Africans also have to re-examine the leaders, ruling classes and governments that have been brutalising their own citizens and those at the centre of igniting hatred and xenophobia against sections of the citizenry. Fundamentally there ought to be a rethink about the promoters of the scourges and the beneficiaries at the different phases of the historical and political processes. It is worth noting that in each of the processes there have always been those who stood and struggled for the larger interests of the continent and the people on the one hand and, on the other hand, those who have never relented in keeping the continent within the hegemonic noose.

Africans have to do more to solidify regional and continental integration and employ more mechanisms towards the resolution of violent intra- and inter-state conflicts. The AU has to tackle the question of citizenship more vigorously. Citizens, civil society organisations and all stakeholders have to take up the challenges and work out positions to be pursued in concrete terms so that the control, development and distribution of resources are guided by the interest of Africa in all spheres. There is need for pan-African peoples' movements and political parties to intensify the struggles for democratic governance on the continent in opposition to the superimposed, neo-liberal, hegemonic variant. However, defiance can only be meaningful if real power in all spheres is taken seriously. If there is defiance without power, it will be as if nothing has been learned over the centuries.

If the continent is to free itself, determine its own place in the world and be a strong player in global politics, it must above all beat its tragic internal swords into ploughshares. The continent must put in place mechanisms to achieve true independence and advance its interests in the face of the current hegemonic hurricane. Only when Africa stops erecting its economic, political and social systems on weak and subservient foundations and instead builds its structures and institutions on solid ground will it achieve lofty heights for present and future generations.

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Towards a Functional African State: Bridging the Gap Between the State and the People

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Abstract

This paper analyses the contribution of the African state to the problems of development in Africa. I argue that the nature of the modern African state, inherited from the colonial state, is inherently oppressive and dysfunctional and that a fundamental change in the nature of the state is required in order to reposition the continent developmentally and liberate the energies of the African people. The existing nature of the African state disposes it toward a negative relationship with the people, leading to a gap in the relationship between the people and the state. This gap has to be bridged in order for the state to contribute positively to the developmental process in the interests of the people. I argue in particular that relying on structural adjustment, electoral democracy and other forms of reform to bridge this gap is misplaced because these reforms do not seek to change the nature of the African state. The people cannot liberate themselves from state oppression or make the state accountable through elections conducted and presided over by the existing negative structures of the state. Only a fundamental change in the nature of the state can accomplish this.

Résumé

Cette étude analyse la contribution de l'état Africain aux problèmes de développement en Afrique. Je soutiens que la nature de l'état Africain moderne, hérité de l'état colonial, est oppressive et dysfonctionnelle et qu'un changement fondamental de cette nature est requis afin de repositionner le continent sur le plan du développement et de libérer les énergies du peuple africain. La nature actuelle de l'état Africain l'incline vers un rapport négatif avec le peuple, créant ainsi un fossé entre

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eux. Ce fossé doit être comblé afin que l'état contribue positivement au processus de développement dans l'intérêt du peuple. Je démontre notamment que dépendre de l'ajustement structurel, de la démocratie électorale et d'autres formes de réformes pour combler ce fossé est déplacé car ces réformes ne visent pas à changer la nature de l'état Africain. Le peuple ne peut pas se libérer de l'oppression de l'état ou responsabiliser l'état par le biais d'élections effectuées et présidées par les structures étatiques négatives existantes. Seul un changement fondamental de la nature de l'état peut accomplir cela.

Introduction

The reality of underdevelopment in Africa is undeniable. There is massive lack of infrastructure, the people lack proper and adequate food and living conditions are so abject that that more than half of the people in the continent survive below the poverty line. Indeed Africa is constantly presented as the typical face of underdevelopment, with images of malnourished and dying children and parents, and the continent appears to depend on aid and donations just to keep up the appearance of decent humanity. Therefore the issue in Africa is not the reality of underdevelopment, but how to change that reality by bringing real and meaningful development to the continent (Mkandawire and Olukoshi 1995; Nabudere 2000; Tipoteh 2000).

However the reality of underdevelopment in Africa is not only about the impoverished living conditions of the people. The continent also suffers from impoverished institutions. This is not because of lack of resources—Africa is well-endowed with both human and natural resources—but because of a combination of institutional failures which have to be corrected for the continent to achieve development. Chief among these institutional problems is the state, which is ultimately responsible for the underdeveloped nature of Africa if only by virtue of providing the framework for every organisation within its jurisdiction (Laski 1982). The state is the basic modern organisational condition for existence, and it must follow that the state will influence all the actions within its jurisdictional competence. This is the sense in which the African state is a major component of developmental failure in Africa, suggesting that the problems of the state have to be addressed as part of the solution to the problems of underdevelopment on the continent (Yahaya 1989; Bangura et al. 1992).

The conditions of existence of the state in Africa are non-functional, if not dysfunctional, judging by the inability of the state to even main-

tain reasonable and effective control over its territory. The African state exists more as a juridical entity at the mercy of international recognition, not through the affirmation of its people. It is an exploitative and oppressive force rather than an instrument for the people's welfare and edification (Bratton 1989; Clapham 1996). The truth is that the African state at present functions as an entity apart from the people and is thus enmeshed in a crisis of significance and legitimacy as it struggles to justify its existence. Only to the extent that this crisis of legitimacy is successfully confronted can the African state become a force for development on the continent.

The crisis of legitimacy and relevance means that state structures are continually contested, such that the African landscape is replete with wars and other violent struggles to gain control of the contested structures. This reality is not conducive to real development and imposes extra burdens on the people. The context of the state therefore has to be made more conducive to development in Africa. This requires a radical transformation of the state to make it functional and people-oriented. My argument is that the present non-functional state in Africa is a negative influence on development processes and has to be changed to ensure that the state provides an enabling environment for real development. The challenge of making the African state a functional and development-promoting entity is the issue addressed in this paper. I explore in particular the different strategies for bridging the gap between the state and the people, given that an abiding characteristic of the African state's dysfunctionality is its alienation from the people.

The Gap Between the State and the People in Africa

The African state is remarkable for its enormous and untrammeled power over its people, even as it set itself apart from the people. Perhaps deriving its essential conception from its colonial pedigree, the state in Africa operates as an imposed power over and above society, surviving by the exploitation of the people. Rather than operating as an organ of society for the protection and promotion of the people's interests, the state acts as an organ apart from society, surviving from the oppression of the people. This is the sense in which the African state has been described as a 'leviathan' state (Callaghy 1988) not answerable to any check or countervailing force due to 'its lack of autonomy, the immen-

sity of its power, its proneness to abuse and lack of immunity against it'
(Ake 1996:7).

The untrammeled power of the state in Africa covers the entire gamut
of life and societal operations. Claude Ake (1996: 6-7), for instance,
describes the workings of the African state thus:

> There is hardly any rule of law, no plausible system of justice, no trans-
> parency. The coercive institutions of the state are above the law, civil
> society is below it, ordinary people are out of sight, far beyond its pro-
> tection. The judiciary is dissociated from justice, and the bureaucracy is
> oppressive and arbitrary. The [African] state, like the colonial state be-
> fore it, turns on the calculus of strength.

Such a state does not and cannot care about its people and would not
make their interests its concern; it is a state in which power is exercised
for the sake of power and not for the benefit of the people. This state is
a predatory one, existing for the oppression and exploitation of its own
people through the deployment of 'overdeveloped' structures which over-
whelm all other structures in the society.

Ironically the exercise of power by the state in Africa does not assure
obedience to its rules and regulations or the ability to fully institution-
alise itself. As already noted, the African state survives on the 'calculus'
of strength and the use of force. It is not in a position to generate an
affinity with the people because it does not work for the interest of the
people. In response the people of Africa have learnt to treat the state
with disdain. They correctly see the state as an oppressive entity and
take the necessary steps to protect themselves from it where possible.
Since state and society in Africa are placed in contradiction by virtue of
the preference of the state to prey on the society, society is not in a
position to have a meaningful relationship with the state. As a result
the state cannot fully and successfully institutionalise itself or turn its
power into obedience. And with the state relying on force in order to
perpetuate its oppression, society is at liberty to relate to it as a con-
queror entity, something to be feared and obeyed where necessary and
to be undermined wherever this is possible. As Ake (1996: 8-9) ob-
serves:

> when most of us encounter what answers to the state only as a preda-
> tory force on the rampage, when those who are supposed to defend us
> have turned their arms against us and never grant us any respite from
> exploitation … . is it any wonder that we don't have a public morality,

that we think nothing of subverting the state, stealing from it, cheating it in every way and refusing to pay taxes?

This means that the enormously powerful state in Africa is also remarkably weak and is not able to tease out a meaningful relationship with society (Chazan 1988). This is the sense in which the African state has also been described as a 'lame' leviathan unable to translate its enormous power into routine obedience (Callaghy 1988). The chasm between the state and society in Africa means that the state does not exist for the promotion and protection of the interests of the people, nor do the people take the state as their own or feel concerned about it. The people in fact see the state as an impediment and try to work out their survival in spite of it. The state in turn sees society only as an entity to be plundered and exploited.

The implication is that neither the state nor society in Africa benefits from a relationship that should ordinarily be rewarding to them, as the state lacks full institutionalisation. Ideally state and society should function in a symbiotic relationship, with the state caring for the interests of society and society supplying the wherewithal for the functions of the state. However, the state in Africa has to routinely dissipate its power and energy on the use of force in order to exploit and accumulate resources from the society. On the other hand society is routinely denuded of resources through exploitation by the state. Thus the reality of the gap between the state and the people in Africa not only speaks to an existing chasm; it also points to an undesirable situation that has to be confronted and changed if the two entities are to benefit from a more productive relationship in which a functional state becomes the benchmark for real development in society.

Bridging the Gap: The Limits of Structural Adjustment and Electoral Democracy

The reality of the gap between the state and society in Africa has not really been contested vigorously in spite of attempts to underplay its importance to the development process by some analysts, particularly those representing the notion of rolling back the state (Kawonise et al. 1998). The general consensus has been that the state in Africa has been inefficient and therefore has to be made efficient and effective in order to make any meaningful impact. This should happen even if there is disagreement about what it would take to achieve a functional state in Africa. The Bretton Woods institutions, for instance, believe that the

African state has to be strengthened in order to provide a framework for the implementation of their reform agenda. However this will only help the state consolidate its overarching powers, thus deepening its relation of force to the people. As Beckman (1992: 83) puts it, the 'focus of the World Bank is on the restructuring of the African state in order to make it supportive of its long-term strategy for the liberation of market forces … [in] African society'. Thus it is not surprising that the restructuring in Africa carried out under the aegis of the Bretton Woods institutions produced more negative reactions as the people responded to the deepening intensity of state oppression which this restructuring effected.

In the era of structural adjustment and deregulation under the aegis of the 'limited state', the African state was expected to become more efficient by presiding over the imposition of market forces that exposed the people more fully to the exploitative sting of international business and its local agents while pretending to concentrate on 'good governance', that is, the strengthening of the repressive apparatus of the state in order to cope with the negative reactions of the people to the impoverishing effects of structural adjustment programmes. This 'reform' of the state thus did not bridge the gap between it and the people; the state only strengthened its forces against the people and their agitation. The continuation of the gap explains why structural adjustment in Africa was 'characterised by worsening living conditions and the intensification of demands for improved living standards' by the people (Mkandawire and Olukoshi 1995; Tipoteh 2000).

This scenario required further efforts at reforming the African state in order to give a semblance of affinity between it and the people. One of the ways these efforts manifested themselves was in the attempt to impose 'democratisation' on the processes of the state. The case was made that the people and the state should work together and that this would bridge the gap between them, with the people having a working control over the activities of the state through democratic processes, largely through elections. The democratisation process in Africa therefore concerned itself mainly with the conduct of elections and the establishment of as many political parties as possible. Many African countries went through the process of conducting elections in order to give a new order and perspective to the existence of the state. From this perspective elections are expected to help guarantee control of the people over their own affairs and ensure that they are in a position to install governments that serve their needs. A government that is accountable

to the people should in theory run the activities of the state in a people-oriented and people-friendly manner, and the end result should be a state that relate positively to its people.

As a starting point electoral democratisation had the potential of redirecting the affairs and essence of the state positively towards the people:

> The legality of the political opposition, enlargement of the public space through a plural press and a rich array of civic organisations ... [together with the] gradual abandonment of undue persecution of conscientious objectors, etc. are important preconditions for the more elaborate, more arduous and long-term task of reconstituting and transforming the political ... institutions and political cultures (Amuwo 1999: 16).

The implication of this position is that electoral democracy should help to remove the continuing oppressive activities of the state by turning the state over to the control of the people and thus ensuring that the gap between the people and the state is effectively closed. This is the sense in which political reform was to accompany the economic reforms carried out under structural adjustment, with the two reforms ultimately delivering real development for the people and impacting positively on their living conditions (Kawonise et al., 1998).

Unfortunately the immense expectations invested in electoral democracy do not reckon with the guiding disposition of the state toward all acts within its territory. This means that electoral democracy has to be conceptualised and contemplated ultimately within the context dictated by the constricting nature of the state in Africa. It should not be assumed that a context that is anti-people would ordinarily yield itself to control by the people. Thus Claude Ake (1996) argues that democratisation in Africa can only be real and meaningful if it seeks to address and change the constricting context of the state. Unfortunately, as Ake notes (1996: 6), democratisation in Africa manifesting as electoral democracy has been 'conducted with no questions asked about the character of the state, as if it has no implication for democracy'. Since virtually every act falls within the purview of the context established by the state, elections too will reflect the overarching and overriding nature of the state and its anti-people disposition. Elections will never deliver control of the state to the people within this context.

Thus it is not surprising that elections under the context of electoral democratisation do not differ significantly from the manipulative trend

that is consistent with the oppressive nature of the state in Africa. They give voters 'only a choice between oppressors' and result in 'voting that never amounts to choosing', as elections continue to be 'manipulated through rules of the game that reduce the chances for fairness and by electoral fraud' (Ake 1996). This is why manipulation of elections has been a key feature of the 'democratization' process in Africa, leading to disputed results in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Togo and Malawi, with the manipulations sometimes serving as a basis for further disputes and violent conflicts. Within this context the existing gap between the state and the people will necessarily continue, and the people will be further impoverished by avoidable conflicts engendered by disputed elections.

Electoral democracy does not address the fundamental nature of the gap between the African state and the people caused by the nature of the state itself. The gap exists because of the oppressive nature of the state, and it is only to the extent that this oppressive nature is confronted and changed that a meaningful relationship can be contemplated between the state and the people. In maintaining an adversarial relationship with the state, the people are only reacting to the state's exploitative nature. A more congenial relationship can be achieved only if the state changes its nature and relates in a more positive way to the people. This situation means that working for a positive relationship between the state and the people entails more than elections; it must involve a direct assault on the nature of the state itself. A new conception of the state is needed in which the state exists for the benefit of the people. Achieving this must include free and fair elections to ensure that governments are accountable to the people but cannot be limited to this. The overall context of state-society relations has to be reconstituted to underline the centrality of the people.

Electoral democracy is not able to significantly change the existing gap between the state and the people in Africa because it does not address the nature of the state. It seeks to change the relationship between the people and the state without changing the nature of the state itself. But only by addressing the oppressive and exploitative nature of the state can the gap between the state and the people be confronted. And only by bridging this gap can a functional and meaningful state emerge to direct the process of real development in Africa.

Lessons from the Decolonisation Struggle

The oppressive nature of the state in Africa is related to its pedigree in the colonial state, which saw its essence as subjugating and exploiting the people. The exploitative character of the colonial state was consistent with the subjugating and exploitative essence of colonialism itself. Since the colonial state was set up principally to further the interests of colonialism, it naturally embodied and replicated the essence of colonialism. Therefore it was not inconsistent for the colonial state to see the subjugation of the people in the colonies as its prime objective. The reaction of the people in the colonies was also consistent with this notion. They saw the colonial state as an entity to be actively resisted, and it was in this context that the spirit of nationalism and the struggle for decolonisation was born among the colonised peoples. Therefore the colonial state was not just an entity above the society and existing for the subjugation of its society, it was a state that was also actively resisted by the people (Callaghy 1988).

Thus there was never a time when the colonial state was accepted; the people appropriately saw it as an alien and negative entity that should be combated and destroyed. The question was never how to reform the colonial state but how to dislodge it, as is confirmed by the consistent rejection of any midway deal by nationalists in Africa. The colonial state, given its nature, could not be reformed. Only by replacing it could the people get back their true identity as a nation and escape the subjugating essence of a constricting entity. This was the whole essence of the decolonisation struggle. The importance and value of this struggle could only be measured in relation to the nature and essence of the state it was directed against. In reality the struggle was defined by the subjugating essence of the colonial state, and the strategies and tactics deployed were consistent with the objective of destroying and replacing the colonial state.

Because of the clear objective of the decolonisation struggle, those involved realised the duties and responsibilities it imposed on them and therefore enunciated strategies and tactics that would not compromise the objective. The nature of the colonial state was the prime object of their attack, and they realised that the mass of the people had to be mobilised against it. The success of the decolonisation struggle was owing to two principal ingredients of the struggle itself: the fact that the struggle was to dislodge the colonial state, not reform it, and the enlistment of the mass of the people into the struggle as a reflection of

its totalising essence. The nationalists were very clear that no compromise could be struck with an alienating and subjugating state. Everywhere in Africa the goal of the decolonisation struggle was to dislodge the colonial state though direct engagement that sought to fundamentally change the nature of the state. Even when nationalists were offered tempting arrangements to reform the colonial apparatus, as in the French colonies where the colonised people were offered citizenship of the colonialist state, they insisted on full independence rather than accommodation with colonialism.

In addition the conception of the struggle as one to be waged by the people themselves through mass mobilisation ensured that the leadership could not betray the people. The people were fully supportive of the struggle and had become its main ingredient. Within this context the people were the motive force of the struggle and the ones who determined its eventual direction, the liberation of the people from the subjugation of the colonial state. The decolonisation struggle achieved its aim in spite of setbacks and obstacle because it was based on the determination of the people to dislodge the colonial state, not on the say-so of a few leaders or those who wanted to represent the people. It was therefore logical for the people to push the struggle to its conclusion; it was not a struggle that could be derailed by the compromises of the leadership. The lesson of the struggle against the colonial state is therefore to invest the people with the responsibility for their own struggle and not seek to struggle for them. Leaders can engage in the conscientisation and mobilisation of the people, tasks which the nationalist leaders performed admirably, but the ultimate responsibility belonged with the people. In the last analysis the direct participation of the people in their own struggle is essential for success, and this is particularly important where the very nature of the oppressive state has to be combated.

Confronting the Gap Between the People and the State

The gap between the state and the people in Africa works mostly to the disadvantage of the people, as they are unable to live worthwhile lives under the constraints imposed by the debilitating existence of the state. The state on the other hand is also harmed; it cannot achieve a maximally beneficial existence under the existing gap between it and the people. However those that are in control of the apparatus and structures of

the state obviously derive advantages from the use of state structures to exploit the people and therefore are not interested in closing the existing gap, as it works well for them. This is also the reality the nationalists confronted at independence when the colonial state was dislodged and the new independent African state was put in place. Those who supplanted the colonialists preferred to perpetuate the exploitation associated with the colonial state. The colonial state was dislodged, but was then perpetuated by the new indigenous rulers. Thus the post-colonial state is in reality the colonial state in another guise, continuing the exploitative tendencies of the colonial state and reflecting and maintaining the gap that existed between the colonial state and the people.

What is important is that the people are the ones bearing the major brunt of the state's negative effects, and they are therefore the ones to benefit from the gap being bridged. By contrast those presiding over the state generally prefer to continue to benefit from the gap. Thus only the people can be relied on to be interested in changing the existing situation, and nobody should take African rulers seriously when they speak about their concern with changing the nature of the state to make it benefit the people; oppressors always speak of helping the oppressed. In any case, given that the post-colonial state is no more than a shadow of the colonial state, it is clear that it is not susceptible to reform; it has to be dislodged. It is impossible to reform an entity with such a deficient nature. This is why all the efforts in the past at reforming the African state have come to nothing. These efforts have always emanated from those controlling the levers of power, who naturally prefer to continue to sell unworkable ideas and strategies in order to preserve the exploitation of the people.

The only realistic way to bridge the gap is to change the nature of the state. This requires a fundamental reworking of the essence and conditions of existence of the state. Mere reform of the state in Africa will never bridge the gap between it and its people. This can only be attained by dislodging the existing state and replacing it with a new conception of the state consistent with serving the interests of the people. This was the strategy used in combating the colonial state, and it should be the strategy where traits of the colonial state continue to dominate in the post-colonial state. The fact that those who are presiding over the state apparatus now are indigenous Africans should not be used to justify recourse to reform where fundamental change is required. The bottom line is that the existing nature of the state is not

conducive to a meaningful relationship with the people. The existing nature of the state dictates its exploitation of the people, and the only way to proceed to a meaningful relationship with the people is to institute a new state that would emerge by replacing the existing one, not by reforming it.

Obviously the task of instituting a new state has to devolve on the people, as they are the ones negatively affected by the existing situation. Thus Campbell (2005) argues that 'only direct action on the part of the people, [their] own perception of what is possible, … can produce change'. To accomplish this, the people have to be invested with confidence to work for the actualisation of the required change, rather than being consigned to the background while some seek change on their behalf. The truth is that those who are benefiting from the present gap will only succumb to pressure from the people en masse, as no power can withstand the conscious and deliberate desire of the people for change. Therefore it is important for the people to be conscientised to the power residing in them as far as change is concerned, such that they will get ready to take their destiny in their own hands and work for change themselves. The fact that those who are presiding over the state now have deepened their hold on the enormous powers of the state and that these can be used to frustrate the aspirations of the people should not vitiate the enormous potential in the ranks of the people themselves. In any case ultimate power resides in the people, and the capacity of the people to change their own conditions has never been doubted (Campbell 2005). Ultimate victory is assured as long as the people are committed to their struggle for change and can see the benefits that change will bring.

What is required is for the people to have the right kind of consciousness. Those who believe in the people and their cause can achieve this through deliberate conscientisation. The terrible living conditions of the people predispose them to desire a positive change. All they need is help to believe in their own power to effect such change in spite of the overbearing presence of the state. The need for a functional state that will bridge the gap between it and the people in Africa is not just about strengthening the state; it is a developmental concern that touches ultimately on the living conditions of the people. This is why the ultimate duty is that of the people, and the right strategy for achieving change is to exhort the people to face the challenge of helping themselves.

Conclusion

This paper has underlined the contribution of the African state to the problems of development in Africa and argued that a fundamental change in the nature of the state is required as part of the efforts at repositioning the continent developmentally. The existing nature of the African state disposes it toward a negative relationship with the people, leading to a relationship gap between the people and the state. This gap has to be bridged in order for the state to contribute positively to the developmental process in the interests of the people. I have argued that relying on structural adjustment, electoral democracy and other forms of reform to bridge this gap is misplaced because the reform approach does not seek to change the nature of the African state. The people cannot penetrate the locus of the existence of the state through elections that are conducted and presided over by the existing negative structures of the state; what is required is fundamental change in the nature of the state.

Bridging the gap between the state and the people in Africa, especially in light of the experience of the decolonisation struggle, which massively involved the people and made fundamental change rather than reform its objective, must go beyond elections and involve the people in the search for appropriate strategy and tactics with which to achieve their own emancipation from the exploitative clutches of the state. Indeed the issue of strategy and tactics should not be contemplated or approached outside of the capacity of the people to effect change in their own conditions, as change cannot be forced on the people. The people must be the architects of their own change and should be assisted through appropriate conscientisation efforts to come to full realisation of the enormous potential they themselves possess to rescue themselves from the exploitation of the state. The extent to which the people will rise to this responsibility depends ultimately on the level of commitment that could be derived from their conscientisation and the level of deployment of this commitment toward achieving the objective of changing the nature of the state in Africa.

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Transcending the Impasse: Rethinking the 'State' and 'Development' in Africa

Bobuin John Gemandze*

Abstract

This paper contributes to the ongoing debate on alternative development strategies in Africa by considering some of the alternative theories of 'development' that have been advanced in response to the developmental impasse faced by African states. It argues that a serious re-evaluation of what 'development' entails is now required that should involve a clear theoretical break with mainstream development theory. After a brief overview of the main alternative theories of development that have been proposed, the paper argues that the way to transcend the development impasse in Africa is through the concept of the 'developmental state'. It then discusses the major concepts of the developmental state before considering the feasibility of the developmental state in Africa and the key issues of state strength, state autonomy, authoritarianism and the role of the bourgeoisie. The paper argues for the centrality of democratic rural development for the feasibility of developmental states in Africa and concludes with a call to rethink the concept of development and the developmental state from the point of view of democracy and the collective.

Résumé

Cette étude contribue au débat en cours sur les stratégies alternatives de développement en Afrique en examinant certaines des théories alternatives de « développement » qui ont été avancées en réponse à l'impasse rencontrée par

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les états africains dans ce domaine. Il y est démontré qu'une réévaluation sérieuse de ce qu'entraîne « le développement » est requise maintenant et qui doit déboucher sur une rupture théorique avec la théorie du développement généralement admise. Après un bref aperçu des principales théories alternatives de développement qui ont été proposées, cette étude avance que la manière de transcender l'impasse relative au développement passe par l'utilisation du concept de « l'état de développement ». Ensuite, les principaux concepts de l'état de développement y sont discutés avant d'analyser la faisabilité de l'état de développement en Afrique et les questions clés de force de l'état, d'autonomie de l'état, d'autoritarisme et du rôle de la bourgeoisie. Cette étude démontre le caractère central du développement démocratique rural pour la faisabilité des états de développement en Afrique, et conclut avec un appel à repenser le concept de développement et l'état de développement du point de vue de la démocratie et du collectif.

Introduction

The 'demise of the development project/theory' (McMichael 1996), the 'myth of development' (Rivero 2001), the failure of the 'development industry' (Rihani 2002). These expressions and more in the literature as well as numerous reports and studies eloquently capture the fact that 'development' has come to an impasse or dead end in developing countries, especially in Africa. As a result a number of alternative strategies have been proposed to transcend the development impasse. These alternative strategies have addressed the problem of the development impasse/debacle from both theoretical and empirical perspectives (Sen and Grown 1986; Sklair 1988; Asante 1991; Cornia et al. 1992; Schuurman 1993; Stewart et al. 1993; Himmelstrand et al. 1994; Ake 1996; Yansané 1996; Rivero 2001; Belshaw and Livingstone 2002; Sow 2002; Hope 2003; Chang and Gabriel 2004). For instance, Schuurman (1993) is concerned with new directions in development theory, while Belshaw and Livingstone (2002) consider strategies for 'renewing development' in Africa. These strategies can be said to belong to the alternative development school of thought or tradition. According to Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1998) there are different ways of conceiving what alternative development is about and its role. It can be viewed as a roving critique of mainstream development, shifting in position as the latter shifts, as a loosely interconnected series of alternative proposals and methodologies or as an alternative development paradigm, imply-

ing a definite theoretical break with mainstream development (Nederveen 1998).

Rapley (1996) rightly notes that if the political and economic prospects for some countries are growing bleaker all the time, a serious reconsideration of what development should entail may be in order. The time for another paradigm shift may be drawing near (Rapley 1996:158). In fact Mbabazi (2005) argues that the search for alternative paths to development in Africa today is more entrenched than ever before, given the changes in the global political economics in the twenty-first century. If Africa is going to ensure that it continues to play any significant role in this new millennium, then there is need to find a model of African democratic development to guide the continent's progress (Mbabazi 2005).

This paper first advocates the institutionalisation of the 'developmental state' and, more specifically, the *democratic* developmental state and then proposes a strategic approach to transcend the development impasse. This approach involves 'strategising' or mainstreaming rural development in national development policy and planning.

Transcending the Impasse: Bringing in the Developmental State

It is now firmly established in the literature that the post-colonial African state has so far not been an effective instrument for development (Doornbos 1990; Rapley 1996; Leftwich 2000). In fact one of the core characteristics of the African state is its general failure to implement development objectives and efficient policies to solve Africa's predicaments Various attempts have been made to account for the failure of the African state in development (Beckman 1989; Ake 1996), and the current 'scapegoat' for the failure of development in Africa is 'bad governance' (World Bank 1992; UNDP 1997; Leftwich 2000; Ake 1996). Development has never really been on the agenda in Africa, and it could even be argued that the absence of development on the agenda is due to the nature of the African state.

The African post-colonial state departs in fundamental respects from both the Marxist and Weberian conceptions of the state (Leftwich 2000). It has been variously referred to as 'patrimonial', 'neo-patrimonial' (Médard 1991) 'soft', 'weak', 'predatory', 'overdeveloped'— characteristics which greatly limit its capacity for socio-economic development/transformation (Leftwich 2000). Yet it is generally

acknowledged today that the state has a crucial role to play in any development/transformation process. The 'developmental state' or, more to the point, the *democratic* developmental state would therefore seem to be the most appropriate state model for effective and sustainable development in Africa.

Conceptualising the Developmental State

Mbabazi and Taylor (2005) state that the definition of the developmental state runs the risk of being tautological, since evidence that the state is developmental is often drawn deductively from the performance of the economy. However they define a developmental state as one whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and that seriously attempts to deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development (Mbabazi and Taylor 2005). On the other hand, Leftwich (2000) proposes what he refers to as an 'operational' definition of developmental states as follows:

> Those states, whose politics have concentrated sufficient power, autonomy, capacity and legitimacy at the centre to shape, pursue and encourage the achievement of explicit developmental objectives whether by establishing and promoting the conditions of economic growth (in the capitalist developmental states), by organising it directly (in the 'socialist' variant), or a varying combination of both.

Leftwich identifies developmental states as those in which 'their political purposes and institutional structures (especially their bureaucracies) have been developmentally driven, while their developmental objectives have been politically driven'. For Leftwich this also means that nationalism will be the core of the 'developmental regime'.

The Feasibility of the Developmental State in Africa

Some reservations have since been expressed in some quarters as regards the feasibility of the developmental state in Africa (Rapley 1996; Leftwich 2000). According to Leftwich developmental states are constituted by particular political forces and processes which are not, nor can they be, easily replicated or created in all developing societies. Rapley (1996) is more categorical. He asserts that the advocacy of the developmental state in the Third World is an unrealistic option, arguing that 'it is doubtful that more than a handful of [African] states could presently

implement a state-led approach to development … [Most African] governments lack an essential feature of developmental states: in the contemporary jargon, strength or hardness' (Rapley 1996).

Regarding 'state strength' Rapley argues as follows:

> To effectively guide economic development, a state must enjoy the power to direct society and lead it through traumatic changes. According to developmental state theory, the state needs to be relatively insulated against society, giving a highly skilled technocratic bureaucracy the autonomy it needs to impose discipline on the private sector … Bureaucrats must be able to draft policies that promote national development, not the advancement of private lobbyists. Moreover, governments may have to enact unpopular and even harsh policies in the name of development, and the governors must be in a position to ignore or repress the discontent those policies provoke.

In this connection Leftwich (2000) asserts that a shared aspect of all developmental states has been the relative autonomy of the elites and the state institutions which they command. By 'autonomy' is meant that the state has been able to achieve relative independence (or insulation) from the demanding clamour of special interests (whether class, regional or sectoral, where they exist) and that it can and does override these interests in the putative national interest.

Thus it may seem that there is need for an authoritarian regime which can ignore demands from society and repress the population if it becomes too vociferous (Rapley 1996). According to Leftwich, there is little doubt that developmental states, whether democratic or not, have not been particularly attractive states, at least not by either Western liberal or socialist standards. Opposition has not been tolerated, and any organisation or movement that looked as if it would challenge the state and its developmental purposes has been swiftly neutralised, penetrated or incorporated as part of the ruling party. As for class politics Rapley (1996) asserts that a developmental state depends not only on a productive bourgeoisie, but a local one. In each state said to be developmental, productive domestic capitalists have been closely linked to the bureaucracy (Rapley 1996).

State Strength and Autonomy

In his literature review on alternative conceptions of the state Krasner (1984) asserts that Nordlinger (1981) identified state autonomy under

different relationships between the preferences of state and societal actors. Thus 'Type 1' autonomy refers to situations in which state actors translate their preferences into authoritative action despite divergent societal preferences. They can accomplish this by using the resources of the state to neutralise societal opponents by measures such as deploying public capital, threatening to withhold specific government programmes or masking the state's decision making procedures. 'Type 2' state autonomy refers to situations in which state action changes divergent societal preferences to convergent ones. The state can use four general strategies to effect such changes: altering the views of societal opponents, limiting the deployment of resources by societal opponents, gaining the support of indifferent actors and increasing the resources of societal actors holding convergent views. Finally 'Type 3' state autonomy refers to situations in which there is non-divergence between the preferences of the state and society. Even under these conditions state-oriented accounts can explain authoritative actions at least as well as society-oriented ones. The state can initiate policy and provide access for particular societal groups. This typology of state autonomy applies squarely to the post-colonial African state. Furthermore, it is compatible with the literature on the policy process in the context of the developing countries (Smith 1973; Grindle and Thomas 1989). Leftwich (2000) asserts that in democratic or partially democratic developmental states the key factor for this autonomy appears to have been the dominance of single-party rule brought about by repeated victory in elections since the 1960s, as in Singapore, Malaysia and Botswana. However it could be argued that the golden era of single-party regimes and military rule in much of Africa offered a unique opportunity for state strength and autonomy, yet this did not translate into the establishment of developmental states.

Authoritarianism

Rapley concedes that although authoritarian regimes wield great command through their control of repressive power, it is not clear that they are all that hard or strong in terms of their insulation from society. Authoritarian regimes may have naked power but lack intelligence or enlightenment. The evidence suggests that authoritarian regimes have not been particularly good at implementing reform or economic austerity programmes (Rapley 1996). Unfortunately the much-touted 'au-

thoritarian advantage' has not shown up in Africa (Mkandawire 2005), and indeed, as Edigheji (2005) points out, African countries would have been among the most developed countries in the world if there were any positive correlation between undemocratic regimes and development. In fact Ake (1996) states that in the African context:

> Political authoritarianism prevents the crystallization of the state or even of a political class. Rather it tends to constitute a plurality of 'informal' primary systems that are largely the repositories of loyalties. It unleashes powerful centrifugal forces that render the polity incoherent and unable to establish a common purpose, including a developmental project, and to pursue it effectively. In short, political authoritarianism is an important reason why the development project in Africa has not been able to take off.

Absence of a Capitalist/Bourgeois Class

Apart from shortfalls in Third World bureaucracies the economic and political weaknesses of indigenous capitalists in much of the Third World seem to preclude developmental states from emerging in many more countries at this time. Africa in particular faces dim prospects (Rapley 1996). Furthermore it is argued not only that capitalism forms the life-blood of the modern state, but also that capitalism and patrimonialism are incompatible. Yet African states are patrimonial/neo-patrimonial. The emphasis on the importance of the capitalist class reflects a Eurocentric/Western conception of development. According to McMichael (1996):

> Development is a long-standing European idea, woven from two related strands of thought. One is the Promethean self-conception of European civilization, underlying the Judeo-Christian belief in the progressive human domestication of nature. This progressivism evolved as the core ideal parallel to Europe's emergence as a world power and was expressed in the capitalist ethos of the endless accumulation of wealth as a rational economic activity.

Furthermore, reference to the absence of a capitalist/bourgeois class betrays a lack of awareness of the nature of class dynamics (Sklar 1979; Beckman 1989) as well as of social movements and grassroots organisations in the African context. In fact Beckman rightly states that notions of an absent national bourgeoisie stand in the way of an understanding of the process of state and ruling class formation. Preoccupation with

inefficiency, corruption, misappropriation, nepotism and other 'aberrations' tends to substitute for an analysis of the forces that determine the dynamics and direction of the process (Beckman 1989).

In view of the issues addressed here it would be no exaggeration to assert that the institutionalisation of the developmental state in Africa is feasible. Of course developmental states in Africa cannot be or will not be similar to those found in Asia (Mbabazi 2005). What is needed is appropriate political and institutional design (Robinson and White 1998). The leap from neo-patrimonial regimes to a developmental state is one fraught with difficulty and one that is likely to be a slow process. But it is not impossible (Taylor 2005).

Transcending the Impasse: Rethinking 'Development'

There is some consensus in the literature on the feasibility of the developmental state in Africa. However this literature does not seem to pay adequate attention to the nature or type of development project/agenda to be pursued by the developmental state. This point deserves serious consideration, because it has been suggested that Africa's developmental failure is due either to the fact that development has never been on the agenda or that African states have adopted/pursued a wrong and/or inappropriate development agenda. It seems to be either explicitly or implicitly taken for granted that the developmental state must of necessity adopt a capitalist development agenda. For example Leftwich (2000) argues as follows:

> Most (and the most successful) developmental states have been those that have thrived in mixed capitalist economies, since one of the key characteristics of this state type is its determination and ability to stimulate, direct, shape and cooperate with the domestic private sector and arrange or supervise mutually acceptable deals with foreign interests.

But to suggest that the developmental state must adopt a capitalist development agenda amounts to a form of reductionism or determinism reminiscent of Rostow's stages of economic growth. In the African context development must be construed initially as rural development generally and, more specifically, as *agricultural* development. Thus the developmental state in Africa must adopt a rural development agenda. This is compatible with developments in East Asia. Without painting a rosy or romantic picture of the East Asian experience, what distinguishes East Asia from the rest of the developing world is that East Asian na-

tions chose to develop the rural sector. In fact the rural sector is of strategic importance for the poorer nations of the world. It is the source of primary products (agricultural produce and minerals) for export to the advanced industrial countries and of foodstuffs and labour for the national urban and industrial centres (Long 1977).

Thus Jaycox (1997) refers to the rural sector as the 'central sector' and asserts that it produces 50 percent on average in Africa. The rural sector is the location of 70 percent of the poor people living on less than one dollar a day (Jaycox 1997). A classic statement on the importance of the rural sector is that of Guy (1970), who over 35 years ago asserted that:

> It is in the rural sector in many developing countries that indigenous resources of men and land are underused, there that nutrition can be tackled; there that success would do most to slow the immigration to major cities, to provide a market for existing and new industries and services and to give the chance for restructuring education to meet the practical needs of a prosperous and diversified rural community. Finally, it is there that some redress of the gross inequality in income distribution can be started.

In fact the importance of rural development today has been reiterated by the World Bank (1997). According to the bank, sustainable rural development can make a powerful contribution to four critical goals:

- Poverty reduction
- Widely shared growth
- Household, national and global food security
- Sustainable natural resource management.

Thus the crucial contribution of rural development to overall macro-economic/socio-economic and political development as well as environmental protection is now well established (Long 1977; Jaycox 1996; World Bank 1997; Grabowski 2005). The World Bank also asserts that its objectives of poverty reduction, widely shared growth, food security and sustainable natural resource management cannot be met unless rural development in general and a thriving agricultural economy in particular are nurtured and improved (World Bank 1997).

Given the development impasse it is imperative to adopt a strategic approach to overcome the development predicaments. This strategic

approach would involve strategising or mainstreaming rural development in national development policy and planning (Weitz 1971; Waterston 1974, Haque et al. 1977; Harris 1984; Ake 1996; Shepherd 1998). Furthermore, in the context of Africa, rural development is the most appropriate policy framework for addressing the question of social inclusiveness (Mkandawire 2005). Neverthless rural development policies and programmes have so far been a failure throughout Africa (Heyer et al. 1981). Various attempts have been made to account for the failure of rural development. Lack of political will and commitment has been identified as one of the factors (Bryant and White 1981; Jaycox 1996; World Bank 1997). According to Heyer et al. (1981) rural development has failed in practice becuase of the incompatibility between the different goals and the means which are almost universally promoted as the ways to achieve rural development. This incompatibility is concealed by a rhetoric, which asserts the mutual interests of rural development agencies, governments and the rural population (Heyer et al. 1981; Williams 1981).

In fact the fundamental reason for the failure of rural development in Africa is the adoption of an inappropriate development paradigm (Potter 1971; Mabogunje 1980; Mackenzie 1992; Taylor and Mackenzie 1992; Rihani 2002). Potter rightly asserts that the classical model of development based on the experience of developed countries is the one usually followed by most developing countries. However it has become increasingly clear that this classic model of rural development is unrealistic for many developing countries (Potter 1971). The new development paradigm must adopt a broader concept of rural development which takes into account the nature of power relations in rural society, that is, those forms of domination that either impede or make possible the realisation of the goals of rural development (Bengtsson 1979). The new paradigm must also address the issues of democratisation and empowerment; approach rural development policy must not be reduced simply to an agricultural development policy as in the NEPAD approach (Gemandze 2004). According to Waterston (1974) agricultural development is essentially a sectoral activity concerned with occurrences within the agricultural sector. In contrast rural development is multisectoral:

> [B]esides agricultural development and rural industry [it includes] the establishment or improvement of social overhead facilities or infrastructure (schools, clinics, roads, communications, and water supply), and

welfare services or programs, which could be for disease control, improved nutrition, widening adult literacy, or family planning (Waterston 1974).

Furthermore any rural development policy must also be concerned with environmental issues; rural development activities that are not environmentally sustainable will not improve long-term well-being (Cleaver 1997). The paradigm proposed by Shepherd (1998) constitutes a comprehensive or holistic approach. It is ambivalent about both state-led and market-led versions of development. The state has often not served rural people well, especially the poor and marginalised. Indeed it has often been the chief exploiter and repressor of rural people and organisations (Shepherd 1998).

Rural Development Ideology

The question of ideology is important not only for the institutionalisation of the developmental state (Leftwich 2000; Mbabazi and Taylor 2005) but also for the legitimation of rural development policy. According to Potter (1971):

> Ideology is important in rural development not only because ideologically influenced decisions determine to some extent whether the end products of planning will more closely resemble family farms or factories-in-the-fields, but also the social force needed to overcome social resistance and mobilise a conservative peasantry to participate in development programmes can apparently come in no other way.

Thus the 'end of ideology' may be appropriate/true in the context of Western/capitalist polities, but ideology remains relevant, indeed crucial, in the context of African post-colonial polities. In fact all development concepts are in a sense ideological (Barraclough 1977; Williams 1981; Sachs 1992; Ake 1996). Furthermore development has been pursued traditionally within specific ideological guidelines. Contrasting approaches based on capitalism or socialism were the norm until recently, but the capitalist camp has emerged as the victor; development prescriptions now follow the dictates of that philosophy (Rihani 2002).

However there is no consensus on the type of ideology to sustain rural development in the context of post-colonial/neo-patrimonial polities. Potter (1977) has suggested that nationalism plus some form of

socialism is the usual creed in most developing countries. Haque et al. (1977) propose a development philosophy and objectives for Asia which could be adopted and adapted to a rural development ideology in the African context, arguing that, historically, the only other known method of accumulation is that of human mobilisation for the conversion of surplus labour into means of production. This mobilisation implies (a) collectivist relations of production (b) choice of appropriate technology and (c) self-reliance, which in external relations means economic independence via de-linkage from existing global dominance/dependence relations (Haque et al. 1977). The importance of mobilisation has been reiterated by Mabogunje, who asserts that the moblisation of the total population of a given country is the most critical factor in the construction of a new and more developmental social framework (Mabogunje 1980). According to Haque et al. (1977) mobilisation as an accumulation strategy requires the adoption of collectivist relations of production. Historical experience indicates that specific forms of collectivist relations have specific bearings on development in a wider sense. This concept of collective rules out the pursuit of the 'animal' spirit of self interest characteristic of capitalism (McMichael 1996), whereby one tries to take as much from society as one can without submitting to a collective evaluation of one's share in the give and take (Haque et al. 1977).

The collective involves creating certain values. Self-reliance—in the sense of building up a combination of material and mental reserves that enable one to choose one's own course of evolution uninhibited by what others desire—is the single most important of these values. It requires psychological and institutional staying power to meet crisis situations. This staying power is best attained collectively (Haque et al. 1977). The importance of self-reliance has also been emphasised elsewhere in the literature (Asante 1991; Rist 1997). Another of the important values is participatory democracy. The collective as we conceive it functions through the active participation of the people. Without this, the individual would not belong organically to the collective, and the collective self would not to that extent be a reality. Therefore participatory democracy and the collective are inseparable concepts (Haque et al. 1977).

The collective also requires that the consciousness gap between the leadership and the masses be closed. This requires that the leadership and the masses move in a mutually interacting process that systemati-

cally reduces the gap (Haque et al. 1977). In keeping with this, the collective further requires de-alienation. The binding constraint on development consists of those factors that inhibit the fullest expression of people's natural selves: identity with work, in which people should find pleasure and fulfillment, and with society, in which alone people discover their selves. This sense of identity has been fragmented into elite and masses, ruler and ruled, privileged and underprivileged, 'superior' and the 'inferior'. Development then must mean a process of de-alienation, that is, liberation from inhibitions derived from the structure and superstructure of society that dehumanise the masses and prevent them from consummating their fullest potential (Haque et al. 1977).

Conclusion

The developmental state is not only feasible but imperative in Africa today (Mkandawire 1995, 2001, 2005; Mbabazi 2005; Taylor 2005). Given that rural development is the key to the whole process of development (Haque et al. 1977; Weitz 1977; Ake 1996), the way out of the current development impasse in Africa in particular lies in the institutionalisation of the democratic developmental state (White and Wade 1985; Robinson and White 1998; Leftwich 1996, 1998, 2000) and the adoption by this state of a development policy based on the promotion of the rural sector within the framework of a democratic rural development policy (Fox 1992).

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The Dilemma of Civil Society in Cameroon Since 1990: Which Way Forward?

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Abstract

The role of civil society in societal transformation and nation building in Cameroon has been compromised by political and social structures created during three decades of autocratic rule that still underline the practical and moral workings of the state today. Civil society remains mired in societal cleavages that find expression in parochial tendencies ranging from ethnicism to regionalism. As a result civil society's ability to mobilise all and sundry towards a meaningful democratic culture is limited. In this context the quest for good governance has remained, for the vast majority of Cameroonians, a platitudinous utopia. This paper argues that only a civil society that transcends narrow social and political boundaries and identifies with the daily and legitimate struggles of ordinary citizens can serve as a signpost pointing towards meaningful quantitative and qualitative development in Cameroon.

Résumé

Le rôle de la société civile dans la transformation de la société et dans la construction nationale au Cameroun a été compromis par les structures politiques et sociales créées au cours de trois décennies de pouvoir autocratique qui marquent encore les mécanismes pratique et moral de l'état aujourd'hui. La société civile reste plongée dans les clivages sociaux qui trouvent leur expression dans des tendances d'esprit de clocher allant de l'ethnisme au régionalisme. En conséquence, la capacité de la société civile à mobiliser tout le monde en

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faveur d'une culture démocratique significative est limitée. Dans ce contexte, la quête de bonne gouvernance demeure, pour une vaste majorité des Camerounais, une banale utopie. Il est démontré ici que seule une société civile ayant transcendé les étroites frontières sociales et politiques et s'identifiant aux luttes quotidiennes et légitimes des simples citoyens peut servir de poteau indicateur signalant la direction à suivre pour un développement significatif tant quantitatif que qualitatif au Cameroun.

Introduction

Like most countries in Africa, Cameroon is a colonial construct. It has its specificities and paradoxes, which can be quite mesmerising. Cameroon is one place where logic does not always have its way, where outcomes are never predictable. For example, in one country where the price of bread is raised by 33 cents, the whole country is expected to go up in flames. But in Cameroon, the currency is devalued by 100 percent, followed immediately by a 70 percent slash in civil service salaries, and not a finger is raised. Cameroon tops the Transparency International world corruption index one year (1998) and is sufficiently comfortable with that performance to repeat the feat the next year. To the best of this writer's knowledge Cameroon is also the only country in the world with two constitutions, each operating according to the whims and caprices of the ruling government. The country is a vastly wealthy triangle, yet its entry into the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) is celebrated as a national achievement. Cameroon is one of only a few countries in Africa to have had three colonial masters, Germany, France and Britain, and has serpentined through Anglo-French trusteeship, federalism and the unitary state, to what is today just the state.

Even natural cataclysms respect the strange ways of this country. Mount Cameroon, West Africa's highest peak, erupted in 1999, but the lava flew down the slopes away from human settlements. The one-kilometre-wide blazing liquid flew downhill for close to fifteen kilometres, destroying all the vegetation, but stopped a few metres from a hotel complex and within sight of the country's only oil refinery. At the end, not a single person died. Cameroon has the poorest football pitches anywhere in Africa but the richest football fame in Africa, having won the African Cup of Nations in 1984, 1988, 2000 and 2002. It has participated in the World Cup finals five times and is the first African country to reach the quarterfinals of the World Cup. Geographically,

even Cameroon's location is ambiguous, with an English-speaking sector located in West Africa and a French-speaking sector in Central Africa

Since 1961 Cameroon has been ruled by two presidents who combined the tactics of divide and rule, Machiavellianism and outright totalitarianism, except for the brief period of 1982 to 1984 when Paul Biya, the second president, introduced a dicey policy of liberalism, but when a coup d'état threatened to eliminate him he became a dictator, and any signs of opposition were driven underground.

However dictatorial rule did not go on forever. The last decade of the twentieth century witnessed debates over the role of citizens in societal transformation in Cameroon in particular and Africa in general after the end of the Cold War, the reunification of Germany and the failure of African totalitarian states to provide minimum social, economic and political resources to their citizens. More especially, the question was pivoted around what strategies, options and forces could be amalgamated to promote democratic transition within internationally recognised norms while taking into consideration the local history and the political and economic peculiarities of the state (Mbuagbo and Fru 2003).

In Cameroon the challenge of civil society has been to create awareness in citizens that will encourage them to take responsibility for their individual and collective destinies (Mbuagbo and Robert 2004). Unfortunately the liberties of citizens as found in the constitution have remained so far a dead letter. Civil society is fractured, and the flavour of its vibrancy has gone sour. In any ordinary sense civil society deals with day-to-day operations of livelihood and one should be able to talk of civil society when it has an impact on the society; if not it should be left out. However civil society has occasioned endless disputes over definitions, and its study in Africa has made great strides (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Kasfir 1998; Sitoe 1998; Osaghae 1994). Some scholars have seen civil society in terms of advancing democracy and disciplining the state to ensure that citizen interest are taken seriously and greater civil and political participation is fostered (Carothers 2000). Others have conceived of civil society as a critical element of democratisation, arguing that the current failure of the process of democratisation in Africa hinges in part on the failure of states to respond to the pressing demands of their people (Fatton Jr. 1995). Yet others see civil society as more or less imaginary: 'outside of the sociological, historical and cultural events of its imagination, the existence or non-existence of

civil society is not significant' (Tester 1992). Still others see civil soci-
ety as the process by which society seeks to breach and counteract the
simultaneous 'totalisation' unleashed by the state (Bayart 1989). Fi-
nally others simply define civil society as 'new spaces for communica-
tion and discussion over which the state has no control' (Monga 1998).
The various definitions are limited by the fact that they are mostly
Eurocentric, and this Eurocentrism has been difficult to deconstruct
(Bratton 1989; Harbeson et al. 1994).

However the definitions are useful to the present work in that they
provide some paradigms which will be borrowed and tasted. In the light
of these definition civil society can be broadly understood as the do-
main of non-kinship-based contractual relations comprising interest
groups such as traditional rulers, credit and development associations,
student unions, Bar Associations, journalists' associations, religious
groups and women and men in the informal sector. These organisations
should exist independent of the state but at the same time be prime
movers of societal dynamism. Civil society generally is pegged on a
number of themes: to foster the spirit of democracy (Ceesay 1998), to
mediate relations between the state and society, to set the rules and
ethos of public conduct and to ensure that the state reflects the social
reality and is committed to the pursuance of the public good (Osaghae
1998).

The role of civil society in societal transformation and nation-build-
ing in Cameroon has been compromised by political and social stric-
tures deriving from three decades of autocratic rule that still underpin
the practical and moral workings of the state. Civil society remains
mired in societal cleavages that find expression in parochial tendencies
ranging from neo-patrimonialism, clientelism, ethnicism to regional-
ism, thereby limiting its ability to mobilise citizens towards a meaning-
ful democratic culture. In these circumstances the quest for good gov-
ernance remains, for the vast majority, a platitudinous utopia. The pith
and kernel of this paper is to examine the roots of civil society in
Cameroon and its impact on the Cameroon body politic and to chart a
new way forward for civil society in Cameroon.

Ingredients of Cameroon's Civil Society

Awasom (2005) has delineated the various components of Cameroon's
civil society in the 1990s to avoid 'ambiguities'. My analysis does not,

in a strict sense, diverge from this approach but will re-interpret it with available data where needed. Civil society is made up of individuals who have an interest in redressing political, economic and social abnormalities in the society. Students press their demands through student bodies, workers through trade unions or professional groupings, market traders through the formal or informal market associations and so forth. Sometimes several groups combine to make demands on government, especially when the levels of immiseration and deprivation have become unbearable (Osaghae 1994).

Civil society in Cameroon became quite vocal in the 1990s and was bent on 'opening and expanding the political space' (Awasom 2005). Various groups and organisations thirsted for freedom, justice, good governance. The initial group was made up of students and workers' unions. They emerged as the main critics of the regime against a backdrop of degrading conditions in the lone state university, the University of Yaounde, opened in 1961 more for political than academic objectives. By 1990 the university hosted more than 32,000 students, well beyond its carrying capacity, while graduates remained unemployed and the economy was souring (Nyamnjoh 1997; Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997). Traditional societies then emerged in the names of Takembeng and Anlu and were quite instrumental during the civil disobedience campaign and the post-October 1992 election results. As a matter of fact, democracy in Cameroon since 1990 has gone only as far as the political ritual of holding elections, all of which have been marred by gross irregularities and blatant disregard of the fundamental principles of democratic electioneering (Nyamnjoh 1999; Mbuagbo and Robert 2004)

Religious groups and organisations also became vibrant and vocal elements of civil society. The Bishops of the Bamenda ecclesiastical province addressed a 25-point letter to the Prime Minister, Simon Achidi Achu, asking the government to address the political, social and economic situation of the state. The church, especially the Roman Catholic Church, even went as far as hosting political party activities considered anathema by the state. A case in point was the All Anglophone Conference, which took place in Mount Mary Health Centre, Buea, in April 1993. The Social Democratic Front convention was also held several times at the church centre, Big Mankon, a citadel of the Ecclesiastical province. Even the Episcopal Conference came out with statements that were critical of the government.

Meanwhile the Cameroon Bar Association did not remain numb in the search for a democratic space. When its ex-president and a prominent Barrister, John Mandengue Yondo Black, was arrested for attempting to form a party as a counterpoise to the ruling party, the arrest aroused the rage of the public against the state and brought demands for a more plural society to their apogee (Awasom 2005). Eventually political parties were given an official stamp by a regime that had held tight to change. These political parties questioned and criticised the lack of political space. On January 9, 1991, the *Cameroon Tribune* newspaper published a list of 41 registered political parties which by 2004 went far above 180 (Awasom 2005).

These were some of the constituents of civil society in Cameroon by the 1990s. So vibrant was it that the archaic and totalitarian system prevailing since 1961 was condemned to kowtow. However, judging from its *modus operandi* today, it is doubtful whether the civil society represents any way forward towards meaningful development in Cameroon. Does it really exist at all in Cameroon as the extant literature conceives it (Mbuagbo and Robert 2004; Orkin 1995; Abdelrahman 2000)? Before attempting an answer, it is imperative for us to examine the roots of civil society in Cameroon. The next section therefore will examine the *casus belli* that gave rise to civil society.

The Roots of Civil Society in Cameroon in the 1990s

The roots of civil society in Cameroon in the 1990s are many and can be appreciated under economic, social and political rubrics. Economically the situation in Cameroon was bad and was aptly captured by a headline in *La Nouvelle Expression*, February 24-27, 1995, 'La Banque mondiale prévoit: encore un demi siècle de misère pour les Camerounaise' ('The World Bank Forecasts: Another Half-Century of Misery for Cameroonians').

Takougang and Krieger (1998) also provide very illuminating figures from the General Agreement on Tariffs (GATT) text on Cameroon. According to them real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita rose from US$500 in 1970 to a peak near US$1,200 in 1986 but then fell back to US$500 by 1994. The ratio of external debt to GDP doubled from 1986 to 1992. Net foreign direct investment from all sources of US$300 million in 1985 became an US$80 million disinvestment in 1990, while there was a 40 percent drop in the value of petroleum exports

between 1990 and 1993. Between 1988 to 1992, Cameroon's productivity was the worst among forty-one African countries from which statistics were available (Takougang and Krieger 1998). The public service sector was in fragments. Salaries, which in any case were not paid regularly, dropped from 70 to 60 percent between 1990 and 1995. Retirement was enforced at 55 years of age or before, with pensions as problematic as salaries. The 100 percent CFA Franc devaluation in 1994 took an additional toll.

Socially, unemployment was near astronomical figures. University and professional—school graduates hardly picked up any job. Besides, an end to student bursaries and the introduction of school or registration fees caused untold disillusionment and frustration to many who could not even afford their 'daily bread'. To add insult to injury, many Cameroonians were deported from Gabon and felt more or less frustrated in Cameroon, as they remained idle, causing untold misery to themselves and their families.

Politically, the Cameroon of the 1990s was pegged on divide and rule, neo-patrimonialism, the politics of the belly, prebendalism, patronage, clientelism and so on (Bayart 1993; Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997; Nyamnjoh 1999). The net effect was that the Cameroon society, from the height of the state's level, appeared to be peopled exclusively by a multitude of private individuals chosen for their loyalty to the state rather than on merit. The Beti ethnic group from which the President comes occupied almost all the important positions in government (Poggi 1978; Ndembiyembe 1997). These people embezzled state resources without a 'modicum of morality' (Wiredu 1998).

The situation becomes very positive for the emergence of the civil society when absolute monarchical rule is arbitrary. Also, authoritarian regimes, in depoliticising as well as atomising their respective societies, give rise to civil societies. Here the civil society designs itself to change government policies (Holm et al. 1996; O'Donnel and Schmitter 1991). The Cameroon situation in the 1990s illustrates all the seeds that are necessary for a civil society to germinate. The next section of our paper will look at the ramifications of civil society on the body politic of Cameroon.

The Ramifications of Civil Society on the Body Politic of Cameroon

The relationship between civil society and democracy is a complex one, and the emergence of a civil society does not guarantee the development of democracy. However it is highly unlikely that a viable democracy can survive without a civil society, because civil society is a necessary foundation for democracy (Woods 1992). It is within civil society that public opinion is formed and it is through independent associations that individuals can have some influence on government decision-making. Despite the fact that the Cameroon civil society had a bearing on at least the democratisation of the state, some African scholars have represented civil society as weak and unable to perform any effective role in promoting democracy (Bratton 1989) The Cameroon example has however shown the contrary. The movement from a monolithic one-party system to a multi-party system was one of the first fruits of the tree of civil society in Cameroon. In December 1990, after considerable pressure on the government, a series of laws to liberalise Cameroon's political landscape were promulgated. In the same year the University of Yaounde, the lone university in the country, was decentralised, and the Buea and Ngaoundere campuses were transformed into full-fledged universities. In a related vein the General Certificate of Education Board was created in 1993.

Cameroon has undergone four major elections since then—1992, 1997, 2002 and presidential elections in 2004—but after all these elections there has been general disenchantment with the electoral process due to massive rigging, non-registration of voters, low participation, unfulfilled promises and sterile political debates between the ruling party, the Cameroon's People Democratic Movement (CPDM), and the opposition parties. Despite these shortcomings one cannot deny that these elections came about largely as a result of pressure from the civil society in Cameroon since the 1990s. To be sure the civil society itself had shortcomings, firstly because it was led by human beings, some of whom only wanted to satisfy their bellies, but also because the government was unwilling to give up power. The next section of this paper will examine the flaws of civil society in Cameroon in the 1990s.

Drawbacks of Civil Society in Cameroon

Whatever we say about civil society in Cameroon in the 1990s, it should be borne in mind that it was neither homogenous nor wholly emancipatory. In fact civil society was contradictory, exhibiting both democratic and despotic tendencies (Fatton Jr. 1995; Chabal 1994). The lack of homogeneity in the civil society in Cameroon can easily be explained on the basis of ethnicity. Cameroon is made up of approximately 240 ethnic groups (Takougang and Krieger 1998; Yenshu 2001), which helps keep civil society weak, as different indigenous groups and individuals pursue their own agendas (Bayart 1993). Moreover individuals belonging to elites were even given the go-ahead by the ruling regime to form ethnic associations to counter the opposition (Nyamnjoh and Michael 1998).

The pitfalls of civil society can also be explained by the role of the government. It is difficult for Cameroon to evolve a viable, inclusive and participatory governance structure due to its long history of autocratic rule, but this difficulty has been increased by the state's use of political stratagems such as divide-and-rule, prebendalism, patronage and clientelism, all of which have led to the informalisation of politics (Mbuagbo and Robert 2004; Bayart 1993; Konings 2002; Nyamnjoh 1999). Through these methods the ruling government has penetrated civil society and survived by 'buying off' sections of the civil society.

This happens because of mediocrity in leadership. Therefore, to achieve a sustainable and vibrant civil society in Cameroon, human resources development or capacity-building must be rekindled and kept alive (Forje 2003). Given the ideological individualism and the fear of subordinate classes, the elite individuals in civil society are prone to all sorts of opportunistic defections and personal accommodations with the authorities. The defections of Ahmadu Vamoulke to become the General Manager of Cameroon Radio and Television (CRTV) and a central committee member and of Bello Bouba Maigari to the camp of CPDM are classic cases in point (Nyamnjoh 1999). Thus individuals or groups within civil society were appeased or rewarded in order for rulers to stay in power. Coercion itself is expensive; the armed forces, police, paramilitary and presidential guard must all be satisfied if they are not to take power themselves (Chabal 1994). All these factors have rendered civil society weak in Cameroon.

In addition university professors, teachers, tutors and rectors are disorganised and fragmented, preferring to accept sinecures and pursue narrow ethnic agendas rather than fight for their professional interests. With civil so-ciety divided amongst itself, the dynamic civil society of the 1990s has become a mirage fifteen years later. Today civil society in Cameroon has collapsed for a variety of reasons ranging from regional-ism to the political acrobatics of the state. Non-governmental organisa-tions have sprouted like mushrooms, but many exist only in suitcases and their leaders have no iota of civic responsibility. At this juncture, what can be done to enable civil society in Cameroon to play its desired role?

Which Way Forward?

This part of the paper attempts to suggest the way forward towards a viable, vibrant civil society in Cameroon. Although Cameroonian schol-ars such as Awasom (2005), Forje (2003), and Nyamnjoh (1999) have attempted to provide such a way forward for civil society in Cameroon, a concrete programme has not been adequately developed. My sugges-tions will therefore be specific to the Cameroon situation rather than globalised, although global paradigms will be borrowed when neces-sary. For close to fifteen years the civil society in Cameroon has re-mained in a morass, bespattered with societal cleavages which find ex-pression in tendencies ranging from ethnicism to regionalism, thereby limiting its ability to mobilise the masses towards a meaningful demo-cratic space.

The way out of this dismal situation requires civil society to tran-scend narrow, social and political boundaries and identify with the daily and legitimate struggles of ordinary citizens. Nyamnjoh (1999) argues that attempts to empower civil society in Cameroon have met with little success because of poor organisation, while Yenshu (2001) blames weak social mobilisation in a context of repressive laws that stifle real political and social debates. To overcome these problems civil society in Cameroon must therefore develop its capacity through a national net-work capable of developing a more consistent and coherent democratic discourse and of promoting practices and attitudes that defend the fun-damental rights of citizens. This requires a synergy among the various elements of civil society to bring pressure to bear on all anti-democratic forces in the state. The experience in many other African coun-tries, especially in South Africa, could be emulated in Cameroon. The

contributions of mass political mobilisation and awareness-building among civil society organisations to achieve social transformation in South Africa should serve as an inspiration to budding civil society organisations in Cameroon (Orkin 1995).

The idea of civil society is not new, but what would appear to be new is its organisation within the modern state and its presupposition of a global character. According to De Oliveira and Tandon (1994) human beings have always come together for a common cause, and the gregarious nature of humankind is expressed in an associational life of diverse character and objectives. This diverse character, according to Bayart (1993), should include villagers, fishermen, nomads, members of different age groups, village councillors, slum dwellers and all others who are, or feel they are, without due access to state resources, as well as professionals, politicians, priest and mullahs, intellectuals, military officers. This human solidarity, with its historic and philosophical origins, is known as civil society and nowadays in Cameroon requires greater citizen participation and influence in the affairs of modern states than ever before.

Today there is empirical evidence of the existence of a plethora of movements in Cameroon within civil society, but most of these are in towns and cities. The most notorious of these movements are the NGOs. These NGOs are not only limited to towns and cities, but some do not even have offices. They exist in suitcases. Their limitation is also dictated by the fact that those who fund them dictate what they should do. Because of this, the interest of the masses is not reflected. Civil society deals with transforming the society; it therefore goes without saying that they must be built up from community levels and operate throughout the country. The mass of Cameroon's people live in the countryside; they need to be integrated into the new political culture and organised and educated through a bottom-up approach.

Civil society in Cameroon is anaemic and fractured. Mkandawire and Olukoshi (1995) maintain that a strong civil society is characterised by the existence of well-organised, highly elaborated, autonomous and self-conscious institutions and associational activities. These may be trade unions, religious or professional associations or traditional authorities. etc. In Zambia, for example, the politically effective characteristics of civil society are modern, while in Nigeria traditional power structures combine with modern ones to create a highly differentiated and articulate civil society.

Current approaches in civil society represent the so-called neo-liberal explanations of social realities that have neo-colonial undertones. Richard Joseph (1978) aptly captures this as an 'ideological façade' designed to distract from a thorough empirical and theoretical explanation of Africa's social realities. Civil society in Cameroon has been stigmatised and asphyxiated since the postcolonial period (Gifford 1997). Today the Cameroon state, although a collapsed one, should take up its responsibility to empower and strengthen civil society. Some states are beginning to see the wisdom of strengthening civil society so that people's interests can be articulated effectively. For example Sierra Leone has been engaged in civil awareness programmes aimed at sensitising citizens about their civic rights. More needs to be done in this direction in Cameroon, and there is also a need to mount massive political awareness campaigns in order to sensitise both the state and civil society about their roles and responsibilities (Ceesay 1998). Cameroon could also go further to nurture a culture of tolerance, debate and accommodation in order to overcome the dangers of ethnic attachments. This can be achieved if specially trained people are employed to educate civil society groups in both urban and rural areas.

Osaghae (1998) maintains that the neo-liberal view pitches civil society as alternative, and even opposed to the state. This neo-liberal conceptualisation evolved and has been popularised within a narrowly defined ideological and historical moment, one which sees civil society as the spearhead and defender of economic and political liberalisation. In the same vein Mbuagbo and Robert (2004) maintain that a Eurocentric and unilinear perspective on civil society, like other development-oriented concepts, is not warranted by historical evidence. Mamdani (1995) argues that we are faced with the problem of viewing social phenomena out of context and imposing explanations not derived from empirical observations of actual social processes but by analogy from antecedent but different historical occurrences. In line with Mamdani this paper proposes autocentric research towards the understanding of civil society in Cameroon. This research should be long term and thoroughly grounded on methodology. Fundamental research should be conducted to come up with viable governance that will anchor the aspirations of the people. Today the Chinese are a challenge to the West because they took time in fundamental research. Research organisations such as the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) should start funding meaningful

research projects on civil society in Cameroon. The research should be manned by people with a high moral and intellectual reputation, since Cameroon has been named twice as the most corrupt country in the world.

To locate the role of civil society in the present political process in Cameroon is like searching for a pin in a haystack. Civil society has been paralysed by ethnic cleavages. The political liberalisation in Cameroon since 1990 has exposed dormant feelings of ethnic animosity, while pro-government vigilante groups emerged for various political reasons to counter the alliance between the minority Anglophones and Bamileke ethnic group that threatened to rob the ruling clique and their supporters of their political privileges (Konings 2002; Mbuagbo and Robert 2004). These ethnic fissures must be resolved and questions around citizenship and voting rights must not preoccupy the political agenda.

There is no doubt that civil society in Africa in general and Cameroon in particular is threatened by the particularism of ethnicity and other atomistic tendencies (Woods 1992). A fully developed civil society in Cameroon should help create norms that would limit the character of ethnic and cultural particularism. It is unlikely, however, that a civil society will develop in Cameroon that is completely void of ethnic tensions and divisions, but structures can be created to contain the problem. Civil society in Cameroon should be questioning its own raison d'etre like other human institutions. By cross-examining itself, it will know whether it is worthwhile. The growth of civil society requires organisational development to enable leaders to exercise influence over government on behalf of their members. When this type of institutionalisation exists, even authoritarian regimes such as the one in apartheid South Africa have to give grudging recognition to the civil society (Sklar 1987).

Conclusion

Civil society in Cameroon has failed to achieve its most important goal—societal transformation. The reasons range from ethnicism to regionalism to elitism. The failure of the government to introduce democratic reforms is seen everywhere—from widespread abuses of human rights to the most blatant forms of corruption. These problems further inhibit the effectiveness of civil society in Cameroon in bringing about any

meaningful change. To rescue itself from this banalised mire, civil society must transcends narrow ethnic, social and political boundaries and embrace the daily and legitimate struggles of ordinary citizens. This is the only way to move towards meaningful quantitative and qualitative development.

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Systèmes de transport pour un développement intégré de l'Afrique : vers un réseau routier et ferroviaire panafricain

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Résumé

L'Afrique est un continent immense dont plusieurs contrées sont encore enclavées à ce jour. De ce fait, elle nécessite des systèmes de transport adéquats, efficaces et fort variés, susceptibles d'accélérer son développement. En effet, le manque de communication adéquate entre les zones de production et celles de forte densité et consommation est à l'origine d'un déséquilibre profond et pathologique entre l'offre et la demande globale des biens et services à travers l'espace continental. À côté du transport aérien fort onéreux, il s'avère opportun d'investir dans le transport routier et ferroviaire, plus accessible à la majorité de la population et véritable catalyseur de l'intégration et du développement du continent africain. Ainsi, dans le but de contribuer à la réflexion sur les alternatives au développement de l'Afrique, il nous semble nécessaire de jeter les bases d'une esquisse théorique du réseau routier et ferroviaire 'panafricain', dont le but serait de relier les grandes aires économiques et démographiques du continent afin de développer l'unité et la solidarité entre les peuples africains. La route panafricaine aurait la forme d'un triangle isocèle renversé, dont les trois angles seraient Le cap en Afrique du sud, Le Caire en Égypte et Dakar au Sénégal. La structure générale du réseau ferroviaire panafricain comprendrait un grand axe central allant du Caire au Cap, avec une variante Alger–Le Cap, une transversale Dakar–Mombassa, une boucle périphérique unissant toutes les zones côtières au cœur du continent, et plusieurs autres axes reliant entre elles les différentes régions. L'implantation de ces structures devrait se faire selon une nouvelle conception de l'intégration régionale ayant pour fondement le com-

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merce et l'investissement, l'exploitation concertée des ressources naturelles, l'implication du secteur privé, l'industrialisation axée sur les exportations ainsi que le développement des infrastructures efficaces et rentables, capables de briser le cercle de la pauvreté et les cycles de violences.

Abstract

Africa is a huge continent with so many landlocked regions. Therefore, there is need for adequate, efficient and highly varied transportation systems that can accelerate its development. The lack of adequate communication between production centres and densely populated areas with a high level of consumption is indeed the cause of a deep and pathological unbalance between supply and the global demand of goods and services throughout the continent. Besides the very costly air transport, it is desirable to invest in both road and railways transportations that are more accessible to the majority of the people and that are a genuine catalyst for Africa's integration and development. Thus, in order to contribute in the thinking on African development alternatives, we see it necessary to lay the foundations of a theoretical outline of a 'Pan African' network of roads and railways aimed at linking the continent's major economic and demographic areas in order to develop unity and solidarity between African peoples. The 'Pan African' road network would have the form of a reversed isosceles triangle, the three angles of which would be Cape Town in South Africa, Cairo in Egypt and Dakar in Senegal. The general structure of the Pan African railway network would include a big central route from Cairo to Cape Town with an Algiers–Cape Town variant, with a cross-country Dakar–Mombassa line, a peripheral loop uniting all the continent's coastal areas, and many other highways linking different regions. Setting these structures should be done according to a new conception of regional integration based on trade and investment, a concerted tapping of natural resources, the implication of the private sector, export-based industrialization as well as the development of efficient and profitable infrastructures able to break the cycle of poverty and cycles of violence.

Introduction

Le transport est un secteur clé pour le développement d'un territoire donné. En effet, de tout temps et de surcroît dans une économie moderne, le transport joue un rôle prépondérant car il facilite non seulement les échanges entre agents économiques, mais également améliore la circulation des personnes et des biens, des idées et des services, ainsi que le raffermissement des liens d'amitié et de fraternité entre les peuples.

L'Afrique est un continent immense dont plusieurs contrées sont encore enclavées à ce jour. De ce fait, elle nécessite des systèmes de

transport adéquats, efficaces et fort variés, car de l'intégration des différents systèmes de transport adaptés à son espace physique dépend en majeure partie son développement. En effet, l'ouverture et l'accroissement des échanges rendus possibles grâce auxdits systèmes ont pour rôle de stimuler la croissance économique.

Cependant, dans la plupart des pays africains, il existe un déficit de liaisons routières et/ou ferroviaires entre les grandes métropoles et l'arrière-pays, d'une part, et d'autre part, entre les différentes localités à l'intérieur du pays, et les différents États entre eux. Il s'agit donc de repenser et de réorganiser les liaisons entre les centres de production et ceux de consommation, et d'opérer le désenclavement des différentes zones de production et de peuplement.

Par ailleurs, il s'avère que le manque de communication adéquate entre la ville et la campagne d'un côté, et entre les zones de production et celles de forte densité et consommation de l'autre, se trouve à la base du développement déstructuré de l'espace africain, du fait d'un déséquilibre profond et pathologique entre l'offre et la demande globales des biens et services.

À titre de rappel, notons que de façon globale la structure des réseaux de transport que la plupart des pays africains ont hérité de la période coloniale n'a pas évolué du tout. Ces réseaux étaient conçus pour faciliter l'acheminement des produits agricoles et miniers vers la colonie. C'est ainsi que plusieurs pays éprouvent jusqu'à ce jour d'énormes difficultés pour l'organisation de leur marché interne, ainsi que la régulation des échanges avec leurs voisins.

En revanche, bien qu'il existe des liaisons aériennes entre les principales capitales africaines, il n'est pas superflu de rappeler que le transport aérien reste onéreux et n'est utilisé que par une infime partie de la population, ce mode de transport étant largement inaccessible à la majorité de la population africaine à cause notamment de son coût élevé. Dès lors, il s'avère nécessaire d'explorer d'autres modes de transport, plus modestes et plus accessibles à la majorité de la population africaine. Nous pensons donc aux modes traditionnels du transport routier et ferroviaire, qui s'affirment comme étant des catalyseurs du développement intégré et de l'aménagement de l'espace, et des moyens par excellence d'intégration des différentes régions du continent africain.

Ainsi, il nous semble nécessaire, alors même que la mondialisation devient non seulement globale et prégnante, mais également irréversi-

ble et incontournable, de jeter les bases sur l'esquisse théorique d'un réseau routier et ferroviaire à l'échelle du continent.

La route panafricaine, dont le but serait de relier les grandes aires économiques et démographiques du continent, aurait la forme d'un triangle isocèle renversé, dont les trois angles seraient Le Cap en Afrique du Sud, Le Caire en Egypte, et Dakar au Sénégal (*cf.* figure 1 en annexe). Des routes secondaires, en forme de Y et incrustées dans le continent profond, seraient reliées au grand triangle, et le tout formant un joli polyèdre, à la structure d'un diamant (*cf.* figure 2 en annexe).

Quant aux chemins de fer, leur implantation doit correspondre non seulement au tracé de grands pôles de croissance dynamique de chaque région, en conformité avec les analyses des institutions financières crédibles telle la Banque Africaine de Développement (BAD), mais également aux grandes aires démographiques du continent. En plus, dans le contexte de la préservation de l'écosystème notamment la réduction de l'émission de gaz à effet de serre, le chemin de fer présente des atouts fort intéressants dans le cadre de l'aménagement du territoire et de la qualité de vie des populations sur le continent africain.

Mais, étant donné que le secteur des transports requiert de lourds investissements, et qu'il constitue sans conteste *l'une des dix priorités* du Nouveau partenariat pour le développement de l'Afrique (NEPAD), le pilotage de ce macroprojet et de tant d'autres qui s'ensuivront, dans le cadre des accords de coopération panafricaine, sollicite, à tous les niveaux, l'engagement des leaders africains, l'amélioration des capacités managériales des cadres africains, ainsi que l'implication effective des bailleurs de fonds et des investisseurs privés dans l'optique du partenariat public/privé.

Nous pouvons affirmer avec Ghebray Berhane (1992 : 35-40)[1] que l'inefficacité des systèmes de transports africains (routiers, ferroviaires, fluviaux et maritimes) et même des services de télécommunications sont des réelles entraves aux divers échanges régionaux : ils alourdissent le coût de l'activité économique africaine. Ainsi, l'Afrique doit aspirer vers son développement intégral, en luttant contre la dispersion imposée par la distance, et en assurant la promotion du transport des biens, des services et des personnes. Aussi, doit-t-elle encourager la libéralisation multilatérale des échanges et l'intégration régionale *effective*, car elles sont source de gains dynamiques et d'élargissement du marché, qui à leur tour génèrent la croissance de la production et les économies

d'échelle. Enfin, l'intégration économique peut accroître le rendement du capital dans les pays intégrés, et ce, indépendamment du stock de capital (Baldwin 1992 : 132).

La présente communication cherche donc à approfondir la réflexion sur :

i) le rôle d'un système de transports intégré dans le développement du continent africain, en l'occurrence le rôle stratégique de la *route* et du *chemin de fer* comme catalyseurs de son développement,

ii) l'esquisse du réseau routier et ferroviaire panafricain et,

iii) la nouvelle conception de l'intégration régionale.

Rôle stratégique de la route et du chemin de fer comme catalyseurs du développement du continent africain

Les transports, toutes modalités confondues, sont des facteurs d'intégration physique et économique des pays, et des vecteurs du développement de la production, de la promotion des échanges et de la cohésion sociale. En effet, comme le souligne Michel Norro (1998 :31), le secteur économique moderne des pays africains a comme caractéristique structurelle principale d'être intégré à un espace géographique extérieur. Et il apparaît clairement que cette situation d'extraversion est une situation fondamentalement précaire.

Les principales fonctions de la route et du chemin de fer

La route et le chemin de fer sont destinés à remplir certaines fonctions traditionnelles dont les principales peuvent être identifiées comme étant celles de faciliter l'approvisionnement et l'acheminement des produits sur les marchés, de permettre la libre circulation des personnes, des biens, des services et des valeurs (commerce, culture, technologie, savoir, paix,…), de contribuer à l'accroissement des flux d'échanges physiques, commerciaux, financiers et de facteurs de production entre les États des différentes sous-régions afin de soutenir la réduction de la pauvreté et le développement socio-économique.

Toutefois, à côté de ces fonctions traditionnelles, la route et le chemin de fer panafricains sont appelés à jouer un rôle stratégique destiné à améliorer l'insertion du continent africain dans l'ordre économique mondial.

Ce rôle stratégique consiste à :

● contribuer à l'accélération et à la concrétisation de l'intégration régiona-le et de l'unité africaine ;

● permettre le désenclavement de plusieurs États incrustés dans l'Afrique profonde ; ce qui aura pour conséquence le renforcement de la vigueur économique globale de la région Afrique ;

● contribuer à l'élargissement de la taille des marchés au sein et au-delà de la région ; ce qui va créer un environnement incitatif favorable à la promotion du secteur privé et à l'investissement ;

● améliorer l'aménagement du territoire et l'attraction des investissements directs étrangers (IDE) générateurs des emplois substantiels dans la région ;

● encourager l'engagement et le déploiement sur le marché africain des investissements directs des nationaux (« IDN »), gage de l'attrait et de la consistance des investissements directs étrangers (IDE) ;

● faciliter l'accès des populations environnantes aux différents marchés et services sociaux induits par la présence de la route et du chemin de fer (petit commerce, écoles, hôpitaux, etc.) ; ce qui conduit par effet d'entraînement à la réduction de la pauvreté dans les zones concernées ;

● aider à la promotion de l'émancipation des femmes et des groupes défa-vorisés au sein des communautés (éclosion des activités agro-pastorales, du petit commerce et de l'artisanat caractéristiques des économies populaires africaines,…).

Mais, appréhendées de façon globale, les deux modalités de transport, à savoir la route et la voie ferrée, ont comme par vocation, une double mission à accomplir : la mission de circulation et celle de développe-ment. Nous allons dire un petit mot sur cette dernière.

La mission externe de la route et du chemin de fer

La route et le chemin de fer, comme nous l'avons déjà dit, sont deux modes de transport par excellence qui favorisent l'aménagement d'un territoire donné ainsi que son développement. Plusieurs études permet-tent d'apprécier cette affirmation à sa juste valeur; mais dans le cadre de cette communication, nous n'en retiendrons qu'une seule qui nous semble pertinente (Kyriacos 1984 : 365-370).

En effet, Kyriacos pense que la route a une double mission, à savoir une mission interne ou de circulation qui est de satisfaire une demande

de trafic entre deux points, et une mission externe ou de développement qui est de satisfaire des objectifs d'aménagement de territoire et de développement. En fait, suite au développement rapide de l'industrie de l'automobile, la route a acquis une place prépondérante dans les infrastructures de transport, tandis que l'économie des transports a été plus centrée sur la recherche de l'optimum interne sur des liaisons isolées, dans le but de parer à un besoin spécifique de transport. Or cette vision qui ne correspond qu'à la première mission de la route, à savoir la mission de circulation, est souvent la cause d'échec de nombreux programmes routiers. Car les rapports de la route avec son environnement sont plutôt dynamiques et relèvent d'un autre aspect beaucoup plus global, la mission de développement. Ainsi, il est nécessaire de considérer les rapports de la route avec son environnement sous deux angles, l'organisation de l'espace et le développement de la région irriguée.

Concernant l'organisation de l'espace, la théorie de la polarisation de l'espace montre que la vie économique et sociale est non seulement faite d'échanges mais également qu'elle ne se manifeste pas partout de façon homogène. Elle s'organise autour des centres ou « pôles » d'intérêt qui concentrent entre eux une floculation de peuplement et d'activités avec des intensités d'attractions mutuelles variables, et les flux qui en résultent peuvent être mis en évidence par les résultats d'enquêtes. Il s'établit donc, dans un certain rayon d'influence entre un pôle d'intérêt et des agglomérations satellites (villes) ou les localités (campagnes) qui gravitent autour, un courant d'échanges réciproques dont l'intensité interne est supérieure en chaque point à l'intensité externe. Et comme les pôles d'intérêt n'ont pas tous la même importance, on peut les « hiérarchiser » en pôles primaires, secondaires, tertiaires, quaternaires, … suivant que leur influence s'exerce à l'échelle continentale (régionale), sous-régionale, nationale, provinciale, etc.

En ce qui concerne les effets structurants du réseau routier sur l'environnement, il semble que l'effet multiplicateur de l'investissement et l'effet accélérateur de l'investissement sont les plus plausibles, lorsque la mission externe du réseau routier est bien remplie. En agissant sur la diminution des coûts des moyens de production, le réseau de transport, par sa création et surtout par sa qualité, est l'un des facteurs-clés pouvant induire l'essor d'une contrée ou d'un territoire donné. Il est dès lors important, par souci d'équilibre, d'apporter à la campagne l'infrastructure routière adéquate couplée à l'investissement pour contribuer à la fixation de la population paysanne. Car la concentration des infras-

tructures de transport en un pôle géant a pour effet de « vider » la
population des campagnes environnantes au profit de la mégapole. C'est
le cas de Beyrouth qui est devenue une « métropole asphyxiée »
(Kyriacos 1984 : 367).

Quant à la relation entre la route et le développement de la zone
irriguée, il n'y a pas de façon formelle un lien de cause à effet entre les
deux; cependant, il n'est pas moins vrai qu'à côté du dynamisme et de
l'esprit d'entreprise des riverains, la route est l'un des nombreux fac-
teurs dont la combinaison concourt audit processus, et à ce jour, son
rôle de catalyseur n'est plus à démontrer. En fait, « le développement
suppose un environnement favorable, une combinaison de circonstan-
ces mais également une combinaison d'actions concertées dans diffé-
rents secteurs, qui pose à son tour des problèmes de synchronisation
dynamique et fonctionnelle » (Kyriacos 1984 : 369). En définitive, le
développement résulte d'une action concertée et coordonnée nécessitant
la contribution prépondérante de la route.

Esquisse théorique du réseau routier et ferroviaire panafricain

Ce réseau, nous le qualifions de « panafricain », car il est appelé à
développer l'unité et la solidarité entre les peuples africains. Actuelle-
ment, l'opportunité exceptionnelle qu'offre le Nouveau Partenariat pour
le Développement de l'Afrique (NEPAD) nous autorise de réfléchir pro-
fondément sur l'aménagement de l'espace africain en vue de favoriser
non seulement la valorisation de son énorme potentiel physique et hu-
main, et la réduction des distances entre les différents pays africains
mais également l'accroissement et l'intensification des échanges
intrarégionaux, et partant une amélioration significative des relations
panafricaines.

La route et la voie ferrée panafricaines ont pour vocation de relier
autour d'un réseau primaire les principales villes des différents pôles
économiques et démographiques du continent. Car, de plus en plus, les
villes ont la capacité d'agir sur l'information concernant les marchés
internationaux, la flexibilité des structures commerciales et producti-
ves, et la capacité d'accéder à des réseaux de dimensions et complexités
variées (Borja 1996 ; Simone 1998 : 28).

En outre, comme l'écrit si bien AbdouMaliq Simone (1998 : 29) :

> Les villes viables font office de centres régionaux, de portes d'entrée, de
> réseaux de distribution, de spécialistes sectoriels, de centres d'activités

des transports, ou alternativement, de sites de production où les coûts sociaux restent fiables, où une main-d'œuvre bon marché est mobilisée, et qui amènent toutes sortes d'arrière-pays dans les circuits de production régionaux et mondiaux.

Le réseau routier

Les routes principales et secondaires africaines représentent moins de 50% de l'ensemble du réseau routier (1500 000 km) dont la densité (0,05 km par km^2) est la plus faible du monde (Atlas de l'Afrique 2000 : 50). De plus, cette infrastructure routière est insuffisante : seuls 12% des routes ont un revêtement dur (Muhigirwa 2003 : 23).

Au plan théorique, un réseau routier assure une desserte spatiale satisfaisante aux conditions suivantes :

- l'espace doit être parcouru par les différentes classes de routes (primaires, secondaires, tertiaires, …) afin d'éviter tout déséquilibre et tout enclavement ;

- chaque route doit fonctionner selon sa classe ou sa catégorie sans entraves ;

- le réseau routier et le réseau de polarisation doivent être harmonieusement répartis afin de permettre à la vie économique et sociale de se développer d'une manière équilibrée aux trois niveaux : régional ou continental, sous-régional ou zonal – les différentes zones ou sous-régions étant le Nord, le Sud, le Centre, l'Ouest et l'Est) – et national ou local (au niveau de chaque pays).

Il faut en outre aborder le problème de l'aménagement en tenant compte de la rentabilité en fonction de la demande de trafic, en termes de structure, de conditions de relief et de géométrie. En effet, la rationalité économique doit rester au cœur de ce macroprojet pour lui donner toutes les chances de réussite et d'essor économique. Car dans le passé, l'Afrique a connu plusieurs projets similaires qui se sont soldés en échec cuisant à cause de l'absence de cette dimension. Autant la volonté politique montre ses limites sans rationalité économique et l'implication communautaire, autant la rationalité économique est obsolète sans retombée sociale positive et palpable.

Étant donné la polarisation de l'espace physique et la structure polarisée des échanges, le réseau routier que nous proposons (cf. figure 3 en annexe) sera composé d'une grande boucle centrale en forme de triangle isocèle renversé et d'une boucle périphérique (réseau primaire qui

relie les pôles primaires du continent ou de la région Afrique), et de plusieurs sous-ensembles. Ceux-ci comprennent des triangles multiformes structurés en réseau secondaire composé des pôles secondaires mettant en liaison les différentes sous-régions. Le réseau tertiaire, quant à lui, est formé de petits triangles dont les principaux axes routiers sont également en forme de Y : ce sont les pôles tertiaires qui ont pour rôle de relier les différents pays d'une sous-région. Enfin, le réseau quaternaire est constitué des tronçons routiers, qui sont en fait des mailles du réseau tertiaire et qui connectent les villes aux localités secondaires au niveau des espaces nationaux : les pôles quaternaires de ce réseau ont la vocation de désenclaver les campagnes africaines.

Ainsi, le réseau routier panafricain proposé est dense et comprend quatre principaux niveaux de réseau. Il s'agit du réseau primaire, avec ses deux boucles, centrale et périphérique, du réseau secondaire avec des axes interrégionaux, du réseau tertiaire avec des tronçons interétatiques, et du réseau quaternaire avec des maillons intranationaux.

De manière concrète, la grande boucle centrale relie la ville du Cap à celle de Dakar et du Caire, et met en liaison les différentes villes et localités suivantes : Le Cap (Afrique du Sud), Tshabong, Ghanzi (Botswana), Andara (Namibie), Sesheke, Mongu (Zambie), Lumbala-Kaquengue, Luau (Angola), Dilolo, Mbuji-Mayi, Lubefu, Kisangani, Buta, Mobaye (RDC), Bambari, Birao (RCA), Wau, El-Obeïd, Khartoum, Atbara, Ouadi-Halfa (Soudan), Abou-Simbel, Assouan, Louxor, Le Caire (Égypte), Awila, Mourzouk, Ghât (Libye), Tamanrasset (Algérie), Tombouctou (Mali), Dakar (Sénégal), Kayes, Bamako (Mali), Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Abuja (Nigeria), Yaoundé, Ebolowa (Cameroun), Koulamoutou, Franceville (Gabon), Oyo, Brazzaville (Congo), Kinshasa, Matadi (RDC), Luanda, Lobito, Namibe (Angola), Tsumeb, Windhoek (Namibie) et Le Cap (Afrique du Sud).

Le réseau secondaire comprend principalement les axes routiers qui relient entre elles les différentes sous-régions. Tel est l'exemple de l'axe routier Yaoundé (Cameroun) – Abuja – Kano (Nigeria) – Agadez – Arlit (Niger) – Tamanrasset – In Salah – Alger (Algérie). Cet axe a l'avantage d'opérer une distribution fonctionnelle efficiente des routes au niveau du réseau secondaire : il occupe une position médiane dans la région et exerce à merveille sa fonction sous-régionale. En effet, il permet de relier la zone du Nord à la zone de l'Ouest et à celle du Centre, et il est connecté au réseau primaire qui relie Dakar au Caire et au Cap.

Plusieurs autres axes prévus dans l'esquisse théorique ont la prétention de jouer ce rôle. On peut donc citer à titre illustratif l'axe Bangui (RCA)– Lisala – Kisangani – Isiro (RDC) – Kampala (Ouganda)– Juba – Malakal – El-Obeïd – Khartoum – Port-Soudan (Soudan) – Hourghada – Le Caire (Égypte). Cet axe routier permet la jonction des zones africaines du Centre, de l'Est, du Nord et de l'Ouest dans le prolongement Bangui-Yaoundé, Douala et Lagos, et du Sud dans l'axe central (prolongement Kisangani – Mbuji-Mayi – Dilolo – Luau – Mongu – Ghanzi – Tshabong – Le Cap), car il est lui aussi incrusté au réseau primaire qui va du Caire au Cap et à Dakar.

L'examen de la figure 3 nous fait également découvrir quelques tronçons routiers en forme de Y destinés à désenclaver l'Afrique profonde. En voici quelques exemples.

Pour la zone du nord : Tamanrasset, In Salah (Algérie), Rabat (Maroc), via Bechar, Alger (Algérie), Ghât, Ghadamès (Libye), Tunis (Tunisie), Tripoli (Libye).

Pour la zone de l'ouest : Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina Faso), via Yamoussoukro (Côte d'Ivoire), Bamako (Mali), Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Porto Novo (Bénin), Niamey (Niger), Tombouctou (Mali), via Gao (Mali), Agadez (Niger).

Pour la zone de l'est : Kampala (Ouganda), Juba, Wau (Soudan), Addis-Abeba (Ethiopie).

Pour la zone du sud : East London (Afrique du Sud), Maseru (Lesotho), Johannesburg, Pretoria (Afrique du Sud), Mbabane (Swaziland), Maputo (Mozambique).

Pour la zone du centre : Brazzaville (Congo), Franceville (Gabon), Yaoundé (Cameroun), Bangui (RCA), Kisangani (RDC), Bangui (RCA), Yaoundé (Cameroun), N'Djamena (Tchad).

Le réseau routier proposé ci-dessus permet d'obtenir une desserte acceptable et un désenclavement de la plupart des contrées incrustées dans le continent.

Le réseau ferroviaire

L'actuel réseau ferroviaire africain est le moins dense du monde : il totalise environ 85 000 km, soit une densité de 2,8 km de voies pour 1 000 km^2 (contre 60 en Europe, par exemple) (Atlas de l'Afrique 2000 : 50). Et ce réseau est caractérisé, à l'exception de quelques lignes près, par l'existence de courts tronçons qui vont des zones minières ou de

production de cultures d'exportation vers les régions côtières, accentuant ainsi la situation d'extraversion et donc de précarité de l'économie africaine évoquée plus haut.

Pour pallier à cette anomalie, le réseau ferroviaire proposé à la figure 4 en annexe voudrait atteindre deux buts majeurs, à savoir établir une liaison entre les principales zones de peuplement de toutes les sous-régions d'Afrique, afin de permettre une meilleure circulation des personnes et des marchandises, ainsi que relier ces zones aux différents pôles de croissance économique à l'intérieur du continent.

En effet, cinq pays représentant près de la moitié (environ 43 %) de la population africaine, hormis quelques autres pays, sont traversés par l'axe ferroviaire central et sa variante. Il s'agit du Nigeria (Afrique de l'Ouest), de l'Égypte (Afrique du Nord), de l'Éthiopie (Afrique de l'Est), de la RDC (Afrique centrale), et de l'Afrique du Sud (Afrique australe).

Ainsi, la structure générale de ce réseau comprend un grand axe central allant du Caire au Cap, avec une variante Alger—Le Cap, une boucle périphérique qui unit toutes les zones côtières au cœur du continent, et plusieurs autres axes qui relient entre elles les différentes sous-régions.

Les principaux nœuds ferroviaires de l'axe central (épine dorsale) sont : Le Caire, Louxor, Abou-simbel (Égypte), Ouadi-Halfa, Khartoum, El-Obeïd (Soudan), Addis-Abeba (Éthiopie), Juba (Soudan), Kisangani, Kindu, Lodja, Mbuji-Mayi, Mwene-Ditu, Lubumbashi (RDC), Lusaka (Zambie), Bulawayo (Zimbabwe), Gaborone (Botswana), Johannesburg, Kimberley, Le Cap (Afrique du Sud).

La variante va d'Alger au Cap en passant par In Salah, Tamanrasset (Algérie), Arlit, Agadez (Niger), Kano (Nigeria), N'djamena, Sarh (Tchad), Bangui (RCA), Yaoundé (Cameroun), Franceville (Gabon), Oyo, Brazzaville (Congo), Kinshasa, Matadi (RDC), Luanda, Huambo (Angola), Windhoek (Namibie), Le Cap (Afrique du Sud).

Comme on peut bien le voir dans la figure 4 en annexe, l'axe ferroviaire central relie le nord, l'est, le centre et le sud du continent, tandis que sa variante permet la connexion des parties septentrionale, occidentale, centrale et australe.

Quelques axes latéraux ainsi que leurs variantes sont également prévus dans cette esquisse. Ainsi en est-il de la voie ferrée devant relier Dakar au port de Mombasa et qui traverse Kayes, Bamako, Bobo-

Dioulasso, Ouagadougou, Niamey, Kano, N'Djamena, Sarh, Bangui, Bumba, Kisangani, Bunia, Kampala et Naïrobi.

Les axes Tripoli–Dakar, Tripoli–Abidjan, Alger–Lagos, Dakar–Djibouti, Douala–Dar es-Salaam, Banana–Maputo, Luanda–Durban, etc. trouvent leur place dans ce vaste réseau à vocation panafricaine.

En définitive, l'on peut affirmer que la complémentarité route / rail au sein du réseau routier et ferroviaire panafricain a pour principal effet de raccourcir la distance entre différents points de l'espace africain, d'éviter la rupture des charges—en ce qui concerne le transport des marchandises—et d'encourager l'amitié entre les peuples et l'accroissement des échanges intrarégionaux. Et ceci est rendu possible grâce à l'action concrète d'une volonté politique éprouvée et traduite en acte par le biais d'une intégration régionale effective fondée sur une approche nouvelle.

Nouvelle conception de l'intégration régionale

La plupart des scientifiques, politiques et acteurs de développement sont d'avis que le processus d'intégration en Afrique piétine depuis plus d'une décennie et qu'il est aujourd'hui nécessaire de lui donner une nouvelle envergure.

En effet, dans une étude récente sur l'intégration en Afrique, Cadot et al. (2005) estiment qu'il est urgent de développer de nouvelles approches à la politique commerciale des pays d'Afrique subsaharienne. Ces auteurs invoquent pour cela deux raisons essentielles : d'une part, les précédentes tentatives d'intégration régionale ont dans une large mesure échoué par rapport à leurs objectifs ambitieux, et d'autre part, la faible performance des pays africains est sans conteste due, au moins en partie, à leurs faibles résultats commerciaux.

D'ailleurs, les accords régionaux de libre échange sont susceptibles d'essuyer un échec parce que la plupart des pays africains ont des structures d'échanges très semblables, important et exportant des biens similaires. Ce qui dénote fort bien une structure des échanges très substituable. En outre, l'analyse standard de Viner sur les accords commerciaux préférentiels (Cadot et al. 2005) passés dans le cadre d'une zone de libre échange montre que le potentiel de création de commerce pour cette zone—qui accueillerait des accords de libre échange (ALE) régionaux—est faible.

Nous estimons pour notre part que la nouvelle conception de l'inté-gration régionale doit être basée sur une approche qui consacre non seulement l'ouverture accrue au commerce et à l'investissement, qui permet des économies d'échelle et favorise la concurrence, la réalisa-tion de projets communs d'exploitation de ressources naturelles et de production de biens, l'inter-connexion des pays africains par des servi-ces d'infrastructures efficaces (Kabbaj 2000), mais également l'encou-ragement et l'engagement du secteur privé qui doit devenir le principal support de la croissance économique régionale, l'industrialisation axée sur les exportations et le développement des infrastructures communes de transport et de télécommunications.

Le commerce et l'investissement

En tant que créateur d'emplois et de richesses, le commerce est un moteur vital de la croissance économique. L'exemple de la Chine est éloquent : sa croissance fulgurante procède d'une augmentation forte et continue de la productivité (doublée d'une efficacité accrue des travailleurs) ren-due possible grâce à des réformes axées sur le marché. Le commerce permet également d'atténuer les conflits tribalo-ethniques et les visées expansionnistes des communautés. Ce qui constitue un effet favorable à la paix sociale et à l'investissement. Le commerce est en effet très ancien, et à ce sujet, Montesquieu disait : « L'effet naturel du com-merce est de porter à la paix. Deux nations qui négocient ensemble se rendent réciproquement dépendantes : si l'une a intérêt d'acheter, l'autre a intérêt de vendre sur des besoins mutuels » (Bakandeja 2001 : 9).

L'exploitation concertée des ressources naturelles

Au niveau infrarégional et même régional, plusieurs initiatives d'exploi-tation des ressources à fortes économies d'échelle sont un facteur cata-lyseur de l'intégration. Ainsi en est-il du projet de rentabilisation du potentiel hydro-électrique du site d'Inga en République Démocratique du Congo (RDC), susceptible de jouer un rôle déterminant dans la production de l'énergie ainsi que sa fourniture dans une bonne partie du continent aux fins de soutenir la localisation optimale des indus-tries. Les premiers bénéficiaires de cette option de développement de-vraient vraisemblablement être les pays de l'Afrique australe regroupés au sein de la SADC[2], ceux de l'Afrique centrale regroupés au sein de la

CEMAC[3] et de la CEPGL[4], ainsi que ceux de l'Afrique orientale organisés autour de la COMESA[5].

En fait, une des causes d'échec de l'intégration régionale dans le passé était l'incapacité des dirigeants africains à aboutir à un accord sur la localisation stratégique des investissements industriels. Ainsi, il faut considérer l'intégration comme un véritable moyen de promotion de l'investissement *in loco* et une méthode de captation des flux de capitaux destinés à nourrir tous les secteurs de l'économie.

Développer des infrastructures efficaces et briser le cercle de la pauvreté

Ensuite, il appert que la faiblesse des infrastructures est un obstacle majeur au commerce et au développement durable dans les pays africains. C'est pourquoi le développement des infrastructures constitue un élément-clé dans la stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté, loin s'en faut. Et tandis qu'au niveau macro-économique, les investissements dans les infrastructures sont intimement liés à la croissance économique et à l'intégration dans l'économie mondiale, au niveau microéconomique, l'accès auxdites infrastructures permet aux ménages de sortir du cercle vicieux de la pauvreté et d'avoir accès aux marchés.

L'implication du secteur privé

Par ailleurs, l'Afrique offre souvent aux yeux du monde un spectacle désolant, celui d'une terre de famine, de guerres, de maladies et de conflits divers. Avec ses 800 millions de consommateurs dont près de la moitié se contentent quotidiennement de moins de 1 dollar américain pour vivre, elle éprouve d'énormes difficultés pour accélérer la réduction de la pauvreté, étant donné les taux de croissance actuels qui sont largement insuffisants. Or l'accélération de la croissance économique passe notamment par la promotion du secteur privé, le renforcement des ressources humaines, l'amélioration des réformes économiques et institutionnelles, l'utilisation rationnelle des ressources naturelles et la promotion d'une gouvernance de qualité et de l'intégration régionale efficace. En effet, les réformes institutionnelles sont nécessaires pour la transparence des marchés, et le modèle libéral de l'économie de marché est basé sur les valeurs telles la liberté, la démocratie, l'État de droit et la bonne gouvernance (Igué 1999 : 56), valeurs que l'Afrique tarde à s'approprier.

Une industrialisation axée sur les exportations

Enfin, l'industrialisation axée sur les exportations doit privilégier l'industrie manufacturière car elle est un facteur diversificateur de l'économie et créateur d'emploi. Elle est considérée comme un atout beaucoup plus sûr pour le développement économique de l'Afrique (Hawkins 1990 :270). Qui plus est, le secteur industriel génère la valeur ajoutée la plus forte et la plus fiable dans le développement autocentré d'un pays (Tshibangu 2004 :118). Et il ne nous semble pas inutile de rappeler que l'industrie est un élément fondamental en ce qui concerne la réorganisation de la structure de production. Plus particulièrement, « l'industrialisation contribue au développement en aidant à la transformation du comportement individuel et de l'organisation sociale » (Norro 1998 :172). En outre, l'industrie manufacturière utilise les technologies, crée des compétences et des connaissances, encourage l'esprit d'entreprise et l'innovation, favorise la mobilité sociale, génère de nombreux emplois et revenus et constitue un pôle d'attraction pour les investissements étrangers (BAD 2002 :26), lesquels investissements sont indispensables pour le développement accéléré et harmonieux des infrastructures communes de transport et des télécommunications.

Surmonter les principaux défis de l'intégration

Mais, tout ce qui précède, c'est-à-dire le pilier de la nouvelle conception de l'intégration, nécessite la mise en place des mécanismes concertés pour l'harmonisation des politiques macroéconomiques et sectorielles, la réalisation des macroprojets visant à valoriser les ressources naturelles et humaines des différents partenaires en vue de la production commune des richesses, la création des systèmes de paiements et de chambres de compensation en attendant le processus ultime d'unification monétaire, et bien sûr « l'interconnexion des pays africains par des services d'infrastructures efficaces », à l'instar du réseau intégré de routes et de chemins de fer panafricain décrit ci-dessus.

Car, faut-il le rappeler, par manque de réseaux d'infrastructures et de transports, les économies africaines demeurent peu articulées ; elles sont constituées en sous-systèmes peu communicants au niveau des flux, des prix et des informations (Hugon 2001 : 38).

C'est pourquoi, pour valoriser son énorme potentiel physique et humain, l'Afrique doit avancer résolument sur la voie de l'intégration

régionale selon cette nouvelle approche et hâter ainsi l'application du Traité d'Abuja dont les principaux thèmes s'articulent autour des concepts de solidarité et d'autonomie collective, d'une stratégie de développement autonome et endogène, et d'une politique d'autosuffisance pour la satisfaction des besoins alimentaires (Banque africaine de développement (BAD), 2000 : 125).

Car en effet, en dépit des progrès fort louables réalisés par quelques États africains, les différents mécanismes d'intégration régionale n'ont pas encore réussi à accroître le volume total des échanges entre pays africains, améliorer la croissance économique globale du continent ou développer le commerce intra-africain, à cause notamment de « l'absence de réelle volonté politique » (Norro 1998 : 201) et du manque d'un réseau d'infrastructures de communication intégré et efficace. Et des efforts supplémentaires doivent être réalisés dans le domaine de la « souveraineté » des États africains et de leur capacité à négocier et à juguler les effets pervers du commerce extérieur, de la confiance mutuelle entre partenaires, et de la valorisation de grandes langues africaines à vocation internationale[6].

Les bénéfices de l'intégration régionale

L'intégration régionale dont l'objectif majeur est de créer un marché commun africain (avec libéralisation des mouvements de facteurs de production), comporte plusieurs avantages et est d'une importance primordiale pour le développement durable de l'Afrique. Elle engendre des gains dynamiques induits par les échanges, et la création des flux d'échanges contribue à l'élargissement du marché qui peut générer des économies d'échelle susceptibles d'attirer et de fixer durablement des investissements directs étrangers (IDE) dans la région.

Elle peut également, à travers des accords d'intégration régionale (AIR), mieux que les institutions nationales, promouvoir la crédibilité des politiques communes menées au sein des organisations supranationales, contribuer à prévenir les conflits entre différents pays, stimuler l'investissement et favoriser la localisation optimale des industries. La rentabilisation du site d'Inga évoquée ci-dessus et tributaire d'une demande croissante, en est un exemple éloquent et rentre bien dans la vision de cette nouvelle approche.

L'Afrique a donc besoin d'initiatives d'intégration régionale qui visent une réduction sensible de coûts de transactions. Car, on le sait, basés sur les concepts de pôle de croissance et de retombées régionales positives, les avantages potentiels de l'initiative d'intégration régionale risquent d'être limités par la médiocrité des infrastructures de transport et de communication. C'est pourquoi la nouvelle approche de l'intégration régionale en Afrique doit désormais privilégier la création d'un réseau d'infrastructures efficace et intégré en vue de maximiser les avantages reconnus à une région intégrée bâtie autour de pôles de croissance dynamique. Nous en voulons pour preuve les résultats positifs enregistrés ces cinq dernières années dans la partie australe du continent.

Une intégration qui se veut holistique

La nouvelle approche dont il est question consacre l'intégration et le développement des capacités de production et des infrastructures locales. En fait, cette intégration se veut holistique en ce sens qu'elle comporte plusieurs dimensions (horizontale, verticale et physique) et a lieu à plusieurs niveaux (économique, politique et socioculturelle).

L'intégration horizontale fait référence à l'intégration des différentes sous-régions au sein du continent africain, tandis que l'intégration verticale rattache l'Afrique à la planète. La route et le chemin de fer « panafricains » constituent le fer de lance pour l'accélération de l'intégration physique du continent africain.

Au plan économique, la régionalisation doit être perçue comme un catalyseur pour intégrer l'Afrique dans l'économie mondiale (Kabbaj 2000). Au plan politique, la régionalisation doit permettre au continent de s'insérer dans la société politique internationale. Quant à l'intégration socioculturelle enfin, elle devra permettre d'unir les peuples africains autour de nouvelles valeurs socioculturelles et leur insertion à l'universel.

Ainsi, la nouvelle approche de l'intégration régionale doit contribuer à bâtir une nouvelle société africaine fondée sur une vision du développement durable qui procède de la rationalité économique, qui favorise l'unité et la solidarité entre les peuples[77] Pourquoi pas un passeport africain pour tous les fils et filles du continent mère (« citoyens africains ») d'ici l'an 2020 pour couronner le processus d'intégration !et qui est capable d'accélérer l'insertion de l'Afrique dans le processus irréversible et prégnant de la mondialisation.

Conclusion

Il est apparu, dès les indépendances, que la « balkanisation » de l'Afrique constituait un facteur de vulnérabilité extérieure, qu'elle limitait les possibilités de croissance interne et qu'elle réduisait son poids dans les négociations internationales (Hugon 2001 : 93). Cette assertion met en lumière la grande faiblesse qu'accusent encore de nos jours les infrastructures continentales, notamment en matière de transports et de communications.

En effet, jusqu'à ce jour, l'Afrique, pourtant dotée d'un espace immense au potentiel riche et diversifié, est encore caractérisée par un déficit routier et ferroviaire, déficit qui entrave les échanges et le développement du commerce intraafricain.

C'est pourquoi, dans le but de contribuer à la réflexion sur les alternatives au développement de l'Afrique, nous avons proposé dans cette communication, la construction imminente d'un réseau routier et ferroviaire intégré à l'ensemble de l'espace continental, fondée sur une nouvelle vision de l'intégration régionale. En effet, nous pensons que la *route* et le *chemin de fer* constituent sans conteste un élément essentiel pour l'aménagement de l'espace africain et un catalyseur de son développement intégré.

La route panafricaine en question est composée d'une grande boucle centrale en forme d'un triangle isocèle renversé qui relie les villes de Dakar, du Cap et du Caire, et d'une boucle périphérique qui relie toutes les villes et localités côtières du continent. À l'intérieur du continent se dressent plusieurs axes routiers en forme de Y destinés à relier entre eux, les différents sous-régions et pays, et à désenclaver les contrées intérieures.

Le réseau ferroviaire, quant à lui, comprend, hormis la boucle périphérique et les axes secondaires, deux grandes structures : le réseau principal composé d'un axe ferroviaire principal allant du Caire au Cap avec une variante Alger–Le Cap, et un axe transversal reliant Dakar à Mombasa.

En outre ce réseau routier et ferroviaire panafricain a pour spécificité de relier les grandes aires démographiques aux grands pôles de croissance économique du continent, de manière équilibrée et intégrée, de façon à favoriser les échanges commerciaux et culturels et la rencontre des peuples.

Cependant, il faut reconnaître que ces infrastructures si vitales pour le développement de l'Afrique, ne peuvent se réaliser et se concrétiser que dans le cadre d'une nouvelle vision de l'intégration régionale. Cette nouvelle approche met en effet un accent particulier sur le développement des infrastructures, en l'occurrence le réseau intégré de routes et de chemins de fer panafricain évoqué dans cette communication, et sur le rôle de l'investissement privé et du commerce intraafricain.

Aussi, peut-on affirmer sans détours avec Stephen Lewis (1990 : 475) que :

> La véritable accession à une plus grande indépendance économique ne pourra s'effectuer qu'en appliquant des politiques qui conduisent à une exploitation plus efficace et plus effective des ressources du continent : la terre, le capital, les hommes, les devises, l'eau. Ces programmes doivent non seulement rentabiliser les possibilités qu'offre le commerce international, mais aussi limiter les effets pervers des marchés extérieurs sur les économies nationales.

En définitive, nous concluons avec Schulders (1991 : 26-27) :

> En fin de compte, l'avenir des nations du Sud dépend des nations du Sud. Elles doivent convaincre le reste du monde (…) de leur aptitude à s'ouvrir sans perdre de vue les intérêts de leurs populations, à s'intégrer dans des ensembles cohérents sans ignorer ni bafouer les particularismes nationaux. (…) Car notre conviction est que l'Afrique du XXIe siècle sera une Afrique régionalisée et intégrée, ou elle ne sera plus.

Comme qui dirait, l'unité dans la diversité culturelle n'est que force mutuelle et enrichissement perpétuel. De cela dépendent aussi la vitalité et le développement de l'Afrique.

Notes

1. *Cf.* Allocution de Ghebray Berhane, Secrétaire Général du Groupe des États ACP, in J.-J. Symoens (dir.), 1992, *Symposium « Les transports et les communications en Afrique »*, Bruxelles :Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer, pp. 35-40.
2. South African Development Community, communauté regroupant la plupart des pays de l'Afrique australe. La RDC, par sa position stratégique au cœur du continent, en fait également partie.
3. Communauté économique et monétaire de l'Afrique centrale.
4. Communauté économique des pays des Grands Lacs.
5. Marché commun des pays de l'Afrique orientale.

6. On peut actuellement penser à des langues telles le swahili, le wolof, le yoruba, le lingala, le zulu, le berbère,...

7. Pourquoi pas un *passeport africain* pour tous les fils et filles du continent mère (« citoyens africains ») d'ici l'an 2020 pour couronner le processus d'intégration !

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Figure 1. Le réseau routier et ferroviaire panafricain sous forme d'un triangle isocèle renversé (structure théorique à géométrie variable)
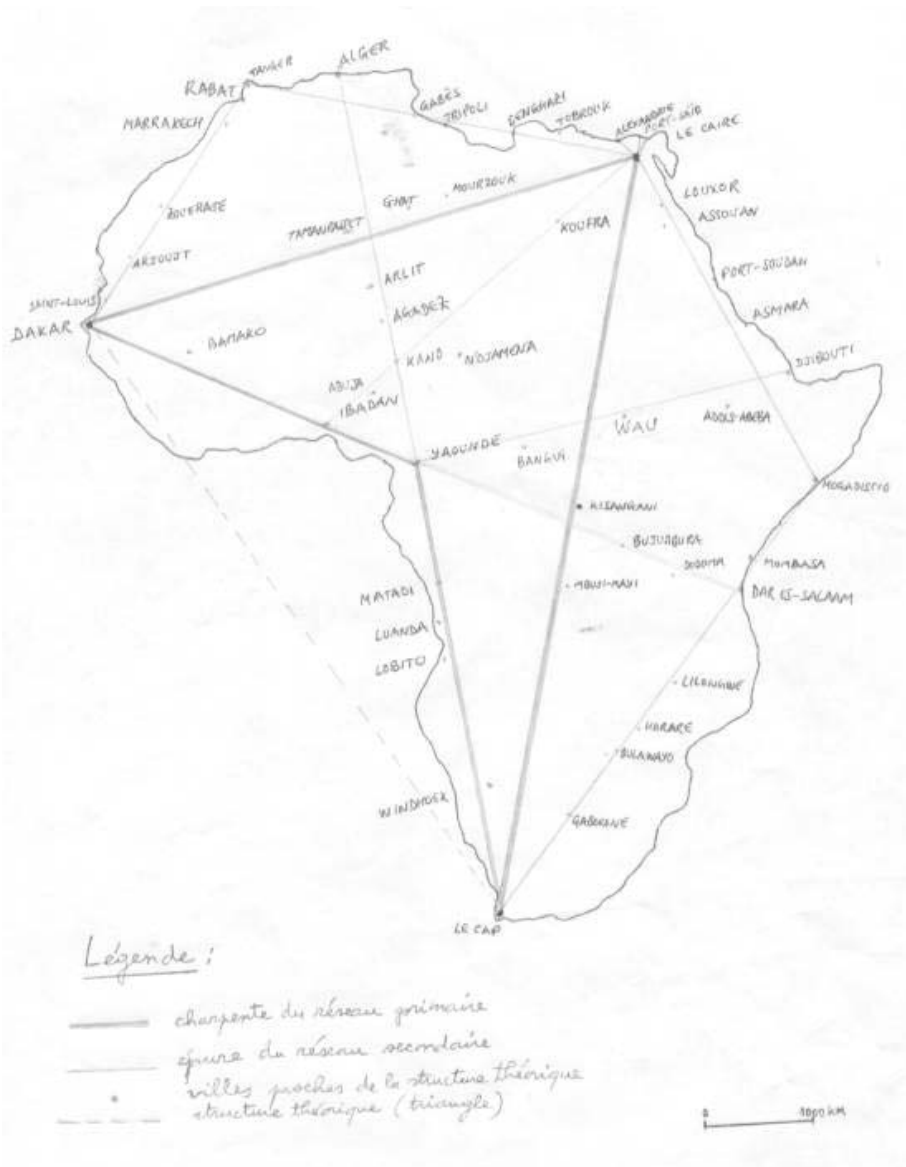
Figure 2. Le réseau routier et ferroviaire panafricain
à la structure d'un diamant

Figure 3. La route panafricaine : structure théorique du réseau primaire et secondaire avec ses principaux nœuds et arcs
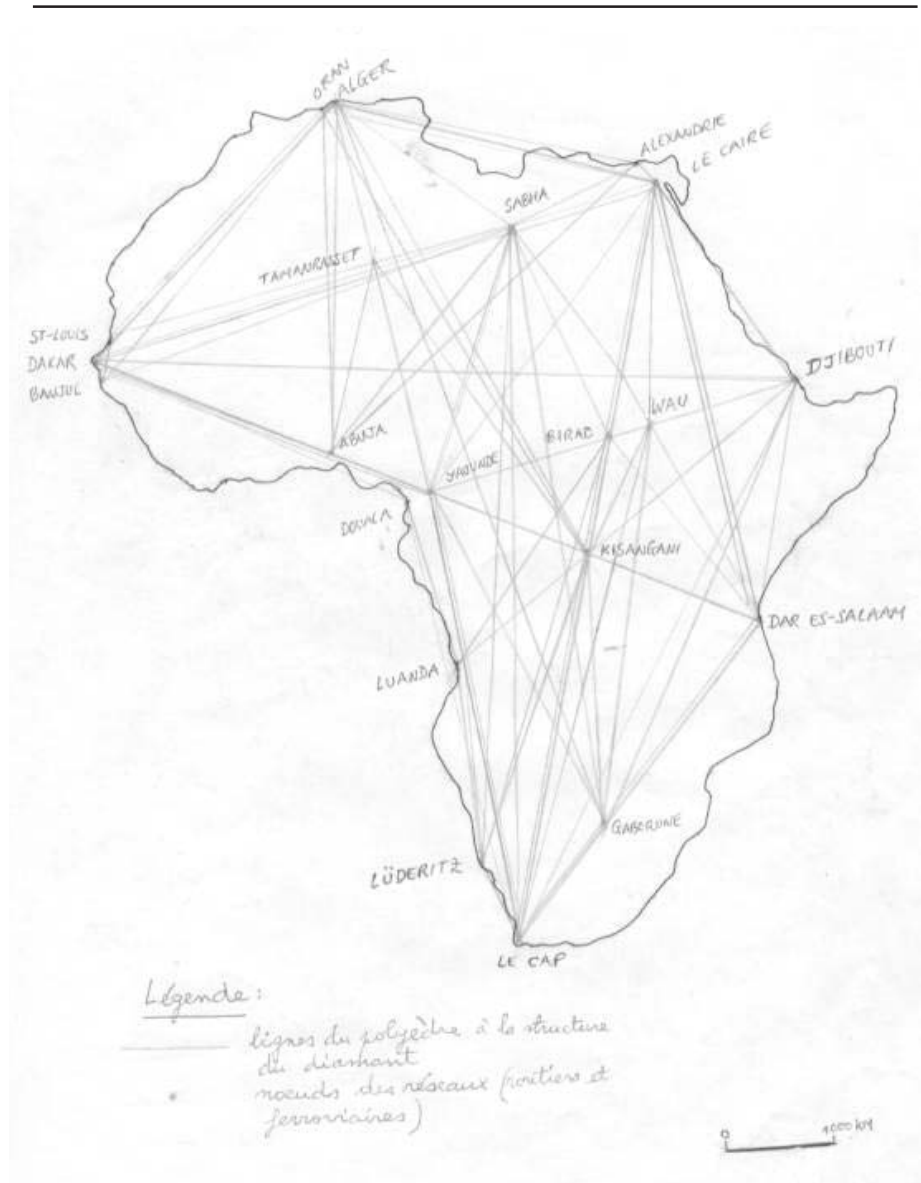
Figure 4. Le chemin de fer panafricain : structure théorique
avec les principaux nœuds et arcs