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Africa Development is the quarterly bilingual journal of CODESRIA. It is a social science journal whose major focus is on issues which are central to the development of society. Its principal objective is to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among African scholars from a variety of intellectual persuasions and various disciplines. The journal also encourages other contributors working on Africa or those undertaking comparative analysis of Third World issues.

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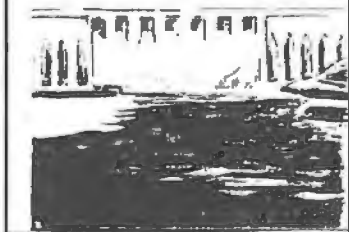
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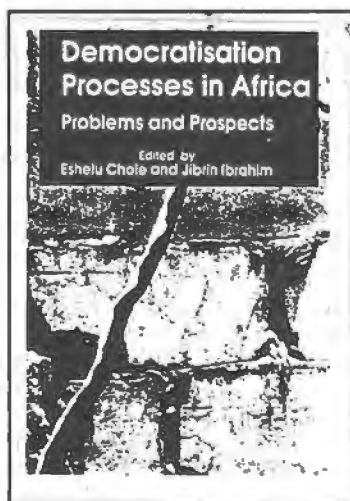
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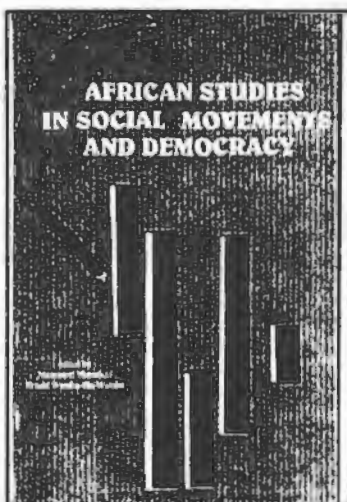
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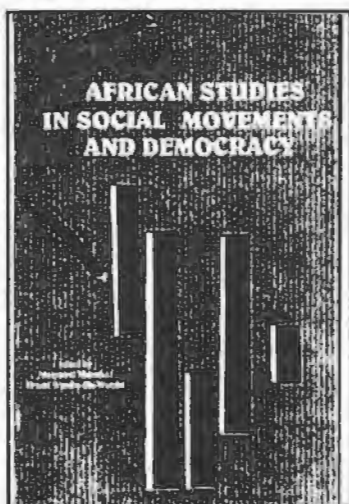
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Parallel Trade and Powerless Places: Research Traditions and Local Realities in Rural Northern Nigeria

Kate Meagher*

Résumé: Le contexte des programmes d'ajustement structurel (PAS) et l'intérêt renouvelé pour l'intégration africaine, expliquent le choix populaire porté sur le commerce parallèle transfrontière des produits agricoles pour la libéralisation et l'intégration des marchés. Le cas du nord du Nigéria atteste de l'existence d'une contradiction de plus en plus grande entre les perspectives actuelles de recherche sur le commerce transfrontière de produits agricoles — surtout celles concernant les pays francophones — et les réalités de son impact sur les capacités de production rurales à l'intérieur du Nigéria. Pour l'auteur, le développement du commerce parallèle limite les capacités de production des «petits» paysans et creuse la différenciation rurale. Les exemples sont tirés d'études menées entre 1990 et 1994 dans 3 villages du nord du Nigéria représentatifs des systèmes agraires et zones agro-écologiques.

Introduction

In the past decade, parallel trade in West Africa has become a subject of increasingly feverish research efforts. Two developments have contributed to the urgency of the issue. The first is the intensification of parallel activities in the context of structural adjustment programmes. The second is the revival of interest in African integration in response to the formation of large trading blocs in other parts of the world. Within the context of the New World Order, parallel trade in West Africa is increasingly seen as a force for liberalisation and market integration. Particular attention has been focused on parallel trade in agricultural commodities, which is believed to have important implications for agricultural development and the transformation of rural society. Unfortunately, questions concerning the actual impact of parallel activity on rural society have been decided more by the ideological orientation of the researcher than by hard empirical evidence.

The main argument of much of the existing literature is that parallel trade contributes to the development of rural society by raising producer incomes and encouraging agricultural investment. Parallel trade is represented as an activity carried out by local producers and traders attempting to evade the distortions of official economies and artificial national borders — a form of structural adjustment and regional integration from below. The accompanying policy recommendations involve the

liberalisation of agricultural markets and the reduction of obstacles to trade across borders — recommendations that are in line with the aims of structural adjustment programmes already in force in the majority of African countries.

The aim of this paper is to identify the gap between the research agendas of current work on parallel trade in northern Nigeria and the realities of its impact on rural productive capacity. The paper will begin by reviewing the existing traditions of agricultural parallel trade research in northern Nigeria. This will be followed by a brief analysis of the impact of parallel trade on northern Nigeria farmers. Evidence will be drawn from studies carried out between 1990 and 1994 in three villages selected to represent a range of agro-ecological zones and farming systems. The analysis will focus on the effect of regional and class differences on the ability of farmers to benefit from parallel markets.

Before proceeding, a brief comment on the use of the term 'parallel trade'. 'Parallel trade' is conventionally used to refer to the movement of legal goods through illegal or unofficial channels (Lindauer 1989:1874). While this definition of parallel trade includes both illegal cross-border trade and illegal channels of trade operating only inside a given country, internal parallel trade in agricultural commodities has largely ceased to exist in Nigeria since the abolition of the marketing boards in 1987. Even prior to the abolition of the marketing boards, there was little regulation of internal trade in grain which has, since the mid-1970s, been the main cash crop of northern Nigeria. The trade of grain across borders has remained clandestine. In the context of this paper, therefore, parallel trade will be used interchangeably with cross-border trade, referring to the illegal trade of agricultural commodities across national boundaries.

Traditions of Parallel Trade Research in Northern Nigeria

One of the peculiarities of research on parallel trade in northern Nigeria is that the bulk of this work has taken place outside the Nigerian intellectual community. The most obvious reason for this is that cross-border movements of most of the commodities involved are illegal on the Nigerian side of the border, though in many cases, not on the other side. This makes research on parallel trade more difficult in Nigeria than in adjoining Francophone countries.

A second reason appears to be related to the nature of the prevailing traditions of rural research in northern Nigeria. The market-oriented structure-conduct-performance approach which dominated agricultural marketing research in the 1970s and 1980s focused largely on establishing the efficiency of indigenous marketing structures as an alternative to marketing boards. Research concentrated on rural-urban marketing chains within Nigeria, and avoided acknowledging more politically dubious

marketing flows except as examples of the distortions created by marketing boards and price controls (Hays 1973; Jones 1972). The more critical political economy tradition tended to focus on the forces of rural class formation, a process which parallel activity tends to blur rather than clarify. The few notable studies of the role of indigenous marketing structures in class formation perpetuated the focus on rural-urban crop marketing, with only passing references to the influence of cross-border trading opportunities (Clough 1981; Clough and Williams 1987).

The emergence of a research interest in parallel activity emanates from a very different source. Economists rather than rural researchers began to take interest in the issue in the early 1970s when cross border flows, always a feature of trade in the region, began to accelerate in response to increasing economic distortions in Nigeria. Most of the 'findings' in the domain of agriculture, however, were either deduced from macro-economic data, or based on anecdotal evidence or ideological conjecture. The general argument is that parallel trade in agricultural commodities raises rural incomes and is indicative of the need for economic liberalisation (World Bank 1981).

At about the same time, a more empirically-based approach to parallel trade research was emerging on the other side of Nigeria's borders. This study, which grew largely out of the disciplines of anthropology and geography, was conducted by French and Francophone African scholars interested in issues of indigenous economic organisation and regional integration. (Amselle and Gregoire 1988; Egg and Igue 1993; Gregoire 1993; Igue 1977; Igue 1985).

The Francophone research is essentially in line with the free market perspective; parallel trade is regarded as an activity that directs resources toward the rural areas and promotes agricultural investment. On a more ideological level, parallel activity is portrayed as a reassertion of African solidarity against artificial colonial borders and urban-biased forms of economic organisation.

More recently, Western political economists and anthropologists appear to have picked up the issue from a post-Fordist perspective. Research from these sources focuses on globalisation and the changing context of ethnic and political identities (Watts 1992).

Despite the range of approaches devoted to studying the issue, an understanding of the organisation and impact of parallel trade in northern Nigeria remains elusive. The main reason is that none of the research traditions identified involve any significant empirical research on parallel trade within Nigeria. In all cases, research is either highly theoretical, conjectural, or is conducted from the other side of the border. As a result, much of the available material is seriously at odds with the Nigerian realities, particularly in terms of the impact of parallel trade on agriculture and other productive sectors.

In the current context of increasing parallel activity, the general contention that agriculture should flourish and rural accumulation should increase does not appear to reflect the actual processes underway in rural northern Nigeria. Information gathered from Nigerian official and media reports links parallel trade with rising production costs, food scarcity and run-away consumer inflation, in the rural as well as the urban areas (NAERLS 1990; *National Concord* 10/6/91; Wedderburn 1988). Predictions speak of famine and unmanageable production costs in agriculture and agro-industry if parallel activity is not brought under control.

This apparent research gap between theoretical perspectives and local perceptions, combined with the re-emergence of African integration as a burning development issue, has generated a growing demand for Nigerian-based parallel trade research. Much of the demand emanates from foreign sources, predominantly the international financial institutions and a Francophone consortium including the Club du Sahel, CILSS, French Agricultural Research Institutes and some local West African NGOs. While the international financial institutions are generally interested in promoting the widening and liberalisation of markets, the Francophone consortium concentrate more on the issue of finding regional solutions to the problems of economic crisis and Sahelian food security, and have initiated a number of research programmes in various parts of West Africa. In northern Nigeria, parallel trade research networks are being set up in the Institute of Agricultural Research in Zaria, and in Maiduguri. These research nodes are linked with similar programmes in western and eastern Nigeria.

While these initiatives appear to have succeeded in bringing Nigerian scholars into parallel trade research, the research agenda they bring with them involve some rather fixed, and in some cases inappropriate, notions of the impact and development potential of parallel trade. Aside from their pro-market bias, the Francophone perspective tends to generalise from the experience of French West African countries, which have derived a number of benefits from parallel trade over the past two decades. In particular, the tendency of an internationally convertible Communauté Française Africaine (CFA) Franc to attract inflows of food crops from neighbouring countries with weaker currencies has tended to improve food security and limit inflation triggered by structural adjustment programmes. The Nigerian experience of parallel trade has been quite different, and cannot be successfully extrapolated by the application of a free-market logic. An adequate understanding of the impact of parallel trade on Nigerian rural society requires close empirical research from inside the country, combined with an infusion of the hard-bitten political economy perspective characteristic of the best of northern Nigerian rural research.

Parallel Trade and Rural Realities

A close look at rural realities in Nigeria calls into question the positive vision of parallel trade painted by much of the existing research. Evidence from studies conducted within Nigeria suggests that, far from redistributing wealth in favour of the rural areas, parallel trade has tended to undermine agricultural production and contribute to the increasing marginalization of small-scale farmers. It is important to recognise, however, that the effects of parallel trade on rural society are uneven. Regional and class differences within rural society exert a significant influence on the ability of farmers to capture the benefits of high parallel market prices.

The differential impact of parallel trade within the context of structural adjustment will be examined using evidence from three northern Nigerian villages. The first, studied in 1990-91, is the village of Danyashe, located north of Daura, about 7 km from the Niger border. This is a grain deficit region characterised by low and unreliable rainfall and recurrent drought. The other two villages, Rogo and Unguwan Dinya, were both studied in 1993, and are located in the central grain surplus zone of northern Nigeria. Rogo is located in south-western Kano State. Production in the area depends largely on rainfed agriculture, with some small-scale valley bottom irrigated farming (fadama). Unguwan Dinya relies more on irrigated, input intensive agriculture. It is located within the Bakori Dam irrigation system in southern Katsina State, as well as being within an the area actively served by the Funtua Agricultural Development Project.

Historical Background

The cross-border marketing of agricultural commodities between Nigeria and Niger has been a significant feature of the regional economy since pre-colonial times. Over the years, the direction, volume and composition of trade flows have shifted significantly with changes in the policy regimes and economic conditions on both sides of the Nigeria-Niger border. Since the collapse of groundnut production in the mid-1970s, parallel trade flows of agricultural commodities have centred on food crops rather than what are conventionally known as 'export crops'. Currently, the trade involves outflows of grain and subsidised agricultural inputs from Nigeria, and inflows of cattle, small livestock, cowpeas and *aya* from Niger (Egg and Igue 1993). In the case of northern Nigeria, grain is not only the principal agricultural export on the parallel market, but also the region's main cash crop and main food crop.

Historical evidence indicates that, for the bulk of northern Nigerian farmers, parallel trade has consistently failed to improve production incentives (Meagher and Ogunwale 1994). Despite the context of high grain prices and expanding agricultural markets, production incentives have been

weighed down by disadvantageous agricultural policies and the high transaction costs of participation in parallel markets. In particular, rising production costs and high levels of consumer inflation have eroded any improvements in grain and other crop prices. In addition, the bulk of farmers have found themselves unable to afford the cost of trading crops to bulking and border markets where prices are higher. Relatively large-scale farmer-traders have been the principal beneficiaries of parallel market prices, but evidence suggests that their profits were used more for diversification out of agriculture than for increased agricultural investment (Clough 1981; Clough and Williams 1987; Amselle and Gregoire 1988).

SAP and the Struggle with Terms of Trade

Structural adjustment policies, introduced in 1986, were expected to remedy this situation through a regime of currency devaluation and liberalisation of markets and prices. These measures were designed to shift resources in favour of agriculture and to increase the competitiveness and efficiency of agricultural marketing — reforms that could be expected to encourage a productive response to the opportunities offered by wider regional markets.

Instead of remedying the situation, structural adjustment has tended to exacerbate the constraints that have prevented parallel markets from stimulating significant increases in agricultural production. Far from improving the terms of trade faced by agricultural producers, structural adjustment has, on the balance, worsened them. Despite the boost given to grain prices by high parallel market demand and the devaluation of the naira against the CFA franc, production costs have been rising faster than output prices. The impact of devaluation on agricultural inputs, most of which are imported or have high import content, has been compounded by the progressive removal of subsidies on these items.

Although the index of Nigerian grain prices rose to 536 between 1985 and 1992, the price of fertiliser distributed on the open market (the main input used by northern Nigerian farmers) rose to 767 over the same period (Table 1). Labour costs have also skyrocketed; in Kano State the index for casual agricultural labour jumped to 600 between 1986 and 1992. Similar difficulties have arisen in the case of cowpeas, the major cash crop of the extreme north. In Katsina State, the cowpea price index rose to 412 between 1985 and 1992, while the price index for pesticide, the main input used for cowpeas, reached 502 over the same period. Crop prices have not fared much better against the cost of living, only managing intermittently to rise above the rural CPI.

At the same time, CFA-denominated grain prices in Niger have remained quite stable. Using the parallel exchange rate of the Naira against the CFA Franc as a proxy, it is clear that until recently the Naira value of grain sold in Niger has been able to keep pace with the rising cost of inputs and

consumer necessities in Nigeria. The devaluation of the CFA Franc in January 1994, combined with increased vigilance from the Nigerian side of the border, has altered the situation, causing a collapse of cross-border grain flows and a sharp decline in grain prices within Nigeria.

Different categories of farmers have reacted in various ways to these pressures. In villages such as Rogo and Danyashe, which are dependent on rainfed agriculture and inputs procured on the open market, the majority of small-scale farmers have responded by cutting back on the use of improved inputs and hired labour, and withdrawing from the production of crops that require high levels of such inputs, especially maize and cowpeas. In Rogo, average maize production among small-scale farmers declined by 40 percent between 1989-1992, and the production of improved cowpeas is also declining. Maize is not grown in Danyashe, but small farmers' production of cowpeas, the main cash crop in the area, declined by 20 percent between 1989 and 1990.

Table 1: Selected Producer and Consumer Price Indices in Northern Nigeria

Year	Fertiliser (Market Price)	Grain	Rural CPI	Parallel Market Value of F CFA
1986	128	53	-	100
1987	-	61	-	167
1988	194	173	182	227
1989	306	179	273	313
1990	256	174	293	351
1991	-	330	328	417
1992	767	536	471	800

Sources: APMEU unpublished grain price data; Central Bank of Nigeria Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 1988-92; Egg and Igue 1993; KTARDA Quarterly and Annual Reports 1990-92; Meagher 1991.

Owing to their location on an irrigation scheme and near the headquarters of an agricultural development project (ADP), small-scale farmers in Unguwan Dinya have privileged access to subsidised fertiliser and other forms of production assistance. In this context, maize remains a profitable option; in 1992, Dinya small-scale farmers produced approximately 10 times as much maize as small-scale farmers in Rogo.

Large-scale farmers have tended toward a strategy of beating high production costs by selling their crops in high value markets, such as agro-industrial, urban or border markets, or by delaying sales until much

later in the season when prices are higher. CFA Franc-denominated grain prices in Niger have more than kept pace with the rise in Nigerian production costs, increasing the attractiveness of border markets and cross-border trade for those with the necessary resources and connections.

These more profitable marketing options have encouraged large-scale farmers to increase production, despite the dramatic increase in production costs. Between 1989 and 1992, large-scale farmers in Rogo have increased maize production by 103 percent. In Dinya, maize production among large-scale farmers is even more buoyant than in Rogo; in 1992, the upper stratum of Dinya farmer produced 47 percent more maize than their Rogo counterparts. Cowpea production also appears to be on the increase among large-scale farmers in Danyashe, though parallel markets cannot be said to have contributed to this trend, since prices for cowpeas are lower in Niger than in Nigeria.

The overall effect of these forces on maize production and marketing provides a striking example of the paradoxical effect of parallel trade and structural adjustment on Nigerian agriculture. Within Nigeria, the evidence suggests an overall decline in maize production in response to the high cost of fertiliser (NAERLS 1991; IAR 1990; KTARDA 1993). At the same time, the supply of maize in border and parallel markets is increasing, as better-off farmers and traders struggle to keep ahead of production costs and consumer inflation (Hamadou 1993; Meagher and Ogunwale 1994; Soule 1993).

Not by Grain Alone

Apart from the problem of rising input costs, high parallel market grain prices can only encourage production to the extent that farmers derive a significant proportion of their income from the marketing of grain. While this may be true in the case of large-scale farmers in grain surplus area of northern Nigeria, it is far less true of small-scale farmers and farmers from the grain deficit areas of the north. These categories of farmers consume a greater proportion of the grain they produce, and are more constrained to participate in non-farm activities in order to purchase food and inputs.

As indicated in Table 2, farmers in grain deficit areas such as Danyashe derive a negligible proportion of income from grain sales. In fact, grain sales in this area are more a reflection of distress than prosperity, as is indicated by the fact that it is small-scale rather than large-scale farmers in the village who derive some income from that source, of only 2 percent of their total income. In Rogo, the share of grain sales in the incomes of small-scale farmers remains extremely low, despite the importance of grain as a cash crop in that part of Kano State. Small-scale farmers in Rogo derive only 6 percent of their income from grain sales, while the same source contributes 20 percent to the incomes of large-scale farmers in the village. In Dinya, high prices and easier access to fertiliser have encouraged an even greater

dependence on grain sales among both small-scale and large-scale farmers, who derive 16 percent and 23 percent of their incomes from this source, respectively.

This data indicate that even spectacular improvements in grain prices are unlikely to contribute significantly to the incomes of small-scale non-project farmers. As a number of studies have pointed out, liberalisation and parallel trade have tended to improve the price of crops that are least important in the incomes of poorer farmers (Gibbon 1993; Meagher 1991; Weber *et al.* 1988).

Worse still, parallel trade has tended to depress the price of agricultural commodities most important to the incomes of poorer farmers. As regards agricultural trade, the dominant parallel exports from Niger into Nigeria are livestock, cowpeas and irrigated vegetables, which are also the main products marketed by farmers in the extreme north of Nigeria. Parallel inflows of these commodities from Niger diminish the prices available in Nigeria. As one farmer from Danyashe commented, parallel trade hurts farmers in the Nigerian border regions both ways: it increases the price of grain which they buy, and depresses the price of the commodities they sell.

Table 2: Percentage of Total Income Derived from Crop and Grain Sales

	Non-Farm Income	Crop Sales	Grain Sales
Danyashe			
Small-scale	65	35	2
Large-scale	73	27	0
Rogo			
Small-scale	74	26	6
Large-scale	50	50	20
Ungurwan			
Small-scale	40	60	16
Large-scale	44	56	23

Source: Compiled by author.

The Forgotten Majority: Marginal and Grain Deficit Producers

The plight of grain deficit producers — farmers who do not produce enough grain to meet their consumption needs — is an issue that is almost invariably ignored in studies of the developmental potential of parallel trade. High grain prices are only an asset for grain surplus producers, who constitute a much smaller proportion of the farming population than is often assumed. For the majority of northern Nigerian farmers, high grain prices are more of a problem than an incentive. This is especially true of the border regions, which market-oriented thinkers present as the principal beneficiaries of high parallel market prices (Igue 1985). As mentioned above, the border regions of northern Nigeria suffer from a chronic grain deficit, with household production lasting an average of 5 to 6 months of the year. The upward pressure on grain prices caused by demand from Niger is a source of great hardship for the farmers of this area.

Even in the core grain surplus regions of northern Kaduna and southern Kano, Katsina and Sokoto States, studies indicate that the incomes of 10-20 percent of farmers are reduced by increases in the price of grain (Matlon 1977; Meagher 1991). An even larger proportion experience a precarious self-sufficiency that is easily undermined by adverse weather conditions, or disadvantageous shifts in production costs or the cost of living.

Table 3 shows the levels of grain deficit production in the three villages under study. In Danyashe, all of the small farming households were unable to produce enough grain to meet their household needs during the period of the study, and 75 percent of the large-scale households were in the same position. Net purchases of grain amounted to 44 percent of grain production among small-scale farmers, and 18 percent among large-scale farmers. In Rogo, located in the heart of Kano's grain surplus zone, 52 percent of small-scale farmers were grain deficit producers, and net purchases amounted to 48 percent of total grain production during the period of the study. The latter figure may be somewhat inflated by the increasingly common strategy in the area of buying grain for future consumption whenever one has money, since prices appear to be rising uncontrollably.

Large-scale farmers in Rogo, and both large and small-scale farmers in Dinya are comfortable net sellers of grain. Net grain sales average 50 percent of grain production for Rogo large-scale farmers, and 33 percent and 13 percent for Dinya large-scale and small-scale farmers respectively.

Time series data from Rogo suggests that, among small-scale farmers, the inability to meet consumption needs has been increasing under structural adjustment. Between 1990 and 1993, net grain sales declined by 71 percent among Rogo small-scale farmers, but increased by 62 percent among large-scale farmers.

Tables 3: Levels of Grain Deficit

	Consumption Purchases (Bgs)	Purchases as % of Grain Production	Net Grain Sales (Bgs)	% Grain Deficit Households
Danyashe				
Small-scale	4.8	44.4	- 4.5	100.0
Large-scale	2.4	18.0	- 2.4	75.0
Rogo				
Small-scale	6.2	48.4	- 1.9	52.6
Large-scale	0.7	0.7	50.1	8.7
Ungurwan				
Small-scale	1.9	5.4	13.4	10.7
Large-scale	0.6	0.6	32.9	0.0

Source: Compiled by author.

Rising grain prices pose problems, not only at the level of consumption, but at the level of production as well. Grain deficit households are forced to divert income and assets from investment in production in order to purchase sufficient food. In some instances, this is leading to de-capitalisation, as in the case of the farmer in Danyashe who sold his plough to buy grain for the household.

It has been argued in some of the Francophone literature that the parallel grain trade represents too small a proportion of Nigeria's total production to be blamed for high grain prices. It is estimated that between 100,000 and 250,000 tonnes of grain are traded into Niger annually, depending on the adequacy of the harvest on either side of the border (de Coninck 1989; Soule 1993).

Although this is less than 2 percent of Nigeria's annual grain production, it is approximately 10 percent of the nation's marketed 'surplus', which is enough to constitute a significant stress on local grain prices (World Bank 1991).

Local Realities and Policy Attitudes

The economic realities faced by farmers in each of the different villages are fairly closely mirrored by local policy attitudes (Table 4). Two policy issues were discussed with farmers: the possibility of liberalising the parallel grain trade and the appropriate level of government intervention in agriculture.

As regards the liberalisation of cross-border trade, the general level of village food security appears to be the major determinant of local attitudes. In the case of Danyashe, there was unanimous opposition to liberalising parallel trade. One farmer even insisted that those who engage in the trade

should be shot. In Rogo as well, opposition to the liberalisation of the parallel grain trade was high, hovering just below 80 percent for both large-scale and small-scale farmers. In Dinya, on the contrary, barely one-third of farmers in both strata expressed opposition to liberalisation.

Table 4: Farmers' Policy Attitudes Towards Liberalisation of Borders and Government Intervention in Agriculture (Percent)

	Opposed to Liberalisation of Borders	In favour of Government Intervention
Danyashe		
Small-scale	100	n.a.
Large-scale	100	n.a.
Rogo		
Small-scale	79	87
large-scale	89	85
Ungurwan Dinya		
Small-scale	36	96
Large-scale	35	97

Source: Compiled by author.

Interestingly, in each village there is little difference between the attitudes of small-scale and large-scale farmers on the issue, despite the fact that the economic impact of liberalisation varies considerably across economic strata. The policy attitudes expressed appear to reflect the importance of communal food security in local economic ethics. In villages where food security is problematic, even large-scale farmers who admit to profiting from high grain prices are loathe to express a preference for liberalisation, either out of genuine communal sentiment or out of a desire to appear to defend community food security interests.

On the issue of government intervention in agriculture, farmers expressed an overwhelming desire for increased intervention, despite the perennial problems of economic efficiency and distribution. In Rogo and Dinya, the majority of farmers in both strata believed high input costs rather than smuggling to be the major cause of high grain prices, and the central impediment to increased production. Particularly among small-scale farmers, capital constraints and lack of access to inputs are currently a more serious disincentive to production than low output prices. The restoration of input subsidies and improved input supplies was perceived by small and large-scale farmers alike as a better means of improving production incentives than high grain prices.

In Danyashe, farmers in all categories made little use of improved inputs, and were much more directly affected by the upward pressure of parallel

trade on grain prices. They were therefore more sensitive to parallel trade as a cause of high grain prices, but incapable of deriving any benefit from that policy direction. Despite their marginal access to and use of improved inputs, Danyashe farmers were also in favour of increased input subsidies and improved supplies through government rather than market channels.

Conclusions

There is little in the evidence presented to support the contention that liberalisation of internal or external agricultural markets contributes to the economic or political empowerment of powerless rural groups. On the contrary, liberalisation appears to raise the stakes of economic participation, and even of subsistence, further disenfranchising poorer farmers and those from marginal areas. In the context of northern Nigeria, it is clear that in grain surplus as well as border areas, small-scale and marginal farmers have been unable to benefit from structural adjustment or from the intensification of parallel grain trading, except for those on development projects with privileged access to subsidised inputs.

As structuralists have been pointing out for decades, the poverty and powerlessness of the rural poor is not simply a product of macro-economic distortions. Small and marginal farmers are bound into their situation by a complex array of structural features, including severe capital constraints, a high susceptibility to food deficits, dependence on marginal non-agricultural sources of income and a lack of connections which would enable them to lower the transaction costs of access to inputs and high value output markets.

These structural features severely limit the ability of poorer farmers in northern Nigeria to derive benefits from parallel trade, even under liberalised conditions. Not only are they least equipped to compete effectively in input and output markets, but their precarious levels of agricultural production leave them least able to benefit from, and more likely to be hurt by, high output prices. This is particularly evident in the border regions, where not only incomes, but the barest food security, have been reduced rather than improved by parallel trade. On the other hand, large-scale and project farmers, who were most privileged in the pre-SAP era, have been the most successful in seizing the economic opportunities created by parallel trade and market liberalisation.

This gap between northern Nigerian realities and the prevailing view of parallel trade brings us back to the question of research agenda. The dominance of external research agenda has tended to bias parallel trade research in favour of conclusions which support the liberalisation of cross-border trade. In the case of Nigeria, the productive consequences of this agenda have not been given adequate attention. It is hoped that the development of a local interest in parallel trade research will increase

attention to its actual impact on agricultural production, and, in time, move on to the more vital, but less fundable issue of alternative solutions to the crisis of regional production and food security.

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Technology Development and Dissemination in Agriculture: A Critique of the Dominant Model

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Résumé: Bien que beaucoup d'attention et de ressources aient été consacrées au développement et à la diffusion de la technologie agricole en Afrique, la grande majorité des paysans, notamment des petits paysans, usent de techniques culturelles traditionnelles. Selon l'auteur, le fait que la technologie qu'utilisent les paysans ne s'est pas améliorée d'une manière significative est due à la manière dont les produits de la Recherche - développement - diffusion sont utilisés. L'analyse que fait l'auteur des points faibles et de l'impact du modèle de la Recherche - développement - diffusion sur l'évolution de la recherche, la diffusion et l'usage de la technologie agricole est destinée à suggérer des changements positifs.

Introduction

One of the greatest challenges facing agricultural scientists, policy makers and project implementors is how to enable small-scale (resource-poor) farmers to increase their production. This is important because as the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) points out, much of sub-Saharan Africa is characterised by low-resource agriculture.

This type of agriculture relies on uncertain rainfall rather than on irrigation and is found in more marginal areas (dry lands, highlands and tropical forests). The areas are vulnerable to degradation and typically have limited infrastructure to support agricultural development. Normally, the farmers in these areas have neither had adequate access to information generated by research nor the organisational support to bring pressure to bear in research systems (Merrill-Sands *et al.* 1991; Frankenberger 1992). The rain-fed small scale farming system in these areas are much more internally complex in comparison to industrial farming systems. As Chambers (1991) points out poor people in these areas seek to multiply their enterprises, raise their incomes and reduce their risks. The production system is driven by the multiple objectives of consumption and production. Thus, there is a constant balancing of competing needs of asset preservation, income generation and present and future food supplies (Frankenberger 1992).

For some time now, technology (new or improved) has been identified as one of the most important factors that would contribute to increased

agricultural production. To this end most African countries have set up agricultural research institutes or stations. In addition, a number of international agricultural research institutes have been located in African countries. Technology in this paper is defined broadly to include ideas, practices and tools.

However, the majority of African farmers continue to rely on their traditional farming practices. This led the Association for the Advancement of Agricultural Sciences in Africa in 1975 to declare:

The lag between knowledge and practice is usually long, but in some parts of Africa it has seemed to be infinite. The value of research findings, however great, remains potential only until they are transmitted to him who will use them in production practices (OECD, 1975:iii).

A decade later Carr (1985:142) in a review of the impact of technology on rural areas of Africa concluded:

The technologies that have gained a moderate foot-hold in the rural areas have had a very limited effect in terms of improving the well-being of all members of the community; the spread of many potentially beneficial technologies has been so very limited; a great deal of money and effort has been wasted on developing technologies that are neither acceptable nor useful to the potential end user or that do not meet a high priority need.

The situation today is not that different from the descriptions above. In many areas of Africa either there are no available new/improved technologies, or where they exist, they are unacceptable to the farmers. In cases where useful technologies exist, their spread have been very limited and in those areas where the technology have been adapted, the benefits seem to accrue to only a small segment of the community.

The logical question to ask is, Why and how do we find ourselves in the current situation? In the past the answer to the above question has been sought in the characteristics of the farmer, namely the ignorance, illiteracy and unwillingness of the farmer to change.

This paper takes the view that in order to fully understand why the available technologies have remained largely at the research institutes and centres, we need to examine the whole process of research, development, dissemination and utilisation of technology. In doing this, we need to investigate the structural constraints under which those involved in the processes work, their motivations as well as the interactions between the different groups involved in the processes. The three major sub-systems involved in the development, dissemination and utilisation of technology are the information/technology generating sub-system (researchers and inventors), the linking sub-system (extension agents) and the information/technology user sub-system (the farmers).

The Information/Technology Generating Sub-system

The inability or failure of the research institutes to generate useful and acceptable technologies are sometimes attributed to lack of adequate resources and poor general agricultural policies. However, it is our view that the unacceptable level of performance of the research institutes could largely be traced to the model of development followed in these institutes.

Most of the research institutes and research stations have adopted the Research, Development and Diffusion (RDD) model (Lakoh and Akinbode 1981; Whyte 1981; Chambers and Jiggins, 1986). The RDD looks at technology development from the viewpoint of the originator of an innovation, who bases his/her innovation on a presumed receiver's needs. The initiative of identifying the problem areas is therefore taken by the researcher of the innovation who focuses on the design and development of a potential solution. This is followed by the dissemination of the solution to those who are supposed to implement it (Chambers and Jiggins 1986; Matlon *et al.* 1984; Monu 1982a).

This model is not unique to the Third World. In fact, the model is adopted from the industrialised world, especially from the Land Grant Colleges of the United States of America (US). Recently, Everett Rogers, one of the exponents of the model, has summarised the major elements of the model as practised in the US as follows:

1. A critical mass of new technology, so that the diffusion system has a body of innovations with potential usefulness to practitioners.
2. A research sub-system oriented to application, as a result of the incentives and rewards for researchers, research funding policies and the personal ideologies of the researchers.
3. A high degree of user control over the research application process, as evidenced through client participation in policy determination, attention to user needs in guiding research and extension decisions and the importance accorded feedback from clients in the system's effectiveness.
4. Structural links among the technology transfer system's components, as provided by a shared conception of the system and by a common sense of mission.
5. A high degree of client contact by the linking sub-system, which is facilitated by reasonable agent-to-client ratios and by a relatively homogenous client audience.
6. A spannable social distance across each interface between components in the system. Social distance is reflected in professionalism, formal education, technical expertise and specialisation.

7. Evolution of extension as a complete system for technology transfer, rather than a research utilisation system grafted on as an additional component of an existing research system.
8. A high degree of control by the system over its environment, enabling the system to shape the environment rather than passively reacting to changes in this environment (Rogers 1989:147-148).

Even a cursory review of the agricultural technology development and dissemination systems of African countries would reveal that most of the eight major elements mentioned by Rogers (1989) are non-existent within these systems.

We submit, therefore, that the weakness of the technology generating sub-systems in Africa could be partly attributed to the adoption of the RDD model without making sure that the assumptions on which the model is based are met. The situation is even made worse because the RDD model adopted in Africa is an adulterated one.

First, in the RDD model practised in most African countries, the receiver of the research results is a passive partner so far as the identification of the problem and the research and development of the solution to the problem is concerned. Thus, in many cases, policy makers and scientists determine research priorities and then scientists design and conduct the experiment under controlled conditions. The results are then handed over to the extension organisation for transfer to the farmers. One would expect the extension service, as the intermediary between the farmers and the researchers, to provide feedback to the scientists concerning the problems, expectations and motivations of the farmers. Unfortunately in many cases very little feedback is provided.

According to Rogers (1989), there is a high degree of user control over the research process; 'as evidenced through farmers' participation in policy determination, attention to user needs in guiding research and the importance accorded to feedback from farmers on the system's effectiveness'. However, in Africa the farmers, for whom the technology is presumably developed, have no input into the process and yet it is expected that whatever technology is developed, they must adopt it (Matlon *et al.* 1984; Chambers and Jiggins 1986; Monu 1989).

The resultant effect is that in many cases the technology generated by the scientists do not fit the needs and priorities of the users and/or the users may not have access to the resources required for the adaptation of the technology.

In the Kadawa irrigation scheme area in Northern Nigeria, when wheat was introduced, farmers were advised to plant wheat by mid-November. However, in order to plant wheat on time, the farmer must have cleared his/her land in preparation for project tractors by October. If the land was

used to grow guinea corn (the food crop of the area) in the wet season, the land could not be cleared until December. Although the farmers were well aware that yields would be below expected levels if planting was not done on time, they ignored the recommended date for planting wheat in order to ensure adequate supply of their staple food crop, guinea corn (Monu 1981a).

Had the scientists involved the farmers in the area, they would have discovered that the planting date specified for wheat was in conflict with growing guinea corn and that the farmers' priority was producing enough food (guinea corn) for the family. Indeed, it is conceivable that the scientists could have developed a variety of wheat which would be compatible with growing guinea corn.

It is suggested that the above could be partly explained by the fact that, in Africa, agricultural scientists are output-oriented rather than client-oriented. In industry, client-oriented scientists are educated and trained in market and user-participation research, thus scientists are more likely to be responsive to user concerns (Chambers and Jiggins 1986). Thus some companies, recognising the value of user resources, have created special programs to identify and encourage user innovation and to incorporate those found worthy into company product lines. IBM, for example, estimates that one-third of all its leased software originated from such user innovations (Gamser 1988).

Second, the RDD model reinforces the view that scientists know more than the potential users of the technology and that the knowledge of the former is superior. Research and experimentation are the domain of those trained in colleges and universities. Many agricultural researchers are surprised by the idea that smallholder farmers in Africa are active experimenters (Richards 1985). Yet many observers have noted that farmers undertake research and experimentation and that these are necessary for farmers to survive and/or adapt to new conditions (Briggs 1986; Johnson 1972; Chambers and Jiggins 1987; Briggs and Clay 1983).

The agro-forestry project in the Mampong Valley in the Eastern Region of Ghana is an example.

The technicians of the project advised the farmers to establish their hedgerows four meters apart. However, one farmer after establishing four hedgerows realised that the distance between the hedgerows was too short, given the type of crop grown in the area. Cassava, the main crop grown in the area, could have tubers beyond two meters in length. The farmer felt that the short distance between the hedgerows would lead to a situation where the cassava tubers could entangle with the roots of the hedgerow trees.

He therefore decided to experiment with three different distances between the hedgerows, the 4 meters suggested, 6 meters and 8 meters. After harvesting the crops he concluded that the 6 meters was the appropriate distance. While the four meters did not provide enough space for

the cassava tubers, the 8 meters was too wide and this resulted in inefficient use of the land.

Indeed, even the proponents of the RDD model implicitly acknowledge the ability of farmers to conduct experiments. However, since in their view only university and college graduates could perform experiments, they label the activities of the farmers as trials rather than experimentation.

This feeling of superiority has blinded the scientists to recognising the useful knowledge that farmers have that could assist scientists in their work. Although recently, there seems to be an acknowledgement of this fact, one wonders why it has taken so long. As far back as 1936 Leakey (1936:122) remarked:

The habit of regarding African methods of agriculture or of any other activities as inherently bad because they are different from our own is most unwise. I do not suggest that the methods used by different native tribes are all perfect. Doubtless the methods of agriculture employed by the Kikuyu could almost certainly be improved in many details, but this could only be done if European methods of research were employed in trying to develop the African method of cultivation which is a very different thing from trying to substitute European methods of planting for those which have evolved out of research by trial and error.

Leakey's (1936) remarks are substantiated by the case of the improved cotton technology in Northern Nigeria (Norman *et al.* 1974). Had the scientists taken the time to understand why the farmers did not plant cotton in June and July, which technically proved to be the most appropriate time for planting and why they practised mixed cropping rather than sole cropping, the nature and direction of their research would have been different. As it were, for farmers to accept their technology, they had to change many of their recommendations including the date of planting, which led one of the scientists to exclaim; 'I have wasted 20 years of my professional life'.

In the light of the above we concur with the Botswana Government when it states:

Not only....should the agricultural research strategy strengthen technology development at various research stations, but should forge more productive links with extension and farmers. Strong and continuous farmer participation in technology development has generally proved beneficial and sometimes cost effective. A research strategy in agricultural development that does not take into account the objective physical, economic and institutional problems faced by farmers is unlikely to pay off in the long-run (Ministry of Agriculture 1991:24).

Moreover, it is evident that the farming systems of small-holder farmers are very complex and not amenable to the manipulation of few variables. Indeed, to fully understand small-holder farming systems, both biological

and socio-economic variables must be examined. It is true that this is exactly what the Farming Systems Research and Extension model (FSRE) calls for. The FSRE model is an improvement over the RDD model in that:

The concept FSRE explicitly recognises the value of the farmers' experience and their traditional experimentation as inputs into strategies for improving the productivity of existing farming systems (Gilbert *et al.* 1980).

However, within the FSRE model the scientist remains the one who determines what to research and who does what (Monu 1993).

Moreover, the cooperation between social scientists and agricultural scientists which is necessary for a successful implementation of FSRE is hard to come by. As Rhoades and Booth (1983:2) have observed:

Differences in perception and role definitions between biological and social scientists result in a mutual respect that is miserably low...the upstart of this disciplinary tribalism (is) that social and biological scientists tend to line up on opposite sides of the fence and throw spears.

The fact remains however, that where the agricultural scientist is prepared to cooperate with the social scientist, the latter has not measured up too well. As Cernea (1991:14) has suggested in terms of applied sociological research:

It entails that the work to be done by sociologists, the methods used and their order of use should differ substantively in a policy perspective from what is habitual in a disciplinary perspective. When guided by an inward looking disciplinary perspective, applied sociological work begins and ends with sociology and may not fully serve the specific purpose of policy (applied work).

The fact is that the conventional methods of social investigation have not produced the relevant, useful and timely information required. In the desire of the social scientist to have a comprehensive data base, the agricultural scientist could be frustrated with the endless process of socio-economic data collection. Indeed, in some cases, the project had already come to an end while the base-line data were still being analysed as an input into the project. Fortunately, recently a series of data collection techniques referred to as Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) has been proposed to overcome some of these problems. It is yet to be seen whether the academic community will give it its blessing.

Furthermore, in most rural development planning and research, efforts have been concentrated on the individual (mostly the male head of the family) as the unit of analysis. However, there is a growing evidence which indicates that to fully understand the decision-making process among small-scale farm families, the unit of analysis must be the farming household.

Using the household as the unit of analysis allows us to examine the distinct roles and multiple goals of individuals within the household, in addition to the recognition that farming is only one of several strategies within the household economy. This approach also enables us to analyse how the household adjusts to different demands in order to satisfy its multiple goals which may compete with one another at times. However, in focusing on the household as a unit of analysis, we must not make the assumption 'that the household is a unit of convergent interests where the costs and benefits of (technology) will be shared evenly by members of both sexes' (Agarwal 1985:105). Thus, for example, the introduction of certain technologies could lead to an increase in workload for women without necessarily any increase in their income.

Reviewing an upland rice project in Ivory Coast, Dey (1984) shows that the major obstacle to the success of the project was the lack of recognition and attention to the traditional sexual division of labour within the farming system.

Traditionally, women are responsible for producing food crops including upland rice which is used to feed the family, and where surplus exists, this is sold to generate income for the women. Men are responsible for cash crops and any income generated is solely controlled by them.

However, the upland rice development project targeted men rather than women. The men however, turned the rice plots into personal cash crop, which meant they alone benefited from it. On the other hand, the men, based on tradition, demanded unpaid labour from the women of the household.

The result was a gender conflict which undermined the success of the project. It is reported that women refused to apply the fertiliser provided by the project since this would increase their workload in weeding and harvesting while the benefits went to the men exclusively.

On the basis of the above, it is suggested that in order to better understand the technology development process and to make sure that the technology developed is relevant and applicable to the conditions of the intended users, we must always seek answers to the following questions in area specific situations:

1. What are the values, norms and rules peculiar to the technology development agency?
2. What are the constraints within which the scientists work?
3. What are the values and attitudes of the scientists, especially their perception of the small-scale farmer?
4. To what extent are the intended users involved in the process?
5. Does the technology conflict with the intended users' aim of maximum profit?

6. What are the likely social costs of the technology?
7. Whose interest is served by the technology?

The Linking/Dissemination Sub-system

Two groups of reasons have been offered for the poor performance record of the extension services in the Third World countries (Monu 1988). The first group of reasons are related to the conditions of work of the extension agent and the extension service as an organisation, while the second group of reasons point to the characteristics of the extension worker.

According to Uphoff and Vandusen (1984), extension agents are provided with little information by their agency to transmit to the farmers, and in some cases there is little information available that could improve the farming system of the small-scale farmer. Secondly, extension agents are often isolated from or ignored in the decision-making process because of their location in the hinterland.

In addition, the conditions of work for extension workers are often difficult while transportation and communication facilities are often inadequate. Extension workers are also often burdened with many tasks beside agricultural extension work and have many bureaucratic duties to fulfil.

It is also noted that in most African countries, there is a large shortfall in the numbers of the necessary personnel with the relevant skills and the willingness to work at the village level. Furthermore, quite often small-scale farmers and extension workers tend to have divergent world views. If extension agents are to assist small-scale farmers, the view points of the farmers and the extension agents need to be brought together. The extension worker needs to have a good knowledge and respect for both traditional and modern techniques. The successful extension agent must not only understand what and how the new technology is applied, but must also know the farming practices of the locality where the technology is to be applied (Uphoff and Vandusen 1984; Axinn 1985; Monu 1989).

As valid as these reasons are, we believe that the more important factors which explain the success or failure of the extension service in disseminating technology amongst small-scale farmers are associated with the 'Diffusion of Innovation' model used by the extension service.

A review of the extension services in most African countries would indicate that most of them continue to operate within the Research, Development and Diffusion model. According to this model, members of a social system can be rated on how soon and how often they adopt new ideas introduced into the social system. A new idea is initially adopted by a very small but highly innovative group. These individuals are able to take the necessary risk because of their high economic status while at the same time their position in the social system allows them to ignore tradition and social

control. From these innovators, those with high social and leadership status learn and adopt the idea. The new idea then spreads throughout the social system until most of the members adapt. Innovators are said to be different from late or non-adapters on a number of socio-demographic and psychological factors (Monu and Omole 1982).

The above generalisation has provided an ideological support for the Progressive Farmer Strategy in agricultural extension in most Third World countries. The strategy assumes that innovations trickle down from progressive farmers (farmers who are more innovative and socio-economically advantaged) to non-progressive farmers. Thus, the extension agent is to work with the progressive farmers whose adoption will create a multiplier effect throughout the system. The innovation will spread out at an accelerated pace in a snowball fashion until most people in the social system adopt it. Thus, the strategy is said to maximise the extension worker's output and his/her direct and indirect impact (Monu 1982).

The question often asked by the practitioners of this model, is 'How do I get them where I want them?' (Rolling 1985:272). The assumption implied in this question is that the change agents have knowledge that is considered essential for the benefit of a category of people. The problem therefore is how to find the effective communication system to transfer this knowledge to the group which needs it. When it becomes obvious that even when the most effective communication method was used the information was not transformed into action, a different question is raised, 'Why don't they do what I want them to do?' Why do people resist change although the change agent is sure they would benefit from what is offered?

Thus, the strategy concentrates only on the receiver group to account for non-adoption. There is an assumption that the technology is good and beneficial to the receiver. The result is that in many cases no attempt is made to examine how suitable and practicable the recommendations are. In other words, the diffusion model does not make room for rational rejection.

Had the propagators of the improved cotton technology in Northern Nigeria (Norman *et al.* 1974) examined the applicability and suitability of the technology to the farmer's field, they would have expected the rejection of the technology. The cost associated with the adaptation of the technology (fertiliser and spraying) was too high for the small-scale farmer. Secondly, the improved cotton was recommended as a sole crop while the farmers were practising mixed cropping. Moreover, the average net return from the improved cotton technology was only 13 per cent better than cotton grown in mixtures. If we consider the benefits the farmers could derive from the other crops on their mixed farm, it is conceivable that the farmer could incur losses by adopting the improved cotton technology, not to mention the risk involved in depending on only one crop, especially a non-food crop.

Another serious problem of the diffusion model is the assumption of a social system which is homogenous with respect to the technology introduced. Thus, the technology is assumed to be equally relevant to all members of the social system, and yet the model differentiates between five categories of receivers within a social system with different socio-economic and psychological characteristics. The fact is that the adopter categories identified within the diffusion model are sub-groups within the social system with varying levels of access to resources necessary for technology adaptation. What is required is to determine which technology would be suitable to each of these sub-groups and the best way to disseminate the information within the group. Surprisingly, with few exceptions (Ascroft *et al.* 1973; Huizinga 1982) researchers and practitioners have not taken advantage of these research results by linking technology development and dissemination to the characteristics of the sub-groups within the target population.

The available evidence clearly shows that the often reported differences between small-scale farmers and the so-called progressive farmers (more well-to-do farmers) in technology adaptation are not due to differences in socio-demographic characteristics, inherent willingness to take risk or accept change and knowledge of the technology; but rather the differences can be traced to differential access to the resources required to adapt the technology, the suitability of the technology to the farmers' situation and the preferential treatment given to the progressive farmers by the extension service (Monu 1981a; 1981b).

Moreover, our experience shows that the 'trickle down' effect in information dissemination does not normally occur. The diffusion of innovation strategy assumes that the technology will 'trickle down' from so called progressive farmers to non-progressive farmers. Our analysis of the Funta Agricultural Development project in Northern Nigeria clearly shows that information does not trickle down from 'progressive farmers' to 'non-progressive farmers' (Monu 1983).

Only a very small proportion of non-progressive farmers derived their farm information from other farmers. Even for this small proportion of farmers, it should be remembered that second-hand information is unlikely to provide as specific or as reliable information as a message received first-hand.

In a way this finding should not surprise us. According to Rogers (1969:181):

Communication is more effective when a higher degree of homophily is present; that is when source and receiver are more similar in certain attributes. An homophily pair share common meanings and interests; they are better able to empathise with each other because their roles are similar.

Unfortunately, the promoters of the diffusion strategy have ignored this logical common sense remark and continue to work on the trickle down strategy.

In addition, contrary to Roger's (1989) description of the US model, extension systems in Africa operate independently of research stations. In many cases not only are they physically separate from one another, but they also have different authority structures. Often there is very little interaction between the two systems. Any communication that takes place is a one way flow of information (from the research organisation to the extension system). Lakoh and Akinbode (1981) in their study of the agricultural research delivery system in Sierra Leone found that research and extension contacts are very limited. In fact, extension workers were largely dependent upon their immediate field supervisors for information about technological innovations. Our observations in Ghana and Botswana yielded the same results.

Additional factors which contribute to poor extension-research linkages are lack of clarification of roles and responsibilities of both groups in the technology development process, educational differences between research and extension officers and the lack of appreciation of one group for the validity of the tasks performed by the other group.

Moreover, a review of the strategies of information/technology/dissemination in Africa shows a total reliance on the extension worker and the use of radio. On the other hand, research findings from the diffusion of innovation researchers indicate that a variety of information sources are involved in the adaptation process (Monu 1984).

What is needed therefore is a multi-media approach to technology dissemination. Although radio can reach a large number of people at different locations quickly and at a relatively low cost, the drawback is its inability to localise messages and tailor messages intended for specific groups such as small-scale producers.

In addition, some students of communication have argued that:

despite all the technological advances in communications, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the mass media such as newspapers, broadcasting and film in their present form cannot greatly perform the roles defined for and expected of them by the development paradigms... The mass media do not reach enough of the Third World population with credible and relevant information (Valbuena 1986:2).

It is therefore argued that for communication to become truly an instrument of social change, it must be based on the existing value and belief system of the community as well as upon built-in respected and trusted communication channels, like the folk media. In this respect traditional dancing groups, and drama groups could be used as effective agents of technology dissemination.

As Date-Bah (1985) has suggested for Ghana, traditional songs or high-life songs could also be used for communicating ideas.

There is also a beginning of the development of a complementary system to the traditional extension system (Monu 1988). These attempts indicate that farmers are capable of disseminating new ideas/technology to their colleagues giving adequate training, sufficient and efficient technical support and follow-up. By this, we are not referring to the 'Training and Visit System' (T and V) which is merely 'Old wine in a new bottle'. So far, much of the evidence available comes from non-governmental organisations and universities. There is a need to research and experiment with the strategy in government departments of Agriculture.

It is important that the information dissemination system/extension be considered as a part of a knowledge system. In this perspective, the extension system interfaces with the technology generation/research sub-system and the user/farmer sub-system. This mode of thinking allows for the integration of ways in which interested users of the information can and/or exert control over the dissemination system or the way in which information from and about intended users is used in the information dissemination programming (Roling 1985). As noted earlier, we would be ignoring reality if we were to assume that knowledge is always generated by researchers and transferred by extension to the intended users. Intended users are also important generators of knowledge which could and should be utilised by researchers and extension officers.

The User Sub-System

As stated earlier, the blame for non-adoption of new/improved technologies, until recently, have been put on farmers. The explanation of non-adoption has been sought in the socio-demographic characteristics of farmers, their ignorance, illiteracy and unwillingness to change.

Although we do not deny the fact that certain socio-cultural beliefs and practices of farmers could hinder change, our view is that a more important factor is the non-involvement of farmers in the technology generation-dissemination process. Indeed, some of the socio-cultural beliefs and practices would not pose obstacles to the adaptation process if farmers were involved at the beginning of the technology development process. Cernea (1988) in his examination of twenty-five World Bank Projects found thirteen of them to be non-sustainable.

The major reason given for the non-sustainability of these projects is the neglect of socio-cultural factors, mainly farmer organisations and participation. Esman and Uphoff (1984) in their review of non-World Bank financed projects have come to the same conclusion.

However, it should be recognised that as individuals, the small-scale producers lack the resources and skills to participate effectively in the

process. As we indicated earlier, one of the reasons why the RDD has been successful in the United States is because of the high degree of user control over the research application process. It follows that if small-scale farmers in the Third World are to participate effectively in the technology development-dissemination process, effective and efficient farmer organisations are needed.

As we have pointed out elsewhere:

One of the major problems of development projects in the developing countries is that adequate village level organisations are not created to sustain the project when the official term of the project expires. Thus, in many cases the official withdrawal from the project means the death of the project (Monu 1982b:261).

There is a need therefore to examine local organisations to determine which form of organisation best enables the intended user group to participate in the development process. Bratton (1986) in his attempt to develop a typology of farmer organisations, identified six categories ranging from single interest groups to multi-purpose groups.

What is important is to be aware that the type of organisation utilised at a particular time will depend on the capabilities of the people and local conditions. It should also be recognised that there are three possible situations that may face the technology development and the dissemination sub-systems.

In some situations local organisations may already be in existence and have the capability to identify problems and needs, to plan and to determine what outside help would be needed. Under such circumstances, it is advisable to work through existing organisations and provide such organisations with the assistance needed.

In other situations, although some organisations may exist, such organisations may be less experienced and thus less able to initiate activities on their own. Under such conditions, the technology development and dissemination sub-systems would have to play a facilitator role in helping to create and develop the capability of the local organisation.

Third, in some situations, local organisations may be non-existent or grossly undeveloped. Under such circumstances there may be a need to develop new organisations or use existing organisations set up for other purposes.

An important point made earlier is that the user sub-system should not be looked upon as only a receiver of knowledge but also as a contributor of knowledge.

As Chambers (1980:2) eloquently points out:

Modern scientific knowledge is centralised and associated with the machinery of the state; and those who are its bearers believe in its superiority. Indigenous technical knowledge, in contrast, is scattered and

associated with low prestige rural life; even those who are its bearers may believe it to be inferior. It is difficult for some scientists to accept that they have anything to learn from rural people, or to recognise that there is a parallel system of knowledge to their own which is complementary, usually valid and in some respects superior.

Both social and natural scientists, in cooperation with farmers must make efforts to codify the indigenous technical knowledge of small-scale farmers so that these could be incorporated into the technology development and dissemination process.

This cooperation between researchers and farmers could lead to the development of technologies that would contribute to sustainable development. Sustainability in agriculture has two dominant features, to ensure that increased cropping intensity and productivity do not affect negatively the quality of the land and water resource base; and secondly to ensure that, at least, some of the plant and animal communities are preserved in the face of increased demand for agricultural products and farmers' desire to increase their incomes. While the first deals with the development, dissemination and utilisation of technology, the second deals with social institutions that regulate access to the use of natural resources.

Building on indigenous technologies, improved technologies could be developed that would contribute to sustainable development. For example, a hybrid model combining modern external inputs and traditional organic practices is possible. Likewise, developing farming systems that combine cash crops with food crops would allow farmers to exploit crop diversity (Lynam 1992).

Earlier, we have also suggested that the units of analysis within the user sub-system should be farming households rather than individual farmers. As Norman *et al.* (1982:16) point out:

The members of the farming household, in achieving a specific farming system, allocate certain quantities and qualities of certain basic types of inputs — time, labour, capital and management — to three processes, crops, livestock and off-farm enterprises — in a manner which given their knowledge, maximises the goals they strive to reach.

Three important aspects of farm households must be examined in relation to the development, dissemination and utilisation of technology. These are the goal structures of the family, the social organisation of the household and the organisation of the household economy (Sands 1986). A careful examination of the above will force us to seek answers to the following questions:

1. What are the important goals of the farm household with respect to agriculture and to what extent are they currently being met?

2. Are there solutions (information/technology) available to the farm household to meet these specific goals?
3. Do all members of the household share the same goals and have equal incentives to utilise the information/technology?
4. Who benefits from the adaptation of a particular technology?
5. Is any member of the household likely to be adversely affected by the adaptation of the information or technology?
6. What are the likely consequences of the adaptation of the technology on the attainment of other important household goals?

Conclusion

The attempt in this paper has been to show that the Research, Development and Diffusion model as practised in most African countries has not been successful in generating and disseminating the needed relevant, useful and acceptable technologies within agriculture, especially among small-scale farmers.

If technologies developed are to be relevant, useful and acceptable to the intended users of the technology, a new model of technology development and dissemination is needed. In this new model we need to see the farmer and not the scientists as the starting point for the development of agricultural technology. We need to discard the unilinear model of knowledge creation — diffusion and utilisation. What is needed is a more dynamic interactive model in which the three sub-systems consisting of scientists, extension agents and farmers work together as equal partners. For this to happen we must develop a mutual trust and respect between the partner groups.

As Acker (1992) suggests, it may be useful to conceptualise the technology development and dissemination process in terms of Thompson's (1982) concept of 'quality circles'. Within an organisation, quality circles refer to employees with similar job functions who come together as a team to improve productivity, encourage innovation and solve work related problems. All groups are fully involved in all the stages of problem identification, development of solutions, implementation and evaluation. The greatest advantage of quality circles is their flexibility in that the membership composition changes in response to changing circumstances.

Thus, in agriculture, depending on the issues involved and the circumstances, teams composed of any combination of farm-families, researchers, extension workers; input suppliers and policy makers could be involved in the process of technology development and dissemination.

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Le capital de confiance initial des régimes militaires africains

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Abstract: The author studies African contemporary armies on the basis of 'Initial Capital Hope'. This study helps him to uncover the various strategies of confiscation, conservation and manipulation of the state. He underscores the weakness of developmental studies which fail to take account of the non-homogeneous character of the army in Africa and which also is a transmission belt of the conflicts and partitions of ethnic, regional and inter-army nature despite the unifying pretensions.

Après leur accession à l'indépendance, les Etats décolonisés d'Afrique se fixent comme objectif prioritaire, la réalisation du progrès économique et social. Le mot «développement» et l'expression «unité nationale» deviennent alors les termes les plus usités dans les discours des dirigeants africains. Ils répéteront avec une constance impressionnante, que l'indépendance politique acquise doit être complétée par l'indépendance économique, car, la première sans la seconde ne serait qu'un vain mot. Cette vision est sans doute très lucide, même si parler régulièrement de progrès économique ne signifie pas forcément que l'on s'y investit véritablement. Or, le développement ne saurait résulter de formules incantatoires. Pourtant, dans leur immense majorité, les premiers gouvernants n'ont, au-delà du discours, rien fait pour susciter, favoriser ou créer les conditions d'un possible décollage économique. Quand on le leur reproche, ils accusent l'ordre économique international qu'ils trouvent injustes. Celui-ci est sans aucun doute défavorable aux Etats africains, mais ces dynamiques du «dehors» (Savonnet-Guyot 1981:793-804) n'expliquent certainement pas tout. Dans un contexte où, faute de bourgeoisies nationales suffisamment fortes, la promotion du développement incombe à l'Etat, celui-ci devrait disposer de toutes ses potentialités pour y parvenir. En pratique, l'Etat a servi de lieu d'accumulation à ceux qui se sont hissés à ses leviers de commande. Ils l'ont patrimonialisé en s'en servant plutôt que de le servir (Medard 1990:25-36). Accusés de corruption et d'inefficacité à promouvoir le développement, les régimes civils sont renversés par des juntes militaires. Les armées sont alors présentées comme les seuls corps capables de modernisation dans un environnement où le développement paraît être bloqué. Les pouvoirs issus de coups d'Etat militaire apparaîtront ainsi

comme les régimes de la modernisation. Ils jouissent au départ d'un capital-crédit qu'ils s'attacheront par la suite à activer.

Composition du capital de confiance initial

On distingue le mythe de la réalité.

Le mythe

Le mot mythe est employé ici, pour désigner l'illusion que l'on se crée au sujet de l'arrivée au pouvoir des militaires. Autour de l'action de prise du pouvoir par les militaires, se tissent des représentations symboliques ou théoriques. L'échantillon de quatre Etats pris comme base de cette étude fait apparaître que sur ce point, la symbolique politique est très riche. D'ailleurs, au-delà du symbole, l'irruption de l'armée sur la scène politique a entraîné une certaine espérance de la part d'acteurs sociaux assujettis, brimés et opprimés par des autoritarismes civils improductifs. Ce mythe n'est pourtant pas un mythe fondateur, puisqu'au-delà du simple symbole et des représentations salvatrices qui lui sont liées, le pouvoir militaire repose sur une réalité: la force des armes. Plus que le symbole (représentations salutaires liées au pouvoir militaire), c'est cette réalité qui fonde et garantit le pouvoir des hommes en kaki.

Le symbole

La charge symbolique de l'irruption de l'armée sur la scène politique ne peut véritablement se comprendre que par comparaison à la vie politique antérieure. Les premiers dirigeants africains étaient sans doute des nationalistes, mais certainement pas des démocrates. Les premiers moments de l'indépendance avaient certes suscité beaucoup d'enthousiasme et d'espoir dans les sociétés africaines. Aux leviers de commande de l'Etat postcolonial, s'installèrent ceux qu'on appelait jadis les «évolués». Ils promirent tout à la société. Avec les leurs au pouvoir, et le discours des élites étatiques aidant, les Africains assimilèrent l'indépendance à l'avènement de la liberté, à la possibilité d'un développement économique rapide, et à l'émergence d'un ordre nouveau fondé sur la recherche du bien-être pour tous. Les groupes sociaux infra-étatiques, bercés de multiples illusions par les nouveaux gouvernants (leurs frères Africains), ne tarderont pas à s'en apercevoir. L'autoritarisme répressif se substitue à la liberté, la violence improductive remplace les velléités de développement économique, les pratiques prédatrices des élites à des fins de contrôle politique et de consommation ostentatoire, ôtent tout espoir de répartition équitable et de justice sociale. La société, même si elle a des modes d'expression qui lui sont propres (Toulabor 1990) est réduite au silence et au rang d'assisté.

C'est dans ce contexte de frustration et de contrôle politique autoritaire, que se produisent les coups d'Etat militaires. A l'origine de ceux-ci, se trouve toujours, en toile de fond, une crise économique, ou une

dé légitimation politique. On ne sera donc pas surpris si les populations censées être des militants actifs du parti unique accueillent à bras ouverts les putschistes assimilés à des libérateurs.¹ En termes de symbolique politique, les militaires sont perçus comme des libérateurs qui délivrent le peuple du joug de l'autoritarisme civil; ils sont en outre considérés comme les justiciers sanctionnant ceux qui ont causé beaucoup de tort et de mal à leur peuple. Les slogans et messages de soutien à l'armée fusent de partout, ils sont diffusés par les mass-médias. Un pouvoir issu d'une action violente, d'une épreuve de force a priori considérée comme illégale, est ainsi légitimée par le soutien populaire qui lui est apporté a posteriori. On a beau disqualifier le coup d'Etat, le soulagement qu'il apporte aux populations soumises à l'autoritarisme au quotidien, conduit celles-ci à l'accueillir favorablement. Le désespoir les oriente à s'accrocher à une action qui, à tort ou à raison, apparaît d'abord comme salvatrice. Ce qui compte en effet, c'est d'être débarrassé des nuisances politiques des pouvoirs de type civil.

Cependant, le mythe du militaire sauveur, du soldat libérateur, est historique en ce sens qu'il est lié à un contexte spécifique: celui d'un régime civil autoritaire essoufflé, et délégitimé par le discrédit jeté sur son action néfaste; l'action des militaires apparaissant alors comme la sanction attendue. Dès lors, le rapport au mythe en termes de perception et de représentation, va être soigneusement et savamment entretenu par les hommes en kaki, conscients de jouir au départ — mais seulement au départ — d'un capital de confiance.

A cet égard, la rhétorique est assez éloquente, qui contribue à renforcer les perceptions et représentations populaires. Au Mali, le 19 novembre 1968, le communiqué suivant était diffusé sur les ondes de la radio nationale:

Maliennes, maliens, l'heure de la liberté a sonné. Le régime dictatorial de Modibo Keita et de ses valets a chuté. Le comité militaire de libération assume désormais tous les pouvoirs politiques et administratifs et promet des institutions démocratiques qui seront issues d'élections libres.

Dix ans après, sans s'interroger outre mesure de ce qui reste du capital de sympathie initial de son régime, Moussa Traoré joue sur le même registre: «Je suis fondamentalement démocratique», proclame-t-il. Après l'arrestation en 1978 de trois membres des plus influents du Comité militaire de libération nationale (CMLN), il considère que «les ennemis de la démocratie» sont exclus de la scène politique, et qu'une ère nouvelle, celle de la démocratie s'ouvre: «Cette démocratie dont j'ai toujours parlé doit

1 C'était une surprise pour nombre de dirigeants africains. Mais, comme le note J. L. Seurin (1990:93), dans le contexte idéologique post-indépendance, ceux-ci s'étaient surtout préoccupés de mobilisation politique, et avaient négligé la gestion de l'armée.

être, à tout prix une réalité vivante de notre pays. J'y veillerai moi-même personnellement et jalousement» (Traoré 1978).

Au Bénin, on retrouve le même son de cloche. Après le coup d'Etat du 26 octobre 1972, le discours-programme du 30 novembre de la même année proclame:

[...] le peuple Dahoméen attend de son armée la restructuration de l'Etat, le redressement économique et social du pays, l'exemple du sens civique, du respect de la personne humaine, de la gestion saine des affaires de l'Etat [...]

Au Niger aussi, la déclaration de prise du pouvoir du lieutenant-colonel Seyni Kountché sacrifie au rituel: «Après quinze ans de règne, jalonnés d'injustice, de corruption, d'égoïsme et d'indifférence à l'égard du peuple, nous ne pouvons plus tolérer la permanence de cette oligarchie».

Tout concourt ainsi à renforcer la perception du militaire venu en sauveur, en justicier et en redresseur. Au Togo cependant, la situation est différente, le coup d'Etat de 1963 s'étant soldé par la mort brutale et soudaine du président Sylvanus Olympio. Le choc émotionnel résultant de cet acte a plutôt eu pour effet, de créer un sursaut d'attachement à la personne du président défunt. Dans ce cas, la charge symbolique du coup d'Etat joue en sens inverse. Celui qui est disqualifié et décrié, c'est le tueur, c'est-à-dire le sergent-chef Etienne Eyadema (aujourd'hui Général Gnassingbé Eyadéma). Celui-ci récidivera pourtant en renversant le régime du président Nicolas Grunitzky, le 13 janvier 1967. Cette fois, le président n'est pas tué; mais Eyadema porte déjà l'étiquette d'un tueur constituant un pôle de répulsion. Une comparaison entre les divers cas révèle que la différence essentielle se situe au départ de l'action, et que c'est elle qui explique pourquoi Eyadéma s'est attaché plus que les autres, à la légitimation de son pouvoir par le conditionnement idéologique (philosophie de la nouvelle marche) et l'usage de la violence (encadrement policier), aux fins de créer une habitude de soumission et d'obéissance.

Dès lors, au-delà des perceptions et représentations symboliques, la floraison d'une certaine rhétorique universitaire a laissé croire un moment, que l'armée était effectivement le seul corps capable de rénovation, et qu'en cela, elle était porteuse d'espérance en accédant aux leviers de commande de l'Etat.

L'espoir

Il est lié à la fois aux perceptions populaires et aux théories universitaires. Dans le premier cas, on attend de l'armée qu'elle mette fin, comme elle le promet, aux frustrations engendrées par le règne des politiciens civils déçus; dans le deuxième, on s'est laissé prendre au piège de certaines théories développementalistes. En effet, dans ses différentes versions sur le phénomène de la prise du pouvoir par l'armée, celles-ci mettent l'accent sur

la centralisation étatique et le renforcement de la construction nationale, qui résulteraient de la militarisation des rapports sociaux, de même que sur la volonté modernisatrice et la croyance en l'efficacité technique des prétoriens. Ces théories développementalistes expliquent pour l'essentiel les coups d'Etat militaires, par les blocages ou les maux dont souffrent les sociétés africaines postcoloniales: corruption, népotisme, trafic d'influence, ethnisme, tribalisme, régionalisme, etc.

Ces sociétés seraient en quête d'ordre et d'unité. Or, seule l'armée, lieu de brassage ethnique et d'intégration nationale, serait à même de résoudre le problème de l'ordre, et d'instaurer l'unité nécessaire grâce à sa discipline et à sa cohésion. En fait, cette théorie coïncide beaucoup avec les discours de légitimation des régimes militaires. Elle fait de l'armée l'artisan de l'unité nationale, le creuset de la nation, le moteur de la construction nationale.

La théorie développementaliste a été beaucoup critiquée et à juste titre (Coulon 1972). Elle l'a été jusque dans ses fondements et sa terminologie. Certains auteurs mettent en effet, l'accent sur le caractère très discutables des termes de cette théorie. Ainsi, pour Didier Bigo (1988:78-79):

[...] les deux termes majeurs de l'analyse sont discutables. Tout d'abord, l'armée est perçue comme un corps homogène, agissant dans l'abstrait au nom du développement économique de la nation [...] Ensuite, la nation et l'Etat n'en finissent pas de se constituer. Ce raisonnement souffre d'une contradiction insurmontable. A l'origine, on présuppose la nation et l'Etat, ainsi qu'une volonté nationale qui, pour advenir, doit se percevoir dans l'armée, alors que celle-ci est censée la représenter et même la construire. Bref, on pose l'existence d'une nation (inexistante) construite par l'armée, censée elle-même être une partie de cette nation, non détachable de l'ensemble, et symbole même de la nation. La nation, cause finale, devient ainsi l'origine du processus, ce qui referme sur lui-même le cercle de l'interprétation développementaliste, en empêchant toute interrogation sur l'armée, la nation et l'Etat.

Pour sa part, Martin Michel (1972:23) reproche à l'école développementaliste de sous-estimer la spécificité du fait militaire. Pour cela, il a reconsidéré (sans vraiment rompre radicalement avec l'approche développementaliste) les rapports entre armée et Etat-nation, et a pu écrire que l'armée est une:

institution moderne engagée vers le progrès, forcée, par son efficacité et par sa mission, d'être constamment au courant des techniques modernes. Elle sera ainsi amenée à un effort continu de modernisation par les contacts avec les autres nations et d'autres Etats.

Pour Michel (1972:41), l'armée s'empare du pouvoir lorsque «les élites civiles sont contraintes d'amplifier le rôle de l'armée et de la police, afin de bloquer les demandes, dont la satisfaction provoque une inflation de nouvelles demandes».

Il s'écarte ainsi de l'approche développementaliste dont les explications sont trop générales, mais il recourt à l'analyse systémique. Il en est ainsi arrivé à formuler l'hypothèse du corporatisme.

La conception de l'armée, institution homogène, ouverte à la technologie étrangère et pour cela seul corps capable de modernisation est très critiquable. Elle l'est davantage lorsqu'elle est appliquée aux armées africaines. Généralement trois critiques sont faites au développementalisme. Un, celui-ci postule une évolution linéaire des sociétés: les sociétés non occidentales progresseraient vers les sociétés occidentales par réduction progressive des différences. Or, on sait qu'il n'existe pas de modèle unique de développement par lequel doivent nécessairement passer toutes les sociétés; chacune a sa trajectoire historique propre. Deux, le développementalisme postule la réalisation progressive de la modernité: il a été forgé pour justifier les politiques publiques d'aide au développement des pays du tiers monde, et pour légitimer l'exportation du modèle occidental dans ces pays. Enfin, le développementalisme n'a fait que légitimer l'autoritarisme,² en considérant que faute d'un développement de niveau assez élevé, il faudra des régimes forts (autoritaires) pour mobiliser suffisamment de ressources en vue de rattraper le retard.

D'un point de vue particulariste, c'est à tort que l'on a considéré les armées africaines comme des institutions cohérentes. En effet, lorsque l'on parle d'institutionnalisation, celle-ci ne doit pas être un vain mot, mais une réalité que l'on peut observer tant au niveau des structures que des représentations. On parle ainsi de dictature institutionnelle lorsque le chef n'est que le porte-parole d'une institution qui peut être l'armée, le parti, la milice... Or, les armées africaines ne sont ni homogènes, ni institutionnalisées; elles sont assujetties à des clivages multiples: générationnel, factionnel, ethno-linguistique... Leur cohésion interne est sinon inexistante, du moins très faible et essentiellement fragile et précaire. On ne saurait affirmer qu'elles ont une conception commune et collectivement intériorisée de leur rôle et place dans la société. A propos de l'armée centrafricaine, Ami Oz Moshe (1978:47) relevait que:

le développement relativement récent en République centrafricaine d'une profession militaire nationale [...] ne permet pas de penser qu'il existe à l'intérieur de l'institution militaire un «esprit de corps», ou une conception commune des problèmes militaires et de la réalité sociale. En l'absence de véritable sentiment national parmi les populations et d'armée organisée sur la base d'une mobilisation générale dans le cadre d'un service militaire

2 Les thèses de Huntington (1968) ont contribué à légitimer les autoritarismes en Amérique latine.

obligatoire, les chefs militaires peuvent utiliser à des fins personnelles leurs troupes, composées en grande partie de militaires de carrière.

Effectivement, à la différence des armées latino-américaines, celles d'Afrique sont hétérogènes. Les premières ont un esprit de corps et une doctrine constituée: celle de la sécurité nationale (Rouquié 1982). En outre, elles ont conscience de leur rôle en tant qu'institutions, de leur importance, de leur poids et de leur pouvoir dans la vie politique.

De ce qui précède, on retiendra que c'est à tort, sinon sur la base de postulats non démontrés que l'on a considéré que l'armée était porteuse d'espérance, en accédant au pouvoir dans un contexte marqué par le blocage du développement. Aujourd'hui, on sait que le *modernising soldier*³ n'a réussi aucune modernisation, même s'il est vrai que son pouvoir n'était pas seulement assimilé au mythe du libérateur et du développement, mais reposait aussi sur une réalité.

La réalité

Le capital de confiance initial (CCI) n'est pas seulement que symbolique. En effet, il est investi et exploité sur deux registres différents, à savoir la persuasion et la dissuasion. Sur le premier (persuasion), l'activation de ce capital repose essentiellement comme dans les développements ultérieurs, sur la phraséologie politique, les déclarations d'intention, les promesses alléchantes, et les discours rassurants dont seuls les démagogues ont le secret et en maîtrisent le style. Sur le second (dissuasion), le déploiement du capital de confiance initial repose sur une démarche de puissance et de supériorité. Les nouveaux maîtres répètent à qui veut les entendre, que le pouvoir militaire est garanti par la force des armes dont il est issu. Les candidats à la déstabilisation de ce pouvoir sont ainsi avertis. Cette dissuasion consiste en une menace à peine voilée, qui vise principalement la classe politique déchue et sa clientèle, et accessoirement «les universitaires qui se croient indispensables» comme aimait à le dire le défunt président nigérien Seyni Kountché. Aux politiciens renversés et aux amateurs d'«ismes» (communisme, socialisme, impérialisme, néocolonialisme...) c'est-à-dire l'intelligentsia civile et les scolaires, il est constamment rappelé qu'aucun désordre ne sera toléré. Désordre ici ne signifie pas seulement tentative de contrecoup d'Etat, mais aussi réflexion, critique, expression d'opinion contradictoire.

Les militaires expriment par là que la démonstration de sa supériorité à la suite d'une épreuve de force, est la base même du pouvoir. Quant à la

3 L'école du *Modernising soldier* fait son apparition aux États-Unis au début des années 1970. Pour les auteurs représentatifs de cette école, voir: Jackman (1976:1078-1092); Lefever (1970:19 et suivantes); Potholm (1971:194 et suivante).

légitimité officielle ou démocratique (le peuple, source du pouvoir), ils s'en moquent. Ils savent que le pouvoir repose sur la force et la manipulation, c'est-à-dire sur la capacité de gérer les ressources de pouvoir, de les faire fructifier et de créer une habitude de la soumission. La réalité, c'est donc qu'au-delà du mythe, l'origine du capital de confiance initial réside dans la force des armes. La détention du monopole des instruments de coercition, est en elle-même une ressource de gouvernement à la disposition des militaires. Mais, il se pose le problème de savoir qui est le tenant du CCI d'une part, et comment s'opère l'accès aux positions institutionnelles de pouvoir d'autre part.

Le tenant du CCI

En dépit des apparences, il n'est pas du tout facile de déterminer le tenant du CCI. Essayer de résoudre ce problème revient en définitive, à s'interroger sur ce qu'est un régime militaire. Très souvent, les régimes que l'on désigne ainsi ne le sont pas, dès lors que l'on se démarque des apparences pour examiner méticuleusement les mécanismes de pouvoir et le processus décisionnel. Puisque l'on a déjà évoqué la question de l'institutionnalisation des armées africaines, qu'il suffise de signaler ici que dans une étude consacrée à la République centrafricaine, Didier Bigo (1988) montre que sous Bokassa il s'agissait beaucoup plus d'un système de pouvoir personnel que d'un régime militaire. C'est pourtant à la faveur d'un coup d'Etat militaire que le Colonel Jean-Bedel Bokassa et ses officiers ravissent le pouvoir au président élu David Dacko, le 1^{er} janvier 1966. Avec l'évolution, le colonel devenu général, puis maréchal, avant de se faire couronner empereur, concentre tous les pouvoirs entre ses mains. Par son appétit du pouvoir et son désir de tout contrôler, il ramène tout à sa seule personne. En fin de compte, il fait complètement éclater les cadres mêmes de l'armée. Bokassa agissait, gouvernait, décidait et s'exprimait en son nom propre; il n'était pas du tout un porte-parole de l'armée en tant qu'institution.

Déterminer le titulaire du CCI c'est répondre aux questions suivantes: Est-ce l'armée tout entière ou une fraction de celle-ci? Est-ce la hiérarchie militaire tout entière ou seulement les héros du coup d'Etat, c'est-à-dire une fraction de celle-ci? Est-ce le chef suprême de l'armée ou les chefs de ces différentes composantes?

Le premier argument c'est que le constat empirique montre que la garde présidentielle n'est pas dans le coup. Directement affectée à la sécurité personnelle du président et équipée à outrance, elle apparaît très souvent comme une armée à part. Bien souvent composée d'hommes en majorité originaires de l'ethnie ou de la région du président, elle fait l'objet de toutes les méfiances. En général, elle est mal vue par les autres forces armées qui n'acceptent son existence que parce qu'elles ne peuvent l'empêcher. Ces raisons expliquent pourquoi la garde présidentielle, n'est jamais impliquée dans les opérations de prise de pouvoir. Cependant, dans le cas très

particulier du Cameroun, la garde républicaine au sein de laquelle est recrutée la garde présidentielle, était l'instigatrice du coup d'Etat manqué de mars 1984, dirigé contre le président Paul Biya. Composé en majorité de soldats originaires du Nord, ce corps était resté fidèle au président Ahidjo. D'ailleurs, sa mission est de défendre le président plutôt que de contribuer à sa chute. Il est toutefois possible d'y avoir des complicités personnelles.

Deuxième argument, les armées africaines n'échappent pas aux clivages de la société (générationnel, ethnique, régionaliste, linguistique...). En conséquence, il est difficile et risqué de vouloir impliquer tout le monde dans la conspiration, car bien souvent la suspicion prend le pas sur la solidarité des frères d'armes. L'armée dans sa totalité, ne peut décider de façon unanime, telle une institution homogène, de prendre le pouvoir.

Ceci renvoie au troisième argument, qui est une observation empirique. Par expérience, dans nombre de cas, c'est un corps de l'armée plus ou moins soudé autour de ses chefs, qui prend le pouvoir. Par exemple, le 17 décembre 1967, après une grève générale, les parachutistes du Commandant Mathieu Kérékou renversent le régime du président Christophe Soglo. Cinq ans plus tard, le 26 octobre 1972, ce sont encore les parachutistes sous la conduite de Mathieu Kérékou, qui renversent le régime de Justin Ahomadegbé. Au Burkina-Faso, les coups d'Etat sont généralement exécutés par les parachutistes de Pô. L'expérience donne également à constater que dans certains cas, il y a une participation de toutes les composantes de l'armée, grâce à une alliance entre chefs au sommet. Participent de cette hypothèse, les coups d'Etat du 13 janvier 1967 au Togo, du 19 novembre 1968 au Mali et du 15 avril 1974 au Niger.

Il faudrait indiquer au préalable qu'aucune fraction de l'armée ne peut jouir de la rente du coup d'Etat et gouverner durablement seule sans la confiance, la participation ou l'accord implicite ou explicite des autres. C'est pourquoi, après la prise de pouvoir, la hiérarchie militaire se soude rapidement. Ceux des officiers qui n'y auront pas participé, se rallient au nouveau pouvoir plutôt que de chercher à s'y opposer en invoquant la légalité. Les auteurs du coup d'Etat les acceptent et les associent à l'exercice du pouvoir, se sachant forts de la légitimité héroïque, ils ont priorité dans le partage des positions de pouvoir.

La réponse à la troisième question dépend des rapports de force au sein de l'armée et des rapports entre le chef suprême et le reste de la hiérarchie militaire. Dans le cas du Centrafrique sous Bokassa, au rythme des tentatives de coup d'Etat supposées ou réelles, celui-ci a réussi à éliminer la plupart des officiers, pour s'imposer comme unique détenteur du pouvoir. C'est une question d'appréciation *in concreto*, au cas par cas. S'agissant de notre échantillon, au Bénin, Mathieu Kérékou avec l'appui de sa garde prétorienne, avait réussi à éliminer ou écarter de nombreux officiers, mais il était resté longtemps l'otage des intellectuels civils, connaisseurs et

manipulateurs de l'idéologie marxiste-léniniste. Au Mali, au Niger et au Togo, au prix de multiples éliminations physiques et d'un encadrement policier impressionnant, Moussa Traoré, Seyni Kountché et Gnassingbé Eyadéma avaient établi à des degrés différents, des systèmes de pouvoir personnel.

Ainsi, l'identification du tenant du CCI est inséparable de la notion de régime militaire, sur laquelle la doctrine est très divisée. Chacun la définit en insistant davantage sur telle caractéristique ou telle autre. Les uns retiennent comme critère le titulaire du poste exécutif le plus important. McKinlay et Cohan (1976:292) définissent le régime militaire comme: «un système dans lequel les forces armées ayant fait un coup, mettent en place un gouvernement dont le poste exécutif principal est détenu par un militaire».

Cette définition est insuffisante et ne résiste pas à la critique. D'abord, l'exemple de Bokassa susmentionné montre que même si cette condition était réunie, le régime pourrait être autre chose (un système de pouvoir personnel par exemple) qu'un régime militaire. Ensuite, la détention de ce poste par un militaire ne serait qu'une simple apparence qui cacherait la réalité. Le plus souvent, dans le contexte des régimes militaires africains, à l'exclusion du Nigéria et du Ghana dont les officiers sont issus de l'enseignement supérieur et avec des spécialisations à l'appui (médecins, pharmaciens, ingénieurs...), ce sont les civils qui demeurent les principaux artisans des décisions et les maîtres d'œuvre des politiques publiques. Les hommes en kaki gouvernent alors sans gouverner puisqu'ils ne font que signer et mettre à leur actif, des décisions conçues et élaborées par les technocrates civils.

Pour Edward Feit (1973), «dans le sens le plus simple, un pays est sous régime militaire lorsque les officiers ont saisi le pouvoir et deviennent politiquement supérieurs».

Cette approche pose le problème de la supériorité politique, que l'auteur ne définit pas. On peut cependant en déduire qu'il fait allusion implicitement à la mise en veilleuse du principe de la subordination des autorités militaires aux autorités civiles. Mais, la supériorité politique se jauge-t-elle seulement à l'aune du principe hiérarchique? On a déjà indiqué que la subordination formelle ne reflète pas forcément la réalité des relations de pouvoir entre acteurs politiques. De fait, la supériorité politique apparente (tenant le premier rôle) peut, au niveau de la maîtrise des processus politiques, se traduire par un déséquilibre au profit du subordonné.

Des auteurs (Myrlande 1968:37) estiment que les régimes militaires se définiraient avant tout par des caractéristiques propres:

En Afrique, un élément particulier retient d'ailleurs l'attention: la rapidité et le succès avec lesquels les coups d'Etat militaires se transforment en régimes militaires, c'est-à-dire les régimes caractérisés non seulement par la présence des militaires aux postes de commande politique, mais en outre,

par une certaine façon de gouverner qui, sans caporalisation excessive, emprunte aux casernes certaines de leurs méthodes; par une présence plus marquée de la police et un contrôle plus actif des libertés publiques et individuelles; par l'application au nom de l'ordre, de méthodes rapides et brutales de répression; par un souci manifeste d'efficacité administrative au nom de la discipline et de l'honnêteté, bref, par un ensemble de «marques de fabrique» qui, sans mériter automatiquement et au tout début, l'épithète d'arbitraires, ouvrent la voie facile à l'établissement de régimes de dictatures.

A la différence des précédentes, cette approche est plus ancienne. Elle insinue qu'un régime militaire se reconnaît aux méthodes de gouvernement. Or, sur ce terrain-là, il n'y a pas une différence de nature entre les régimes civils et les régimes militaires africains. Toutes ces caractéristiques ne sont pas spécifiques aux seconds, mais communes aux deux.

S'intéressant à un contexte différent, Rouquié (1982:246) note:

les régimes militaires sont des régimes nés d'un coup de force dans lesquels la souveraineté des institutions militaires s'exerce collectivement sur la sélection de l'Exécutif et sur toutes les grandes décisions de portée nationale par-delà l'étendue et le contenu des alliances civiles.

Cette assertion vaut pour l'Amérique latine dont les armées sont plus spécialisées et plus institutionnalisées que celles d'Afrique.

La gamme des définitions inspire quelques réflexions. En premier, on retiendra qu'un régime militaire résulte d'une intervention de l'armée quelle qu'en soit la forme, dont le but est de permettre aux hommes en tenue d'accéder au pouvoir politique, qu'ils exerceront avec ou sans l'aide des civils. En second, le plus haut poste (chef de l'Etat) revient toujours à un militaire, mais qui n'est pas forcément le plus ancien dans le grade le plus élevé. Enfin, les officiers de la hiérarchie militaire se signalent plus par leur présence aux postes administratifs et politiques qu'à la tête des hommes de troupe dans les casernes.

Il s'agit d'autant d'éléments qui peuvent dissimuler un système de pouvoir personnel ou un système guidé dans l'ombre par les personnalités civiles. Pour cette raison, il est préférable de parler plutôt de régime issu d'un coup d'Etat militaire, car si on admet que le régime militaire commence à partir de la prise du pouvoir par l'armée, à quel moment cesse-t-il de l'être? Avec l'entrée de civils au gouvernement? Au moment de la restauration du parti unique? Dès la mainmise du général-président et de sa famille sur l'ensemble de la vie publique?

La synthèse des entretiens que nous avons eu avec les militaires toutes catégories confondues, au Bénin, au Mali, au Niger et au Togo, montre que l'identification du bénéficiaire des retombées du coup d'Etat n'est pas évidente. Les réponses expriment plusieurs clivages. D'abord le clivage

hiérarchique intervient, les hommes de troupe affirment que ce sont les «grands» de l'armée qui dirigent, laissant pour compte les «petits». Quand on interroge les officiers, le clivage générationnel prend le pas, les «jeunes» soutenant que la prise du pouvoir par l'armée ne profite qu'aux «anciens». Si l'on ne retient que le groupe des officiers les plus anciens, c'est un clivage intra-catégoriel qui apparaît entre ceux ayant obtenu des responsabilités administratives et politiques et ceux qui n'en n'ont pas bénéficié. Que l'on interroge les officiers ayant participé à l'exercice du pouvoir et l'on obtient un clivage inter-armes, ceux appartenant à tel corps (armée de l'air, Gendarmerie, armée de terre, Garde républicaine...) accusant ceux d'un autre d'avoir monopolisé les postes.

Dès lors, si le mythe dans la composition du capital de confiance initial peut être facilement expliqué, il est en revanche beaucoup plus difficile de mettre l'accent sur la réalité, tant elle est complexe. Pour la saisir, il faut également se pencher sur le problème de l'accès aux positions de pouvoir.

L'accès aux positions de pouvoir

L'accès aux positions de pouvoir dépend des réponses aux questions précédentes. Il pose en outre le problème des queues ou files d'attente (Ibrahim 1991), dans le cadre spécifique d'un pouvoir militaire. S'étant intéressé dans ses travaux aux notions d'accès et de queues, Bernard Schaffer (1972) écrit ceci:

Dans un certain sens, il y a des gens qui sont dans la queue et qui attendent. Ils dépensent des ressources spécifiques de temps et acceptent manifestement certaines règles à propos de leur rang dans la queue plutôt qu'autre chose comme avoir accès au service.

D'où les règles qui déterminent les positions d'accès sont multiples. Un, il est nécessaire que les prétendants soient physiquement présents. Deux, à chacun son temps dans la file d'attente, mais la durée de l'attente ne saurait être interminable. Enfin, chaque prétendant doit rester dans une ligne qui lui est propre en attendant son tour.

En pratique, les choses ne sont pas aussi simples que cela. Bien souvent, il y a en effet plus de candidats que de postes à pourvoir.⁴ L'espérance d'accès, c'est-à-dire la probabilité d'être bénéficiaire de la distribution des postes diminue alors. Dès lors, chaque acteur doit élaborer la meilleure stratégie lui permettant de n'être ni lésé ni perdant dans le partage des postes. Cela donne lieu à des stratégies de déclassement d'une part et à des stratégies de risque de l'autre. Les premières reposent sur la technique de l'exclusion. Entre militaires, celle-ci consiste à fabriquer des étiquettes et à

4 Voir l'étude de Léon Mann (1969) sur la vente des billets de la finale de l'*Australian Rules Football*.

les coller à des concurrents potentiels, aux fins de les éliminer. Un prétendant peut ainsi se voir constamment rappeler sa collaboration avec l'ancien régime. Il peut faire l'objet d'accusations fondées sur le régionalisme ou l'ethnicité, comme il peut se voir reprocher son manque de solidarité avec la corporation militaire à un moment ou à un autre. En somme, tout est bon pour disqualifier un concurrent dans la course aux postes.

Quant aux secondes stratégies, elles consistent à passer à la vitesse supérieure dans le marathon vers l'occupation des postes. Cela est d'autant plus facile que les règles de préséance fondées sur le primat de l'officier le plus ancien dans le grade le plus élevé, peuvent être contrées par la légitimité tirée de la participation au coup d'Etat. Un officier subalterne qui aurait participé à la prise du pouvoir, pourrait arguer de cela et réclamer sa «place au soleil», avant un officier supérieur qui n'y aurait pas participé. Peu importe alors le grade, seul compte le degré d'implication ou de participation à l'épreuve de force ayant permis la conquête du pouvoir. Le principe hiérarchique, facteur de régulation dans l'armée est ainsi battu en brèche. En effet, lorsqu'on ne sait plus s'il faut respecter les principes de la régulation interne (soumission du subordonné au supérieur), ou faire valoir la qualité de héros historique du coup d'Etat, c'est la confusion totale qui s'instaure.

D'un côté l'impatience, c'est-à-dire l'appétit de pouvoir triomphe, parce que tel officier subalterne ayant participé au renversement de l'ancien régime se signale comme candidat au poste; d'un autre, la frustration domine, tel officier supérieur ne supportant pas d'être exclu de la distribution des postes. La cohésion militaire en prend un sérieux coup. Cela peut se terminer par des tentatives de contrecoups d'Etat qui échouent ou réussissent. En cas de réussite, les conspirateurs bénéficient de la rente de leur action (accession au pouvoir); et dans le cas inverse, ils subissent une sanction qui va de l'emprisonnement à la peine de mort.

La notion de capital de confiance initial ainsi élaborée, permet de décrire la crise des autoritarismes militaires en Afrique, par l'usage de la métaphore économique d'un entrepreneur disposant d'un capital de départ, cherchant à le faire fructifier, et finalement échouant dans cette opération. Une telle analogie rend possible une étude dynamique de l'organisation des régimes militaires africains, en mettant en relief les stratégies de conservation du pouvoir, les difficultés à mettre en oeuvre des politiques publiques efficaces, ainsi que la progressive adaptation des leaders en uniforme aux techniques de gestion patrimonialiste des affaires publiques, de même qu'à celles de personnalisation du pouvoir.

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Militaires et militarisme en Afrique: cas du Burkina Faso

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Abstract: *There is a tendency to associate military regimes with militarism and civil regimes with democratic ones. This view is supported by the fact that in Africa the most horrible dictatorship have been led by the military. Cases in point are the military regimes led by Idi Amin Dada in Uganda and Bokassa in the Republic of Central Africa. Burkina Faso experienced with the fallacies of military rule as early as independence day when the first Head of State of the state of Upper Volta refused to sign a secret agreement with France on military cooperation. Since then they have played key roles in the successive governments both military and non military. Their involvement in the political management of the country is so deeply engrained in the history and the politics of the society that Burkina Faso is one of the rare African countries where military men or women are allowed to belong to political parties and eventually run for presidential elections.*

Problématique et orientation

Il n'existe pas deux armées identiques en Afrique. Ce constat d'évidence, ne l'est plus, dès qu'il s'agit d'analyser le phénomène «militaire et militarisme» en Afrique, surtout dans le contexte actuel de démocratisation des régimes politiques. Limiter la réflexion au seul dualisme «civil/militaire» devient une tendance collective des chercheurs. Une tradition regrettable s'est établie depuis les premiers coups d'Etats militaires contre les régimes politiques issus des années 1960.

Le régime politique civil devient dans les faits le régime démocratique par excellence. Et le régime militaire, le prototype de l'antidémocratie absolue. Il m'est arrivé, à maintes reprises, d'être questionné par des chercheurs surtout européens, désireux de mieux connaître la situation politique dans tel ou tel pays africain. La première question portait inéluctablement sur la nature du régime, à savoir si le pouvoir était militaire ou civil, avec, en filigrane l'équation: régime militaire = dictature; et régime civil = démocratie.

Clausewit (1843) a écrit que: «la guerre n'est que la continuation de la politique par d'autres moyens», c'est-à-dire la puissance de feu des armes de chaque protagoniste. Avec ou sans effusion de sang, la lutte politique implique la violence à un degré ou à un autre. Le phénomène du militarisme dans la sphère politique dépasse largement la présence physique du militaire, pour embrasser une conception de l'exercice du pouvoir (civil ou militaire),

qui s'appuie essentiellement sur la violence, la force et la peur inspirée par les armes.

L'expérience politique des trente dernières années en Afrique a révélé une multitude de situations où les équations:

militaire = militarisme; et

civil = démocratie,

ont été sérieusement remises en question. Des régimes politiques civils ont excellé dans la militarisation de toutes les sphères de l'Etat et de la société, au point de se faire renverser par des militaires acclamés par les foules comme des «sauveurs». Une fois en place, les régimes militaires n'ont jamais pu réellement s'empêcher de «militariser» l'Etat et la société, toujours au nom de l'ordre, de la discipline, et de la cohésion nationale, pour développer le pays.

Mais si le militaire n'est pas toujours et partout le militariste, on constate que les formes les plus odieuses de la dictature politique en Afrique ont été plus, l'oeuvre de militaires que de civils: les exemples de l'Ouganda d'Amin Dada et du Centrafrique de Bokassa le montrent. En outre dans les années 1970-90, sur le continent africain, les régimes militaires étaient devenus la règle et les régimes civils l'exception. La complexité de ces mutations sociopolitiques qui ont, dans des contextes différents, impulsé cette dynamique que des chercheurs ont qualifié de «culture politique du coup d'Etat», méritait des approches et des analyses plus fines.

L'héritage culturel précolonial, la nature des structures administratives et politiques traditionnelles (là où elles ont existé ou existent encore), les voies et moyens de leurs enracinements ont beaucoup contribué à la propension du militarisme et de la militarisation des pouvoirs politiques. C'est un domaine de recherche qui reste à investir.

Le recours par les touaregs du Mali et du Niger à la rébellion armée pour se faire comprendre, dans les années 1990 dites «années de la démocratisation en Afrique», ne peut être ni compris, ni analysé sans une connaissance de l'histoire, de la culture et des traditions des «hommes bleus du désert».

L'évolution sociopolitique du Burkina Faso exclut la logique restrictive de l'opposition civils/militaires. L'implication des militaires dans la vie politique au Burkina a une origine datant d'avant l'indépendance. L'armée, ici plus qu'ailleurs, est le produit des contradictions politiques entre la France et les dirigeants locaux qui ont négocié l'accession à la souveraineté internationale du pays.

L'ex-Haute-Volta, devenue le Burkina Faso après le coup d'Etat militaire du 4 août 1983, a connu huit (8) régimes issus de coups d'Etats militaires. Ces putschs militaires ont «balayé» les institutions de trois régimes constitutionnels issus de consultations démocratiques et multipartistes. Le

référendum constitutionnel du 2 juin 1991 a doté le pays des institutions de sa quatrième république en trois décennies.

Depuis le 3 janvier 1966, tous les chefs d'Etat (élus démocratiquement ou non) ont été des militaires. Au Burkina Faso, la donnée militaire (avec ou sans militarisme) a joué, et continue de jouer, un rôle politique plus qu'évident: dans les conditions particulières de non-droit de coups d'Etat, comme dans les conditions plus démocratiques (vie constitutionnelle démocratique avec multipartisme et syndicats indépendants du pouvoir) des militaires ont toujours été impliqués.

L'article examine les points suivants: les conditions historiques et politiques de la création de l'armée; pouvoir militaire sans militarisme: 1966-80; la montée progressive du militarisme: 1980-90; de la possibilité de démocratiser l'armée.

Méthodologie

Depuis le 4 août 1983, le Burkina Faso, à la faveur des mutations socio-économiques et politiques impulsées par le régime révolutionnaire au pouvoir, a fait l'objet de nombreuses publications sous forme de livres et d'articles de la presse spécialisée ou non. Cet article s'en inspire largement. Il s'inspire également du témoignage vivant des acteurs d'une période précise de la vie politique particulièrement mouvementée du pays tels que le général-Président Lamizana (qui est resté quinze ans à la direction de l'Etat voltaïque), les différents ministres des gouvernements précédents; et aussi avec d'anciens présidents de la République comme le colonel Saye Zerbo (pasteur protestant), le médecin commandant Jean Baptiste Ouedraogo (pédiatre). Toutes ces informations ont été complétées par les témoignages divers et riches de nombreux acteurs anonymes rencontrés fortuitement au cours de nos recherches dans les campagnes surtout entre 1979 et 1993 et par l'expérience personnelle de l'auteur, successivement ministre de l'environnement et du tourisme (1983-84), ministre des relations extérieures et de la coopération (1984-85 et 1985-86) et ministre de l'information (1986-87).

Les conditions historiques et politiques de la création de l'armée

Le 11 juillet 1960, les chefs d'Etats de la Côte d'Ivoire, du Dahomey, de la Haute-Volta et du Niger (les pays membres du Conseil de l'entente) signent à Paris (France) avec le Premier ministre français Michel Debré, les accords portant transfert des compétences de la Communauté franco-africaine. La signature de ces accords marque le début du processus qui conduira à la proclamation des indépendances politiques.

Le 24 avril 1961, des accords de coopération entre la France et les mêmes pays membres du Conseil de l'entente sont signés. La Côte d'Ivoire, le Dahomey et le Niger signent, en plus, des «accords secrets de défense»

avec la France seul le président Yaméogo de la Haute-Volta refuse de signer un accord secret autorisant de fait la présence et le droit d'intervention de l'armée française dans son pays.

Le général De Gaulle n'a pas apprécié le refus du président Yaméogo de s'aligner sur ses pairs. Ce refus signifiait un déménagement futur de l'une des plus importantes bases militaires françaises de l'Ouest africain, sise à Bobo Dioulasso, deuxième ville de Haute-Volta. De Gaulle a vite compris les velléités «d'indépendance complète» du président voltaïque de l'époque. Il en tiendra compte dans ses rapports futurs avec lui, le pays et la future armée.

Un journaliste, leader syndical et futur ambassadeur voltaïque aux Etats Unis et à l'ONU, a fait le commentaire suivant (Guirma 1991:124, 126-127):

[...] Le 1er novembre 1961, Yaméogo crée les Forces armées voltaïques (FAV). A l'époque, Félix Houphouët-Boigny s'inquiète de «ces légions voltaïques» comme il les qualifie en privé. Jacques Foccart constate de son côté que ce sont «les seuls soldats qui ont l'expérience du feu en Afrique», en pensant que cette armée était formée d'anciens combattants des guerres coloniales d'Indochine et d'Algérie [...] l'équipement des forces armées voltaïques ne fait pas le poids. En l'absence d'accords militaires, l'assistance française en la matière est nulle. L'ambassadeur à l'ONU et à Washington demande des armes et des équipements aux américains. Les français ne pardonneront jamais cette initiative. Les américains refusent en argumentant, que, selon les français, si l'on équipait militairement les FAV, les voltaïques auraient tôt fait de conquérir leurs voisins, car ils sont un peuple de guerriers et de conquérants. Les Etats Unis ne livrent que des jeeps et quelques véhicules de transport de troupes fort gourmands en carburant.

Tous les officiers et soldats «français», d'origine voltaïque, furent rappelés au pays (de France, d'Algérie, de Madagascar, et d'autres pays où ils servaient dans les bases françaises), pour créer une armée nationale, dans un contexte de conflit latent avec l'ex-puissance coloniale. Quand on sait que les indépendances politiques ont été pratiquement imposées à certains futurs chefs d'Etats africains par le général De Gaulle, il est aisé de comprendre que ce dernier entendait garder le monopole des «domaines de souveraineté».

Les «accords spéciaux» de défense, qui légitimaient le maintien des bases militaires françaises en Afrique et le droit d'intervenir militairement (en faveur ou contre le régime en place), constituaient de sérieuses garanties pour la défense des intérêts économiques et politiques de la France dans sa «zone réservée». Entre 1960 et 1990, les nombreuses interventions militaires françaises au Zaïre, au Gabon, au Tchad, en Centrafrique ou au Togo par exemple seront justifiées par ces accords spéciaux.

Les conditions historiques et politiques de la création de l'armée voltaïque, née d'un conflit politique, lui ont permis d'avoir une autonomie

de pensée, d'organisation et d'action en dehors de toute influence directe de l'armée française. Les premiers officiers avaient comme première mission, de prouver qu'ils étaient aussi capables que leurs homologues français, de créer et de faire fonctionner une armée digne de ce nom.

Le Président Yaméogo a mis un point d'honneur et les moyens pour se doter d'une armée digne de l'idée qu'il avait de lui-même et de son pays. Fin politique et bon orateur, il sait stigmatiser les «comportements colonialistes» des officiers français dans son pays, tout en saluant «l'amitié avec la France du général De Gaulle». Le départ des militaires français de la base de Bobo Dioulasso se fait sur fond de dénonciation de «l'immixtion dans les affaires intérieures de Masson, Haut commissaire, représentant du président de la Communauté franco-africaine».

Dans une allocution radiodiffusée du jeudi 21 juillet 1960, le Président (Balima 1969:240) Yaméogo fustige les pratiques du représentant du général De Gaulle:

[...] Jamais ! au grand jamais ! je n'aurai réagi de la sorte si je ne savais qu'en me taisant je risque de vous laisser surprendre par une machination qui échappe au général De Gaulle à qui tant d'hommes ont caché leur visage pour mériter sa confiance afin de poursuivre un but personnel. Nous savions tous en Haute-Volta que si Masson a accepté de revenir dans ce pays qui l'a «vomi», comme il le sait, c'est parce qu'il a misé sur la valeur profonde de notre silence coutumier [...] C'est parce qu'il croyait au bénéfice d'une terreur qu'il avait semé parmi une élite sans arme et sans recours [...] il a jugé que la Haute-Volta était indigne d'une indépendance non octroyée et tente maintenant de justifier par la provocation, ses nombreux rapports, selon lesquels, en Haute-Volta, l'idée d'indépendance n'était pas mûre. Ah ! quel affront pour un pays si indépendant depuis toujours.

J'ai dit à Paris que Masson ne devait pas revenir [...] il se trouve cependant à Bobo Dioulasso où il prend des contacts [...] Paris a été à nouveau alerté d'avoir à rappeler Masson dans les meilleurs délais car c'est bien sa personne qui est mise en cause et non pas autre chose.

Yaméogo se donne les moyens de sa chute

Cette logique conflictuelle conduit de fait la nouvelle armée à une existence de plus en plus indépendante du pouvoir politique. Elle ne craint aucune menace d'intervention militaire française et assiste à la montée du phénomène des coups d'Etat en Afrique postcoloniale. Il est important qu'elle puisse se positionner en «ultime recours politique».

Les méthodes de gouvernement, personnelles et autoritaires à l'excès, du Président Yaméogo s'affirment progressivement. Sa volonté de domestiquer l'ensemble des partis d'opposition, des syndicats et de toutes les associations du pays est évidente. Aux élections législatives de novembre 1960 son parti remporte une écrasante victoire.

Le 18 décembre 1960, en pleine campagne pour les élections de conseillers municipaux, Yaméogo déclare:

A l'occasion des élections municipales, l'unité politique du pays ne saurait être ébranlée par le fait de quelques mécontents, que notre excès du sens de la démocratie vient d'annistier partiellement [...] Le seul parti national qui légifère et gouverne en Haute-Volta, c'est le RDA. Tout le monde le sait. Pourquoi donc vouloir donner à l'extérieur cette malheureuse et démagogique impression qu'à l'intérieur nous sommes divisés? Ce soir, donc, aucune liste en dehors de celle que le verdict populaire du 27 novembre 1960 — la liste nationale du RDA voltaïque — a magistralement consacré, ne sera reçue dans aucune des circonscriptions communales.

Il dissout tous les autres partis politiques sauf le sien (Union démocratique voltaïque/section territoriale du Rassemblement démocratique africain) qui devient de fait le parti unique. Malgré toutes les tentatives pour imposer une centrale syndicale unique liée au parti unique, aucun syndicat et aucune des trois centrales syndicales ne cède. Jusqu'en 1994 il n'y aura jamais plus de syndicat unique dans le pays.

C'est avec et à travers les revendications des travailleurs syndiqués que la lutte politique de l'opposition contre le régime de Yaméogo va se mener dans les faits. Les syndicats vont de plus en plus prendre des positions politiques ouvertes en dénonçant les fraudes électorales, la corruption, le gaspillage et les atteintes aux libertés démocratiques. En refusant l'existence légale des partis d'opposition, Yaméogo invitait les militants de cette opposition à utiliser les syndicats pour s'exprimer c'est ce qui s'est finalement passé.

L'armée observe, impassible, le duel. Elle connaît les relations plutôt mauvaises entre le régime et les autorités françaises. Elle sait qu'aucun accord secret de défense ne lie le pays à la France. Aucune base militaire n'existe et aucune intervention militaire française n'est possible pour défendre le régime en place. Elle a donc les mains libres pour agir à sa guise, de la manière et au moment voulus.

L'affrontement entre le régime et son opposition à travers les centrales syndicales ne va pas tarder. C'est le gouvernement lui-même (le président de la République en tête) qui va en donner l'occasion, quand, en fin décembre 1966, il annonce que «les salaires vont être réduits du cinquième, parce que les caisses de l'Etat sont vides». Le lendemain, les syndicats protestent unanimement et annoncent une grève pour exiger l'annulation pure et simple du projet de réduction des salaires. Ils créent une structure de coordination des trois centrales pour organiser la grève. Le ministre de l'Intérieur, cousin du président Yaméogo se rend personnellement à la bourse du travail pour traiter les syndicalistes de «bâtards» et les menacer d'un pistolet: l'épreuve de force avait commencé.

Les 1^{er} et 2 janvier 1966 furent des journées de grève générale largement suivies. Le 3 janvier, les élèves, les étudiants, avec l'ensemble des grévistes et les jeunes chômeurs et marginaux envahissent les rues et marchent sur la présidence. Malgré les menaces, les injures et la recherche frénétique des «meneurs téléguidés de la Chine communiste», selon Yaméogo, la marche continue. En milieu de journée, c'est l'émeute populaire. Les organisateurs ne peuvent pas empêcher les pillages et les destructions. Le président donne l'ordre à l'armée de tirer sur la foule. Les chefs militaires refusent catégoriquement. Les militaires déployés dans la ville regardent faire les manifestants. C'est pratiquement une démonstration de fait, que le pouvoir n'a pas l'appui de l'armée. Le message est bien reçu. Les manifestants vont se regrouper en face du camp militaire pour crier en chœur et jusqu'à la nuit tombante: «A bas Yaméogo, l'armée au pouvoir!».

Née de la politique, l'armée fera la politique à son compte

Dans une ultime tentative pour sauver son régime, le président déclare qu'il annule le projet de réduction des salaires. C'était trop tard. Les officiers supérieurs étaient en réunion pour décider si oui ou non il fallait «répondre à l'appel du peuple». Dans la même nuit du 3 janvier 1966 Yaméogo s'adressera pour la dernière fois au pays à travers la radio et à la télévision, pour annoncer sa démission et la remise du pouvoir à l'armée.

Le lieutenant-colonel Lamizana, l'officier le plus ancien dans le grade le plus élevé de l'armée devient président de la République. Il dissout l'Assemblée nationale, le gouvernement et le parti unique: il restera quinze années au pouvoir. Le président Lamizana inaugure une méthode de gouvernement militaire très particulière. Il évitera la répression comme méthode politique. Pour s'imposer, il jouera sur la simplicité du discours — presque toujours paternaliste — le temps, la négociation et le sens du compromis.

Pouvoir militaire sans militarisme: 1966-80

Du 3 janvier 1966 au 25 novembre 1980, le lieutenant-colonel devenu général Lamizana restera président. Conscient de sa «dette morale» vis-à-vis des syndicats et des partis politiques, il saura éviter d'être leur otage en s'appuyant principalement sur le Conseil Supérieur des forces armées dont il est le chef. Il fait très peu usage de la force (aucun prisonnier politique en quatorze ans) et ménagera les uns et les autres, au point de devenir aux yeux de tous les prétendants au pouvoir ou à la promotion professionnelle et politique, «le passage obligé et le dernier recours». Il dira lui-même qu'il a gouverné en «chef de famille».

Il a réussi à imposer l'armée comme institution et surtout les militaires en tant qu'individus, comme des composantes à part entière du paysage politique au Burkina, à travers un savant dosage alternatif de régimes

d'exception et constitutionnels. Contrairement à l'image du «militaire débonnaire» qu'on lui prête, Lamizana est un fin politique. Dès son arrivée au pouvoir le 3 janvier 1966, il va s'attaquer de front au problème du redressement des finances publiques qui accusaient un déficit d'environ cinq cents millions de francs CFA. Lui-même entretient un dialogue permanent avec la société civile, les syndicats, les partis officiellement dissouts et les leaders d'opinion.

Au pouvoir, l'armée va essayer de prendre le contre-pied de toutes les méthodes et pratiques du gouvernement précédent, surtout dans le domaine de la gestion des finances et du train de vie de l'Etat. Elle a pu ainsi instaurer un esprit de rigueur et de discipline interne propre, au service de son image politique. Les principales critiques des syndicats et des partis politiques d'opposition sont prises en compte. Ce sont elles qui justifient et légitiment la prise du pouvoir par l'armée. Le président va en faire son programme de gouvernement. Il s'appuie sur ces critiques pour imposer la rigueur — qu'il s'applique à lui-même, pour l'exemple. Lamizana n'a jamais quitté son logement de fonction d'officier pour la résidence présidentielle. Il a cultivé l'art de la disponibilité et de l'accessibilité à tous, sans protocole. Il a continué de fréquenter parents et amis, en ville, où on le rencontre sans escorte. Il s'est toujours habillé en notable traditionnel et beaucoup oublient qu'il est avant tout militaire. Le personnage Lamizana pèsera très lourd dans le fait que l'armée ait pu facilement manoeuvrer pour s'imposer petit-à-petit comme partenaire politique à toute la classe dirigeante de l'époque, sans devoir user de violence ni de répression. Les conditions particulières de prise du pouvoir par l'armée vont aussi jouer.

Le Conseil Supérieur des forces armées (CSFA), assemblée des officiers, avait fait un coup d'Etat sur commande des syndicats et des partis. Il pouvait effectivement prétendre n'avoir pas pris le pouvoir de par sa propre et seule initiative. Il lui a été facile de convaincre les forces civiles de la nécessité de toutes mesures économiques inacceptables pour les travailleurs salariés dans d'autres conditions historiques.

Concernant les mesures économiques de redressement, le régime militaire est allé plus loin que celles préconisées en décembre 1965 par le président déchu Yaméogo. La réduction des salaires a coûté un mois de salaire à chaque agent salarié de l'Etat et du secteur privé. Les logements gratuits, et les indemnités de fonction, qui multipliaient par deux les salaires des directeurs généraux, furent supprimés. Dès 1968 le déficit budgétaire était largement comblé. Pour la première fois de l'histoire du pays, un excédent budgétaire de trois cent soixante trois millions de francs CFA est dégagé. Le bénéfice politique de ce succès reviendra à l'armée. Elle va rappeler à tous, qu'entre 1964 et 1965, sur un budget de cinq milliards de francs CFA, le déficit était passé de cent cinquante à cinq cents millions de francs CFA.

L'intendant militaire, ministre des Finances, Garango surnommé «GMT», à cause de sa ponctualité et de son «perfectionnisme» en matière d'organisation du travail va publier *le redressement économique de la Haute-Volta*. Il est le «modèle» parmi les officiers qui se sont imposé à l'opinion publique et à la classe politique comme des militaires capables de faire progresser le pays par une gestion plus rigoureuse et plus saine que celle des civiles technocrates et politiciens.

L'armée commence ainsi à prendre conscience de son pouvoir sur la scène politique et s'organise pour l'exploiter à fond. Le Conseil supérieur des forces armées décide de se maintenir au pouvoir jusqu'en 1970 pour dit-il, «achever son oeuvre». Malgré quelques protestations pour la forme de partis politiques et de syndicats, la décision va s'appliquer sans difficultés particulières. En douceur certes, mais en conformité avec ses ambitions politiques, l'armée est arrivée ainsi à s'affranchir de ses tuteurs civils (syndicats et partis politiques), pour faire de la politique à son propre compte. L'évolution politique du pays se fera, de plus en plus, en intégrant presque naturellement l'armée dans le paysage politique.

Les syndicalistes et les politiciens commencent à fréquenter assidûment les baraques militaires pour y faire de l'agitation et de la propagande politiques plus ou moins ouvertement. Ce conglomerat politico-syndical qui anime une vie politique nationale marquée par la «politique de la grève» ou ponctuée de grèves politiques, poussent au renforcement de «l'esprit de corps» au sein des officiers supérieurs.

Le CSFA devient parti politique

Les officiers au sein du CSFA vont se donner le temps et les moyens d'imaginer l'institutionnalisation de leur présence au pouvoir face à la classe politique civile qui n'accepte pas ce monopole exclusif. Syndicats et partis politiques réclament «le retour à une vie constitutionnelle normale». L'armée temporise et cherche sa propre formule de démocratisation.

En 1970, un projet de constitution est soumis au référendum puis voté. Cette loi fondamentale contient des clauses particulières concernant l'armée. La constitution stipule que «la charge de président de la République est assumée par l'officier le plus ancien dans le grade le plus élevé» (en l'occurrence le général Lamizana), et aussi que «le tiers des postes ministériels revient de droit aux militaires».

Le vote de cette constitution consacre et légitime le maintien de l'armée (sans aucune exigence de suffrage électoral) à la tête de l'Etat et dans le gouvernement sous la deuxième république. Même ce «compromis historique» ne satisfait pas totalement les militaires. Les élections législatives ont lieu le 20 décembre 1970. L'Assemblée nationale se met en place et un nouveau gouvernement est formé par le Premier ministre issu du parti majoritaire. Les grandes manoeuvres politiciennes commencent. Les

partis politiques s'affrontent dès la formation du gouvernement. Certains partis minoritaires ont exigé plus de postes ministériels que le parti majoritaire ne pouvait leur offrir. Le chantage politique ne marche pas puisque l'opposition est trop minoritaire à l'Assemblée nationale. Par contre les conflits de personnes naissent au sein du parti majoritaire où la «guerre des chefs» s'accroît de jour en jour. Le président de la République (l'officier le plus ancien dans le grade le plus élevé) assiste à l'affrontement entre le Premier ministre et le président de l'Assemblée nationale sur fond de crise de leadership au sein du parti politique majoritaire au parlement. Les autres partis de l'opposition s'en mêlent et dénoncent la médiocrité politique des «vieux leaders» du parti majoritaire. La crise persiste. Des ministres démissionnent les uns après les autres.

Le parlement refuse de voter la loi de finance et défie le gouvernement: le pays est bloqué par la paralysie des institutions. Il n'y a ni grève, ni meeting, ni marche de la part des syndicats, des partis d'opposition ou même de la société civile. La classe politique au pouvoir est usée jusqu'à la corde. Les «vieux leaders» sont complètement coupés du nouveau paysage politique, des valeurs et des modèles de référence des nouvelles générations.

Certains partis, notamment le Mouvement de libération nationale du professeur d'histoire Ki-Zerbo en appellent à «l'arbitrage de l'armée». Ils s'activent au sein des officiers de l'armée (le président de la République en tête) et à travers la presse privée pour démontrer la nécessité d'un coup d'Etat: des «exégètes d'occasion» écrivent des articles commandés avec des citations du *Daloz* et du *Themis*, pour inviter les officiers supérieurs à «prendre leurs responsabilités».

Les officiers déjà mécontents d'avoir été obligés de partager le pouvoir avec des civils, n'attendaient que cet appel pour passer à l'action. Le 4 février 1974 le général président de la deuxième République proclame «la suspension de la constitution, la dissolution des partis politiques, du gouvernement et de l'Assemblée nationale». C'est un coup d'Etat en bonne et due forme, dirigé par le président de la République lui-même, contre ses propres institutions républicaines et avec la bénédiction des partis politiques de l'opposition.

De 1974 à 1978 le général Lamizana et ses officiers vont diriger le pays. Mais ils n'arriveront pas à imposer la formule du parti unique (mouvement national du renouveau) comme les présidents zairois et togolais étaient venus personnellement le leur proposer. Les 14 et 15 décembre 1974, à l'unanimité, les partis politiques (officiellement dissouts) et les syndicats ont vigoureusement rejeté ce projet de parti unique à travers la grève générale la plus suivie du pays. L'armée prend acte et abandonne son projet.

L'armée négocie la troisième république (1978)

CSFA a perdu la bataille pour l'instauration de son parti unique. Les partis et les syndicats en profitent pour exiger de nouveau «de retour à une vie constitutionnelle normale». Il faut donc négocier la mise en place des institutions d'une troisième république avec les civils. Le climat politique était très mauvais pour le régime militaire. Il avait perdu beaucoup de son prestige à travers notamment l'échec de son projet de parti unique.

A côté de cet échec politique, l'armée était impliquée dans les scandales de détournements frauduleux des vivres envoyés des pays occidentaux (USA en tête) pour secourir les victimes de la terrible sécheresse du Sahel. Dans la capitale (Ouagadougou), à chaque occasion où des soldats se manifestaient, comme par exemple sur les gradins du stade de football, la foule en montrant leurs bérets rouges criait: «bérets rouge = sorgho américain»!

Il fallait nécessairement accepter le nouveau rapport de forces sur l'échiquier politique et élaborer une nouvelle constitution dans laquelle les clauses spéciales concernant les militaires ne pouvaient plus être acceptées. La nouvelle constitution (la troisième république) est votée par référendum en 1978 et des élections législatives et présidentielles sont organisées.

Le général Lamizana est mis à la retraite de l'armée. Il devra affronter le suffrage universel pour se maintenir au poste de président de la République sans le soutien du CSFA. Pour la première fois de sa longue carrière politique, il lui faut officiellement adhérer à un parti. Il choisit le Rassemblement démocratique africain (RDA).

Son adversaire le mieux placé dans la course est l'ancien président Yaméogo, celui-là même qu'il avait renversé en 1966. Yaméogo, toujours privé de ses droits civiques et politiques a trouvé un «prête-nom» pour créer un parti, l'Union nationale pour la défense de la démocratie (UNDD). Le candidat de ce parti (Macaire Ouedraogo) est le fils d'un vieil ami politique de l'ex-Président.

Ouedraogo, avec les voix des électeurs favorables à la réhabilitation politique de Yaméogo et ceux des fidèles à la mémoire de son propre père, met le président Lamizana en ballottage au premier tour des élections présidentielles. Le candidat Président en exercice, parvient de justesse, seulement au deuxième tour, à obtenir sa réélection, après douze ans de présence au pouvoir.

La longévité politique du vieux général touchait à sa fin. De nombreux officiers supérieurs étaient mécontents de lui et ne voulaient plus qu'il soit candidat. Sa mise à la retraite de l'armée visait surtout cet objectif. A-t-il eu tort de céder aux pressions des vieux politiciens qui lui ont demandé de se représenter en s'appuyant sur la plus grande formation politique de l'époque qu'était le RDA?

Dans tous les cas, le candidat élu du parti majoritaire qu'il est devenu, aura désormais une grande partie des officiers supérieurs de l'armée à dos. Les partis politiques battus aux élections ne vont plus hésiter à encourager ouvertement les mécontents au sein des officiers supérieurs, en dénonçant le fait que le président n'était plus le «vieux sage au dessus des partis», mais un militant partisan.

La montée progressive du militarisme (1980-90)

Colonels contre les généraux

Le fonctionnement des institutions de la troisième république débute par les traditionnelles protestations et accusations de «fraudes massives» des partis politiques battus aux élections législatives. Le parti majoritaire est le même qu'en 1970. Mais cette fois-ci, il est sorti très affaibli des élections. Les querelles de leadership n'ont pas cessé en son sein et le parti a connu de nombreuses scissions. Le soutien à la candidature du général Lamizana n'avait pas été acceptée par de nombreux «barons du parti» qui voulaient eux-aussi être candidats. Une scission dite du «front du refus RDA» avait suivi la décision de soutien à la candidature du président sortant. Les dissidents ont alors rallié l'opposition.

La constitution avait prévu que seules les trois premières formations politiques qui arriveront en tête du suffrage électoral législatif pour l'Assemblée nationale seront légalement reconnues. Le but avoué était de simplifier et de clarifier la scène politique en éliminant la multitude des «petits partis», sans base électorale significative. Une recomposition des forces politiques va s'effectuer en conséquence. Le Rassemblement démocratique africain (RDA) était arrivé en tête, suivi de l'Union nationale pour la défense de la démocratie (UNDD) et du Front progressiste voltaïque (FPV), nouveau nom du Mouvement de libération nationale (MLN). Ce dernier parti était le plus frustré par les résultats des élections; les dissidents du «front du refus RDA» viendront renforcer ces rangs.

Il contrôlait le syndicat des enseignants du primaire, du secondaire et de l'enseignement supérieur. Il poussera donc «ses syndicats» à la grève dès la première belle occasion. Ce sera fait grâce à une banale histoire concernant l'envoi en stage à Paris (France) de l'épouse du ministre de l'Education nationale selon une procédure irrégulière. L'exigence de la démission du ministre montrait bien la nature profondément politique de la grève, si l'on sait que ce ministre était la «bête noire» des dirigeants du Front progressiste voltaïque qui considéraient le ministère de l'Education nationale comme son dû quelque fût le régime en place. Déjà, au tout début de la grève, la rumeur publique faisait état de contacts secrets entre des dirigeants de ce parti et des officiers mécontents de la présence du général Lamizana à la tête de l'Etat. Le gouvernement issu de la majorité démocratiquement élue au parlement ne prend pas très au sérieux ces rumeurs.

Sur la base de ses résultats électoraux, le RDA veut s'affirmer comme le parti auquel le vote démocratique du peuple a confié la gestion du pays. Il refuse les exigences de postes ministériels (dont le ministère de l'Education nationale) du parti qui est arrivé en dernière position dans le verdict des urnes. Il refuse de céder au chantage politique par syndicats interposés. Le 23 novembre 1980, la grève se termine sans que les revendications ne soient satisfaites. Mais dans les casernes militaires, des colonels étaient déjà sur pied de guerre et se préparaient à réaliser le premier coup d'Etat dans l'histoire du pays, celui d'un militaire qui allait renverser un autre militaire; avec l'appui ouvert d'une formation politique civile.

Le 25 novembre 1980 au matin, la radio diffuse un communiqué sur fond de musique militaire annonçant comme d'habitude «la dissolution des partis politiques, de l'Assemblée nationale et du gouvernement» et la création du Comité militaire de redressement pour le progrès national (CMRPN). Le CMRPN, dit «le régime des colonels» inaugure l'entrée officielle des partis politiques civils dans les casernes d'une part, et d'autre part le bouleversement dans le strict et traditionnel respect des hiérarchies militaires. Jusqu'ici les grades étaient respectés dans le choix des officiers supérieurs «envoyés sur le front politique». C'est le colonel Saye Zerbo qui met aux arrêts le général-président à la retraite Lamizana, et qui devient le nouveau président. Le porte-parole officiel des putschistes est un jeune capitaine, qui se fera remarquer à la radio et à la télévision chaque fois que le nouveau pouvoir devait annoncer une de ces multiples décisions politiques.

Ce coup d'Etat du 25 novembre 1980 crée un précédent. Il sera exploité au sein de ce «corps spécial» où la discipline et le respect de la hiérarchie étaient des lois sacrées. Une tradition s'installe. Et le 7 novembre 1982, aidé de capitaines et de lieutenants, le médecin commandant Jean Baptiste Ouedraogo, fait un coup d'Etat. Après que les colonels aient renversé les généraux, c'est au tour des premiers d'être démis par les commandants. La logique voudrait que l'on s'attende au tour des capitaines. L'armée était devenue dans les faits, partie intégrante de la classe politique dirigeante, avec les mêmes clivages idéologiques en fonction des grades. Le Conseil provisoire de salut du peuple qui s'installe au pouvoir ce 7 novembre 1982, sera un théâtre d'affrontements politiques ouverts entre officiers se réclamant des ailes «progressiste» et «réactionnaire». Des règlements de comptes commencent vite au sein de cette instance. La participation des partis politiques civils dans l'animation de la vie politique au sein des casernes militaires devient ouverte. Chaque parti y recrute militants et «alliés». La tension monte très vite dans ce contexte d'un «mariage explosif» entre les kalachnikov des militaires et la polémique politique activée par les civils.

Le 17 mai 1983, c'est «l'aile réactionnaire» du conseil militaire qui fait un coup d'Etat contre «l'aile progressiste». L'aile victorieuse envoie en prison les principaux leaders de l'autre aile dont le capitaine Sankara qui venait d'être nommé Premier ministre en janvier. Ainsi, la jonction politique entre militaires et civils se renforce. Partis politiques de gauche et syndicalistes, élèves et étudiants, favorables à «l'aile progressiste» de l'armée envahissent les rues de la capitale pour protester et exiger la libération de jeunes officiers révolutionnaires arrêtés et emprisonnés dans la nuit du 16 au 17 mai. Le pays devient ingouvernable.

Les vainqueurs du moment eux-aussi organisent des marches de soutien au régime avec les militants des partis conservateurs. Les pancartes sont brandies dénonçant «les communistes» et exigeant «le libéralisme». La confusion s'installe. Le pouvoir est presque vacant, puisqu'en son sein, l'unanimité requise pour réprimer ne se fait pas. Dans les rues, les forces civiles s'affrontent à coups de «marches» et de «contre-marches», pour des conflits politiques nés officiellement dans les casernes, entre militants. Personne n'est dupe. Toute la classe politique sait que dorénavant la décision se fera à travers le rapport des forces dans les casernes.

La révolution démocratique et populaire du 4 août 1983.

Le 4 août est la veille de la fête nationale du pays, depuis l'indépendance politique le 5 août 1960. Le message à la nation du président de la République à la radio et à la télévision à vingt heures est suivi avec intérêt par tous les citoyens. Ce jour était tout à fait spécial pour tous. Le message présidentiel était particulièrement attendu compte tenu du contexte politique.

La plus importante partie du corps d'élite des para-commandos de l'armée, basée dans la ville de Pô, à 140 km de Ouagadougou, dans la région montagneuse adossée à la frontière du Ghana du capitaine Rawlings, était en rébellion de fait contre le pouvoir en place depuis le 17 mai 1983. Le commandant de ce centre n'était autre que le capitaine Compaoré. Seul des quatre officiers dirigeants de «l'aile progressiste» limogée, qui a pu échapper au vaste coup de filet opéré le 17 mai car, ayant réussi à rejoindre ses troupes en déjouant la «vigilance» des nouveaux putschistes.

Le capitaine Sankara (ex-Premier ministre) et le commandant Lingani, ex-secrétaire du Conseil provisoire de salut du peuple, sont en prison loin de la capitale. Le quatrième est le capitaine Zongo, retranché dans un camp militaire au centre de Ouagadougou et qui va faire le «monsieur bons offices».

Entre le pouvoir et le groupe des quatre «officiers rebelles» commence un véritable jeu de «cache-cache». Chaque camp jure de sa bonne foi et demande une solution négociée. Tel était le tableau par rapport auquel le président de la République, le médecin commandant Ouedraogo devait se prononcer en cette nuit du 4 août 1983. Durant l'après midi, rares sont les

personnes qui ont remarqué l'entrée discrète dans la capitale de gros camions recouverts de bâches noires, en provenance de Pô. Les camions appartenaient à une société canadienne de construction de routes. Ils avaient été réquisitionnés quelques heures plus tôt par les commandos du capitaine Compaoré pour se faire débarquer depuis leur base de Pô, dans les fossés de canalisation aux abords des points stratégiques de la capitale. L'opinion publique s'attendait de toute façon à une action d'envergure des rebelles.

Le message présidentiel sera un violent réquisitoire contre «l'aile progressiste» de l'armée accusée d'être «manipulée par des communistes athées qui veulent livrer le pays à l'aventure». Le ton était donné. Et chacun était fixé sur l'inéluctable affrontement au sein de l'armée. Mais quand? A la fin du message radio télévisé à la nation, l'hymne national est diffusé. Dans les secondes suivantes, c'est le capitaine Sankara (censé être toujours en résidence surveillée) qui annonce qu'une époque politique s'achève et que le pays entre en révolution sous la direction du Conseil national de la révolution.

L'ère politique des capitaines et des lieutenants commence, après celle des généraux, des colonels et des commandants. La place et le rôle des militaires dans la vie politique s'affirmera beaucoup plus clairement en 1984. L'effort de vouloir «effacer» la différence entre «civil» et «militaire» sur le terrain de la politique sera officielle.

Comme tous les autres coups d'Etat, celui du 4 août 1983 est aussi sponsorisé par la presque totalité des partis et des syndicats progressistes et révolutionnaires. Depuis longtemps déjà les jeunes officiers de l'armée fréquentaient les milieux politiques civils de la gauche révolutionnaire. Ils s'adonnaient à la lecture des mêmes ouvrages politiques (Marx, Lenine, Mao, Che Guevara) et suivaient les débats politiques au sein des congrès étudiants et syndicaux. La politisation de l'armée au Burkina date de 1966, puisque depuis lors les militaires n'ont pratiquement jamais été absents de la vie politique.

Le Conseil national de la révolution aura le mérite historique d'avoir officialisé le rôle et la place politiques de l'armée. Elle fut baptisée «forces armées populaires» avec la proclamation des principes selon lesquels: «le militaire est un militant révolutionnaire en tenue», et «un militaire sans formation politique est un criminel en puissance». Les Comités de défense de la révolution (CDR) sont créés dans toutes les casernes militaires tout comme dans les quartiers des villes et dans les 8 000 villages du pays. Les militaires sont présents dans tous les rouages du nouveau pouvoir. Ils sont ministres, préfets, hauts-commissaires de provinces, directeurs généraux de société d'Etat.

Le règlement des contradictions politiques par les armes

Malgré les discours fortement teintés de principes révolutionnaires, malgré les efforts réels pour mobiliser les masses rurales et urbaines autour d'objectifs de développement socioéconomiques clairs et précis, le régime des capitaines, dirigé par le président Sankara est resté profondément militaire. Sans cette prédominance des méthodes militaires pour ne pas dire militaristes, aurait-il été possible de faire autant en si peu de temps dans un pays où l'indépendance et la politisation des syndicats comme de l'opinion étaient connues depuis fort longtemps? La forte dose de militarisme injectée dans la révolution était aussi son point faible.

Pour avoir sous estimé la nature militaire du régime, les partis politiques civils de la gauche y ont trop prudemment introduit leurs traditions de «guerres théoriques fratricides et sectaires». Tant que ces querelles se limitaient aux intellectuels sans armes, les divergences étaient facilement maîtrisables. Les cadres civils de gauche n'avaient pas encore eu en charge la gestion d'un Etat et de sa politique. Les polémiques théoriques étaient même utiles à la formation de cadres «politiquement conscients et techniquement compétents». Mais les problèmes se compliquaient avec les enjeux du pouvoir assumé avec de jeunes officiers. Dès 1986-87, les tensions au sein des instances dirigeantes vont se cristalliser de plus en plus. Le morcellement sur fond de banales querelles de préséance entre chefs de partis et entre tendances d'un même parti, va fragiliser sérieusement la composante civile du régime.

De plus en plus, l'incapacité des civils désunis à s'imposer par la force de l'argumentation dans la recherche de solutions politiques aux problèmes politiques devient évidente. Il se crée un vide politique, récupéré par l'approche militariste, et qui ne pouvait conduire qu'au langage des armes. Les leaders politiques civils dans de nombreuses fanfaronnades faisaient croire qu'ils «contrôlaient» ou «avaient assuré la formation idéologique et politique» de tel ou tel capitaine de l'armée. Certains affirmaient même que «Sankara et Compaoré étaient des militants de leur parti»: rien n'était plus faux.

Les jeunes officiers ont eu des professeurs civils comme enseignants dans le cycle secondaire ou supérieur. Parmi ces enseignants il y avait des militants de gauche connus. Leur enseignement reflétait leur sensibilité idéologique et politique. Des sympathies naissaient entre élèves officiers et professeurs, c'est justement en voulant transporter ces «sympathies» personnalisées sur le terrain de la politique dans le cadre d'une gestion «dualiste» du pouvoir, que de nombreux cadres civils ont par trop imprudemment joué aux «pères idéologiques» de jeunes officiers qui n'en voulaient plus. Les réflexes d'indépendance de pensée des militaires se sont imposés.

Les jeunes capitaines voulaient prouver qu'ils étaient des militants révolutionnaires comme les autres. Ils ont rejeté les tentatives de parrainage politique des groupes et partis civils qui ne veulent pas ou ne peuvent pas, dans la pratique, céder sur le seul terrain où ils se croient réellement les plus forts. La rupture se dessinait. La méfiance naît de ce «malentendu fondamental». La méfiance est le mal suprême entre alliés, en politique comme ailleurs. Les jeunes officiers vont de plus en plus chercher à se constituer en bloc face aux civils toujours divisés en partis, groupes, cercles et autres rassemblements de gauche. Dans ces conditions, il est facile de comprendre que le pouvoir de décision se concentre plus fortement entre les mains des militaires, qui, en bons stratèges, se préparent très tôt à la pire des évolutions possibles dans leurs rapports avec des alliés peu sûrs. La militarisation du pouvoir ne peut alors que s'accroître.

La tendance à user de la force des armes en particulier et de la répression en général pour résoudre les contradictions politiques s'impose lentement et sûrement à tous: 1 400 enseignants sont licenciés en 1984 pour «fait de grève politique», ensuite un complot est découvert et sept personnes seront fusillées. Dès 1984, les contradictions au sein du Conseil national de la révolution provoquent le renvoi du gouvernement, des ministres membres du Parti africain de l'indépendance (PAI) et l'arrestation de certains de ses dirigeants. Les militaires constatent que les civils (partis et groupes) n'arrivent pas à faire bloc. A la place des militants du PAI éjectés du pouvoir et réprimés, d'autres «nouveaux venus civils», organisés en parti ou non, se présentent pour occuper les «places libres». Ceux qui siégeaient dans les instances y sont restés malgré des protestations de forme. Ces comportements renforcent l'assurance des militaires.

Ils seront dorénavant seuls «maîtres à bord», et négocieront «les actes d'allégeance» (adhésion aux instances du pouvoir) des forces politiques civiles selon leurs seuls critères. Scissions et créations de nouveaux partis se multiplient sur fond de «guerre des tracts». Aucune analyse de fond ne permet de poser les vrais problèmes. Les groupes civils de gauche s'entre-déchirent, chacun cherchant à «avoir raison contre les autres», plutôt que d'aider à une recherche collective de solution politique en dehors de la violence verbale. La qualité des écrits ne permet pas de faire des citations, seules insultes vulgaires et procès d'intention en sont la substance.

Tous les observateurs avertis de la vie politique au Burkina Faso ont, peu ou prou, remarqué la tension qui avait saisi le pays dès les premiers mois de l'année 1987. Les rumeurs circulaient sur les dissensions au sein des instances dirigeantes. Des responsables politiques faisaient ça et là des déclarations plus qu'inquiétantes. Le climat politique se détériorait visiblement. L'enthousiasme des premières années de la révolution, cette «substance vitale» qui avait rendu possible toutes les réalisations concrètes (routes, écoles, dispensaires, retenues d'eau, actions de reboisement),

retombait. Les structures politiques de jeunes, femmes et paysans se mouraient. Le discours du Président Sankara le 4 août 1987, à l'occasion du 4^e anniversaire de la révolution faisait le constat suivant:

En quatre ans de révolution, nous avons opéré d'importantes transformations révolutionnaires. Nous avons jeté les bases de la révolution de nombreux problèmes qui se posent à notre peuple. Nous avons beaucoup agi et partout dans les différents secteurs de la société. Nous avons donné l'impression de tout vouloir changer et tout de suite. Et des critiques nous ont été faites çà et là et nous comprenons fort bien. Du reste, nous constatons pour notre part, que d'autres tâches importantes ont été négligées ou minimisées. Il nous faudra consacrer plus particulièrement l'An V à l'exécution de ces tâches-là qui sont d'ordre politique, idéologique et organisationnel.

[...] L'adversité, nous l'avons aussi connu de l'intérieur de notre Burkina Faso bien aimé, dans nos propres rangs, dans le camp de la révolution. Des idées et des pratiques erronées se sont développées au sein des masses et des révolutionnaires et ont causé du tort à la révolution. Il nous a fallu les combattre [...] des affrontements ont suivi les provocations, il y a eu des déchirements[...]

[...] Il faut prendre le temps d'expliquer et le temps de convaincre les masses [...] Et il faut rectifier, nuancer, il faut s'adapter aux masses et non vouloir adapter les masses à ses propres désirs, à ses propres rêves [...]

Même dans cette allocution très officielle, il n'était pas possible d'occulter les tiraillements, les tensions et les intrigues qui minaient sérieusement les rangs du pouvoir. La révolution était-elle arrivée à un degré ultime d'impopularité comme certains le soutiendront plus tard? Des dirigeants politiques civils théorisaient sur la nécessité de l'usage de la force armée contre d'autres civils. Les traditionnelles tentatives de se faire des alliés au sein des militaires recommençaient de plus belle de la part des groupes et partis politiques de la gauche civile. Les militaires eux, parlaient peu mais se préparaient à l'action.

Lorsque les premiers dirigeants militaires de la révolution connaîtront des divergences de vues profondes (entre le président Sankara et le ministre d'Etat Compaoré), la solution sera remise, presque naturellement, au seul langage des armes. Rien, ni personne, ne pouvait dès lors arrêter la spirale de la violence.

Dans l'après-midi du 15 octobre 1987, une fusillade éclate au siège du Conseil national de la révolution et le président Sankara y perd la vie. C'est le cinquième coup d'Etat en sept ans. Le pays a connu cinq présidents militaires en sept ans. Le nouveau régime dirigé par le capitaine Compaoré crée le Front populaire. Le nouveau régime s'installe sur fond de violence. Compaoré, le président du Front populaire adopte un ton relativement modéré et conciliant, le 19 octobre, lors de sa première apparition à la télévision et à la radio. Il doit endosser tout seul une tragédie politique dont les responsabilités sont largement partagées.

La génération des révolutionnaires burkinabé a été incapable de se doter de moyens autres que les règlements de comptes violents pour résoudre ses contradictions internes. Le constat fondamental est à ce niveau. La déclaration lue le 15 octobre 1987 à la radio tient compte de l'état d'esprit qui régnait entre «les camarades révolutionnaires». La chasse aux sorcières va se poursuivre entre les révolutionnaires jusqu'en 1990-91. Le zèle des nouveaux idéologues du régime les conduit à des excès dans le langage comme dans les actes. Les anciens camarades sont traités d'«aile militaro-fasciste», et de «réactionnaires»: ils sont traqués, arrêtés, torturés et même tués.

Mais le cercle de la violence va vite se renfermer sur l'équipe dirigeante elle-même (le Front populaire), tout comme il en fut pour le Conseil national de la révolution entre 1983 et 1987. Les règlements de comptes se poursuivent. En septembre 1989, deux dirigeants militaires du front populaire sont exécutés, pour avoir comploté.

Conclusion: Peut-on démocratiser l'armée?

Au Burkina, une longue marche entre l'armée et la démocratie a eu cours. C'est le 31 décembre 1990, au cours de son message à la nation, que le président Compaoré annonce la nécessité d'un Etat de droit, sur la base d'une constitution qui fixera enfin «des règles du jeu politique» et mettra fin au règne sans partage de la violence. Des membres du front populaire dénoncent la «déviation droitière» du président. La quatrième constitution est votée le 2 juin 1991 par référendum. Tous les partis politiques sans exception ont appelé à voter oui. Après l'adoption de la constitution et de la loi électorale, des partis politiques de l'opposition, soutenus par on ne sait quelles forces intérieure et extérieure, se mettent subitement à réclamer, à cor et à cri, une conférence nationale souveraine: une stratégie à contre-courant politiquement cher payé. Cette «formule insurrectionnelle» n'avait absolument rien à faire dans le cadre d'un pays qui venait à peine de se doter d'une constitution que ces même partis politiques avaient fortement soutenu. Mais ils vont persévérer dans cette direction au point de décider du boycott des élections présidentielles du 1^{er} décembre 1991. Le président Compaoré sera seul candidat à sa propre succession. Il ne cherche pas à susciter des candidats postiches. Il déclare: «une candidature unique n'est pas incompatible avec la démocratie». Bien sûr il sera élu. L'opposition se retrouve en train de réclamer le bénéfice des voix des 75% d'abstentionnistes.

Sur cette base, elle exige l'annulation du scrutin, comme si dans une seule démocratie au monde, on peut réclamer le pouvoir en s'appuyant sur des «non-votants». En désespoir de cause, ces partis se résignent à participer en ordre dispersé aux législatives du 24 mai 1992. Les résultats sont catastrophiques pour eux: à peine 20 députés sur 107. Les institutions de

cette quatrième république sont en marche. Le Burkina Faso connaît une presse et des radios privées (radios fm, quotidiens et hebdomadaires) relativement diversifiées et libres. Dès 1987, la toute première radio privée en Afrique est née au Burkina. Les titres des journaux privés se multiplient assez vite. Il n'existe aucun prisonnier d'opinion dans le pays. Le gouvernement comprend trois ministres issus du principal parti de l'opposition, dont un membre assure aussi la vice-présidence de l'Assemblée nationale. Le président de la République élu est un capitaine «en disponibilité de l'armée». Le président de l'Assemblée nationale est un médecin-commandant «en disponibilité de l'armée». Le ministre de la Communication est aussi un capitaine «en disponibilité de l'armée».

La commission constitutionnelle chargée de rédiger le projet de constitution a été obligée d'intégrer la donnée militaire. Elle a pris acte du fait qu'il est pratiquement impossible de vouloir refuser la prise en compte du rôle de l'armée dans l'histoire politique du pays. L'armée et les militaires ont été en permanence dans le jeu politique national, sinon qu'ils l'on toujours dirigé depuis le 3 janvier 1966. La nouvelle constitution a donc reconnu le droit des militaires d'avoir des opinions politiques, donc de militer dans des partis. Ils ne peuvent pas être membres des instances dirigeantes. Pour participer à des élections, ils doivent prendre congé de l'armée avant de se présenter. Au Burkina Faso, personne ne songe à des militaires «apolitiques».

Les régimes militaires au Burkina se sont succédé sans jamais se ressembler. Chaque régime militaire remplaçait un autre et ne pouvait pas pas chercher à cultiver sa différence pour justifier son «coup d'Etat»: «renouveau», «comité militaire pour le redressement national», «conseil du salut du peuple», «conseil national de la révolution» et «front populaire» sont des manifestations de cette volonté. D'autre part ces régimes ont toujours bénéficié de l'appui ouvert ou voilé des forces politiques civiles. C'est ce qui explique la multitude de formules constitutionnelles utilisées pour ménager les militaires et les intégrer dans la vie politique, depuis qu'ils ont été, selon leurs propres termes, «appelés à prendre leurs responsabilités» en 1966. Ce brassage politique permanent entre civils et militaires a eu l'avantage de minimiser pour l'essentiel le développement sans limites de la tendance militariste. Cette tendance a existé et elle existera tant que les militaires feront partie de la scène politique. L'instabilité politique chronique rendait difficile l'instauration d'une tradition militariste permanente. La capacité mobilisatrice des quatre centrales syndicales, indépendantes des pouvoirs en place, a toujours permis de sauvegarder le minimum de libertés, même aux périodes les plus répressives. Lorsque cette dernière a faibli, les dérapages ont été mortels, comme cela a été le cas, ces douze dernières années. Au Burkina Faso, la démocratie est présidée par un ex-militaire.

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Towards an Analysis of IMF¹ Structural Adjustment Programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): The Case of Zimbabwe 1990-94

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Résumé: En s'appuyant sur le cas du Zimbabwe, l'auteur de cet article étudie le rôle et l'impact des programmes d'ajustement structurel (PAS) en Afrique au Sud du Sahara. L'application des PAS a des effets dégradants et particulièrement pénibles pour les populations pauvres. Les réformes préconisées par le FMI sont non seulement incapables de résoudre les problèmes économiques des pays concernés mais elles renforcent la dépendance économique. Ce résultat est le fruit d'une campagne délibérée des pays industrialisés, en particulier les États-Unis, pour que les pays en développement restent dans leur rôle traditionnel de fournisseurs de matières premières et de consommateurs de produits finis. Les exemples choisis pour étayer ces arguments sont tirés de l'expérience du Zimbabwe entre 1990 et 1994 et des pays d'Afrique subsaharienne.

In 1990, Zimbabwe, like many other Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries before it, turned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for help to revive its economy which had deteriorated in the first decade of independence and crippling socialist experimentation. The decision to appeal to the IMF came at a time when the role of the IMF in the developing world was coming under increasing scrutiny world-wide as critics of the international agency questioned not just the efficacy of the IMF's structural adjustment programme (SAP) imposed on recipient countries but also the motives of the IMF and its backers in the developing world. Voices from as far afield as Tanzania, Nigeria, and various Latin American countries were charging that, far from being a benevolent and well-intentioned saviour of ailing Third World economies, the IMF was in fact an agent of Western imperialism

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1 While this article concentrates on the International Monetary Fund (IMF), it should be noted that the IMF structural adjustment programmes are designed jointly by the IMF and the World Bank. In addition, the World Bank runs its own adjustment programmes which are funded through its Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs). Comments advanced in this study on IMF adjustment programmes thus apply equally to World Bank programmes.

which sought to reinforce neo-colonialism and dependency in the developing countries.²

As evidence, such critics cited the harsh conditions that always accompany IMF adjustment programmes, the underpinning ideology of the IMF and the negative impact of its programmes on the economies of the developing countries in general and the poor in the recipient countries in particular. Criticism of the IMF spring not so much from the fact that it is a harbinger of painful austerity programmes but because its brand of austerity measures is seen as particularly designed to benefit the powerful industrialised countries at the expense of the peoples and economies of the developing countries. In the words of former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, the IMF is 'not a friend of poor countries' and is used 'by imperialist countries . . . to control the economies of poor countries and to destabilise (their) governments'.

It is strongly argued that IMF programmes are injurious to both the short and long-term interests of the poor nations and result, not in economic independence and prosperity for the recipient countries, but in a strengthening of the Western nations' grip on the resources of the developing countries. It is also contended that IMF programmes result in an upward redistribution of wealth from the poor to the already rich and powerful within the recipient countries; intensifying the power of those classes which have traditionally collaborated with the industrialised countries in exploiting their own societies (Cheru 1989).

Critics of the IMF also note that, since the Second World War, the developed countries of the North, particularly the United States, were determined that the post-war international economic order should be based on the principles of economic liberalism that would advance their interests throughout the world. To promote the ideology of laissez-faire, the Western countries created the IMF and its sister organisation the World Bank at the post-Second World War Bretton Woods Conference (Krasner 1985:136).

Objectives and Methodology

This paper attempts to analyse the role and impact of the IMF structural adjustment programmes in SSA in general and Zimbabwe in particular in order to make a modest contribution to the growing debate on the IMF's agenda in the developing world. Beginning with an analysis of the background to IMF structural adjustment programmes in SSA, the paper proceeds to critically evaluate IMF adjustment packages. Using evidence

2 Critics of the IMF and its Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) (Nabudere 1987; Nabudere 1977; Payer 1974; Payer 1987; Roddick 1988; Cheru 1989; Brown and Tiffen 1992).

from Zimbabwe and other SSA countries, it then assesses the impact of IMF programmes in these countries. Particular attention is paid to the vulnerable groups within the recipient countries; those generically classified as the poor. Because measurements of poverty are likely to differ from country to country, no attempt will be made to classify 'the poor' in dollar terms. As used in this paper, 'the poor' refers to that broadly defined group which comprises the majority of the populations of SSA and which is sometimes referred to as 'low-income group'.

Background to IMF SAPs in SSA Countries in SSA

The IMF's recent role in SSA has been one of providing short-term loans to countries facing balance-of-payments difficulties to prevent them from having to resort to import restrictions and other measures considered by the Western countries to be detrimental to global trade and investment flows (Helleiner 1983). The provision of IMF loans is, therefore, meant to be a temporary stop-gap measure to tide the recipient country over until it can balance its external account. SSA countries have, in recent years, been faced with severe economic crises resulting in balance-of-payments problems. These economic problems have been the result of both internal and external factors. Among these have been overly ambitious government expenditure programmes which led to excessive borrowing, the misuse of borrowed funds by the ruling elites and a variety of exogenous factors over which the SSA countries had no control (Nowzad 1982:155-69).

Internal factors included the incompetence of the ruling elites resulting in gross mismanagement of the economy, corruption and embezzlement of public funds, misuse of public funds in constructing 'white-elephant' projects that are of no economic value, conspicuous consumption patterns by the elites and the pursuit of developmental strategies ill suited to the needs and capacity of the nation. Examples abound of loan funds being squandered on stadia and conference centres, and of national financial resources being stashed away in the ruling elites' foreign bank accounts. A typical example of such kleptomania is that of Mobutu of Zaire who is reported to have appropriated approximately US\$71 million from the National Bank of Zaire in 1977 and about US\$14 million in the first quarter of 1979. From these and other ill-gotten riches, Mobutu is, presently, one of the wealthiest men in the world, with assets estimated at up to US\$5,000 million, including residences in France, Belgium and Switzerland (Leslie 1987:68-75).

In Zimbabwe, the Willowgate Scandal of the mid-1980s revealed that some members of the ruling elites had, since independence in 1980, abused their offices in order to line their own pockets at the expense of the Zimbabwean masses (Sandura 1989). Such public corruption and self-enrichment machinations of the ruling elite were occurring despite the socialist rhetoric of the country's ruling elite which castigated the

inequalities of the colonial past and championed the principles of egalitarianism and growth with equity. Meanwhile, the country's bloated bureaucracy, in its turn, absorbed a great amount of public funds, while the elite's populist re-distribution measures were undertaken at the expense of the creation of new wealth. In Zimbabwe, as in other SSA countries, large outlays were made for the construction of 'white-elephant' prestige projects like the National Conference Centre and Sports Stadium.³

In line with its socialist ideology, the government adopted a centralised economic policy which was meant to enhance state control of the economy by reducing the power and influence of the private sector. Rather than dismantle the stifling controls earlier imposed by the beleaguered Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) regime of Ian Smith since the 1960s, the new government not only maintained the old restrictions but also introduced new ones. The result was capital flight and a decline in investment flows as companies relocated to neighbouring countries where private enterprise was welcomed.

External factors have ranged from declining markets, deteriorating terms of trade and high interest rates to the high oil prices of the 1970s. The fall in the terms of trade for SSA countries in the 1970s and the 1980s was so drastic that the IMF itself characterised the fall as 'brutal' (Helleiner 1983). The dramatic 1973 oil price hike drained what little foreign currency reserves SSA countries had and worsened their balance-of-payments problems. Natural and man-made calamities such as droughts and incessant wars added their fair share to SSA countries' woes. Because of these and other problems, most SSA countries found themselves with little choice than to knock on the IMF door for financial help. By 1990, when Zimbabwe was forced by deteriorating economic conditions to apply to the IMF for funding, the list of SSA countries implementing IMF structural adjustment programmes was growing steadily longer.

IMF SAPs: A Critical Evaluation

The IMF is normally the lender of last resort. Countries approach the IMF only when there is no other alternative. This is mainly because the IMF imposes very stringent conditions on borrowing countries. Before funds can be disbursed, the applying country has to sign a Letter of Intent agreeing to implement a number of IMF-designed economic reforms. Once committed to the IMF's reform package, the recipient country can not easily back out of them since continued IMF financial support is conditional upon borrowing country adhering strictly to the terms and conditions laid out in

3 Among other expensive projects undertaken since independence which have been criticised are the Harare International Conference Centre and the Heroes' Acre.

the Letter of Intent. It is these conditions which have made the IMF a resented institution in SSA countries and other developing nations.

The IMF reform package requires the borrowing country to restructure its economy through demand management, currency devaluation, trade liberalisation, elimination of price controls, reduction of budget deficits, removal of government subsidies on goods and services and raising interest rates to their natural market levels to discourage capital flight. Other requirements are that the borrowing country should reduce state investment in the economy, privatise public corporations such as parastatals and open up the local economy to foreign investment. This package, which is uniformly applied to all borrowing countries notwithstanding their special or unique circumstances, has been heavily criticised. In the words of former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda: 'the IMF does not care whether you are suffering economic malaria, bilharzia or broken legs. They will always give you quinine' (Cheru 1989).

While Kaunda's criticism of the IMF approach is valid, it misses the point, however, for it assumes that the IMF is indeed committed to providing solutions tailor-made for each country to help it to become economically viable and independent. However, as has been argued above, the IMF is mainly interested in ensuring the continued existence of a specific type of international economic order based on the free operation of the global capitalist system according to the principles of economic liberalism. Its straight-jacket approach to all borrowing countries is, thus, not remarkable.

With specific reference to the appropriateness and efficacy of the IMF package, critics maintain that structural adjustment reforms worsen rather than improve the borrowing country's economic situation. Stewart (1987) revealed that developing countries in Latin America and SSA which implemented IMF SAPs in the 1980s found themselves: 'with reduced real incomes, increased poverty, deteriorating social conditions, reduced growth potential and often with no significant improvement in their external accounts'.

Zimbabwe's experience under SAP between 1990 and 1994 corroborates Stewart's conclusions. By all indicators, Zimbabwe's economy was worse in 1993 than it was in 1989. Between 1989 and 1992, Zimbabwe's total external debt increased from US\$2 791 million to US\$4,007 million, real GDP growth declined from 4.6 percent to 1.7 percent, the volume of manufacturing production (with 1980 as 100) dropped from 130.8 to 119.3, while the Zimbabwe dollar's exchange rate fell from Z\$2.113 to Z\$6.473 per US\$1 between 1989 and 1993. Average real non-farm wages fell by more than a third since 1991 and were reported in 1994 to be at their lowest in twenty years. Meanwhile, borrowing associated with the reform programme was reported to have made Zimbabwe one of the most indebted

countries in Africa, with a total debt of Z\$34.1 billion (US\$4 billion). This represented, according to L. Tumba, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, 217 percent of export earnings in 1992. In addition, the debt-service ratio rose from 23.1 percent in 1990 to 31.9 percent in 1994 (Economist Intelligence Unit, 1992i; Balleis 1992).

Sudan's experience during the adjustment years (1977-1984) reveals similar disturbing economic trends. In the eight years of SAP, Sudan's current account deficit increased from 6 percent of GDP in 1977-78 to 11 percent in 1983-84, the total foreign debt increased from US\$2,000 million to US\$86,000 million and the debt-service ratio rose from 19 percent in 1978 to over 150 percent in 1984. Meanwhile, the Sudanese pound was devalued to 27 percent of its 1978 value and the GDP per capita fell from US\$483 in 1977 to US\$344 by 1984. In addition, Gross National Savings fell from 2 percent to 0.3 percent of GNP in the same period (Brown 1988:28).

The poor performance of both Zimbabwe and Sudan's economies under SAP casts doubt on the efficacy of IMF reforms and reinforces the 1989 findings of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) which showed that, between 1980 and 1987, non-adjusting SSA countries experienced economic growth while the economies of the strong adjusters actually declined. UNECA's findings are documented in Table 1.

**Table 1: African Economic Growth, 1980-1987
(1980=0)**

Country	1981 %	1982 %	1983 %	1984 %	1985 %	1986 %	1987 %	Average %
Strong adjusters	-3.01	0.33	-3.85	-4.31	6.33	2.82	-1.97	-0.53
Weak adjusters	5.44	3.46	0.66	-1.29	0.13	4.01	1.88	2.00
Non- adjusters	3.92	3.35	3.53	3.68	6.40	3.62	-2.51	3.50

Source: ECA 1989.

The IMF always insists on trade liberalisation through the removal of exchange and import controls. As Payer (1974) notes, this is a strange requirement considering the fact that developing countries impose exchange and import controls precisely to conserve scarce foreign currency resources. The IMF's insistence on the removal of such controls means, therefore, that the drainage of the borrowing country's foreign currency reserves is accelerated. What may have been a temporary ailment thus becomes a chronic or terminal disease.

Liberalisation of trade further leads to a flooding of the local market by cheaper imported goods which ultimately destroy local business whose prosperity depends on the availability of a protected market. While it may be true that protected markets may promote inefficiencies in business operations, it remains to be proven that the death of indigenous enterprise as a result of unrestricted competition from more developed countries is a better alternative in the long run.

The IMF's insistence on devaluation is also harmful to the economy of the borrowing country. The IMF argues that devaluation makes the exports of the country more competitive and attractive in international markets. The resultant increase in export volumes, it is argued, must of necessity increase the country's foreign earnings. The fallacy in this argument can be shown by the fact that between 1980 and 1984, Latin America increased its export volume by 7 percent but export revenue on each unit exported actually fell by 6.5 percent in the same period (Roddick 1988). This seemingly paradoxical situation can be explained by two main factors.

Firstly, the deteriorating terms of trade for primary exports means that developing countries find themselves exporting more and more of their commodities to earn less and less from them. Secondly, the resulting competition for markets by several countries producing the same commodity, which has now been made cheaper through the devaluation exercise, exerts downward pressure on prices in the international market. The gains that are supposed to accrue to countries through devaluation may thus turn out to be more imaginary than real.

A further problem with the devaluation strategy is that while the prices of the country's exports continue to fall, the cost of acquiring manufactured inputs from the industrialised countries continues to rise, making it increasingly difficult for domestic consumers to afford imports. In 1972, for example, Tanzania could buy a seven-ton truck for 38 tonnes of sisal: 10 years later Tanzania had to pay 134 tonnes of sisal for the same type of truck (Davidson 1987; Hubbard 1986). Primary producers are thus caught in a no win situation in the international market, the IMF's alleged benefits from devaluation notwithstanding.

The IMF emphasis on trade liberalisation has disturbing implications for the future of the developing countries. The IMF works on the unsustainable belief that the economic problems of developing countries arise from insufficient exposure to international economic influences. Borrowing countries are thus expected to 'open up' their economies as a first step on the road to economic recovery and prosperity. The IMF's view is clearly at odds with that of the developing world which has long argued that its impoverishment over the centuries was the result, precisely, of over-exposure to international economic influences. Abundant literature showing how the developing world was incorporated into the evolving world

capitalist system as source of raw materials and consumers of finished products exists. Such literature argues persuasively that it was the protracted interaction between the developed countries and the developing world which resulted in the former's development and the latter's underdevelopment (Rodney 1974; Wallerstein 1974; Frank 1967).

In light of the above, trade liberalisation and the IMF's emphasis on export-led growth strategies are likely to perpetuate the traditional role of developing countries as consumers of finished products and exporters of raw materials; the very same global system which, it is argued, produced underdevelopment in the developing countries. In any case, the primary commodity export-led growth strategy of the IMF comes at a time when bio-technology is producing substitutes for traditional primary products and thus rendering primary producers increasingly irrelevant. Given this scenario, Africa can no longer realistically hope to escape from poverty through producing more tea, coffee, sisal and so forth, yet this is precisely what the IMF insists African countries should do.

Even more disturbing is the fact that developing countries are being urged to liberalise their economies when, within the developed world itself, the trend is in the opposite direction. The creation of trading blocs such as the European Community (EC) and the recently established North American Free Trade Area means that, just as the developing countries are moving towards free trade, the industrialised countries are becoming more restrictionist.

In addition, as Adeoye (1991) points out, the IMF strategy is predicated upon a gross misunderstanding of the African economic reality. Commenting on Nigeria's economic woes which finally led to the IMF, he stated:

The Nigerian economic crisis was the direct outcome of the dependent character of the accumulation process that determined her political economy. The IMF-style SAP strategy tends to ignore this fundamental fact . . . The specific characteristics of this accumulation process such as the pre-eminent role of the state as the agent of capitalist accumulation, the weakness of the material base of the indigenous private capitalists, the dominance of the economy by foreign private capitalist interests as represented by the TNCs; . . . the dominance of primary export as chief forex earner, all have roots in the nation's economic history . . . Consequently, the central role accorded 'free market forces', trade liberalisation . . . in the SAP strategy becomes illogical, meaningless and absurd.

Adeoye (1991) further points out that one of the most illogical measures imposed by the IMF is that which requires governments to cut spending and reduce their 'presence' in the economy. This is because in poor countries where private capital is scarce, it is the government which, by virtue of its

comparatively abundant resources, is the major catalyst for economic development. In his words:

in the special circumstances of LDCs (Less Developed Countries), government is the prime mover of the economy. Government is the major employer of labour. Therefore, its expenditure is crucial for the promotion of private spending. It is also an indispensable source of investible funds. The implementation of the policy of less government in economic affairs inevitably leads to loss of jobs, reduction in incomes and general economic depression.

The IMF's policies are, at least in this respect, mistargeted and 'can only further entrench foreign capitalist domination of (the borrowing country's) economy' (Adeoye 1991).

In industry, the IMF's emphasis on promoting exports means supporting large industries which have the foreign connections and capability to penetrate Western markets. Small industries which lack the necessary capital resources, the expertise and sufficient knowledge of international markets cannot switch over easily from producing for local consumption to servicing the export market and are likely to be squeezed out by their international competitors. The destruction of the domestic market through liberalisation, wage cuts, high interest rates, price increases and removal of subsidies on basic consumer goods thus only benefits the multi-national companies and not the small-scale domestic manufacturer.

High interest rates and credit restrictions, which are the hallmark of IMF programmes, give multinational corporations a distinct advantage over small-scale local business in securing scarce credit for business operations. The cost of borrowing money at home becomes prohibitive at the very time that local companies are expected to 'compete' with the more-established and financially-sound multinational companies. This is an impossible task for most local small business enterprises as can be seen from the complaints by the Confederation of Zimbabwean Industries (CZI) in October 1992 that high interest rates were 'forcing non-exporting companies to the wall' (Economist Intelligence Unit 1993i:13).

The negative impact of IMF programmes on domestic businesses was well summarised by Payer (1974) in the following passage:

The programmes result, typically, in the take-over of domestically owned businesses by their foreign competitors. The stabilisation programme puts the squeeze on domestic capitalists in several ways. The depression which it causes cuts deeply into their sales. Devaluation raises the costs, in local currency, of all imports. This, a severe blow in itself, is compounded by the fact that the contraction of bank credit makes it more difficult than before to get the loans they need to carry on operations. Finally, the liberalisation of imports robs them of the protected markets they had enjoyed before.

With respect to the balance-of-payments situation which the IMF claims to correct through its reforms, there is little evidence to show that IMF programmes are effective in this area. Rather than achieving substantial reductions in their current account deficits and total foreign debt levels, Sudan, Tanzania and, indeed, Zimbabwe recorded escalating debt burdens under IMF reforms. Sudan's current account deficit increased, as shown, from 6 to 11 percent between 1977 and 1984, while Tanzania's current account deficit also shot up from US\$302 million in 1984 to US\$425 million in 1990 and its overall debt rose from US\$2 743 million to US\$5 866 million in the same period (Brown 1984:90).

In Zimbabwe's case, not only did the country's total external debt increase from US\$2,791 million to US\$4,007 million between 1991 and 1992 but by 1992, its trade deficit was higher than it had been in 1990. According to one source, in 1990, Zimbabwe's exports were worth Z\$4.28 billion (US\$1.75 billion) but imports were 35 percent higher at Z\$4.46 billion (US\$1.82 billion); yielding a trade deficit of Z\$187 million (US\$77 million) (Economist Intelligence Unit 1994). On the basis of the evidence produced so far, it can be concluded that IMF programmes are neither effective nor appropriate in remedying the problems that they are supposed to solve.

The IMF and the Poor

Defenders of the IMF are quick to point out that its programmes are necessary to make the economy more efficient and responsive to market demand and that protected markets, government subsidies, price controls and other non-market mechanisms create distortions in the economy. What they do not address, however, is the question: efficiency for whose benefit or, as one scholar put it, do IMF programmes 'have people . . . the welfare of people . . . as a goal or is it just a matter of statistics and figures?' (Adeoye 1991). Do IMF programmes improve the quality of life for the majority of the populations of the borrowing countries? It is on the basis of answers to these questions that the real effectiveness and impact of the IMF programmes can be assessed. Sadly, as numerous commentators have pointed out, the IMF is, in the final analysis, an 'enemy of the poor' (Cheru 1989:67).

Confronted with such charges, the IMF has responded in two ways. Its first defence is that it does not concern itself with how governments distribute the burdens of adjustment. It merely advises governments on how much spending has to be cut, but it is up to the borrowing government to decide where those cuts are to be made. According to one IMF official, 'imposing our own income distribution objectives on other countries may be considered as infringing on the prerogatives of sovereign governments' (Goreaux 1987:85-92). This is as good an example of double-talk as any,

since IMF conditions amount in fact to dictating to the recipient country how to organise its finances.

In response to the IMF claims that it is neutral on the issue of the distribution of burdens, Payer (1987:66-7) writes:

This is simply a lie. The IMF has quite definite ideas about who should bear the burden of spending cuts - also definite ideas that wages should be repressed and social spending curtailed while tax concessions are given to foreign investors and laws are changed if necessary to facilitate foreign participation in the economy.

It is in fact the rich and powerful elites who enjoyed the fruit of earlier borrowings and who were responsible for accumulating the foreign debts who benefit from the IMF austerity programmes. The poor, those who have gained nothing from past borrowing, have to shoulder the burdens of economic adjustment.

Occasionally, the IMF admits that certain groups do indeed suffer as a result of its economic adjustment regimes. In the words of one official:

It has been said that Fund Programs had the effect of worsening the situation of the urban poor and it is true that the elimination of food subsidies has often had this effect. But the great majority of the African population live in rural areas. The reduction of subsidies on imported food in urban areas has the effect of improving the terms of trade of the rural population in relation to the urban population, and the rural poor are often poorer than urban poor (Goreaux 1987:87).

What are we to make of the above statement? That it is fine for the poor to suffer as long as it is the urban poor who do so? If so, in what way have the urban poor been responsible for the economic crisis that they should be so heavily penalised?

More recently, some officials of the World Bank and the IMF have started to admit that their programmes are not only hard on the poor but that they have been misguided and mistargeted. In May 1994, the World Bank's resident representative in Zimbabwe, Christian Poortman, admitted that 'the recent downward trend in real public financing and education has already had some disturbing effects on the supply of basic social services', while a few days earlier, the vice-president of the World Bank, Edward Jaycox, had admitted that the World Bank had got it wrong in Africa. Speaking to the African-American Institute, Jaycox said that 'the donors (had) done a disservice to Africa, and many African governments (had) participated blindly' (Economist Intelligence Unit 1993).

Such admissions are coming rather late in the day, following decades of IMF/World Bank experimentation in SSA and elsewhere during which the borrowing countries' experiences were forcibly made to fit the donor agencies' predetermined models, regardless of how disparate such experiences were, instead of reform programmes being designed to suit the

specific circumstances of individual countries. That for years the IMF and World Bank policy designers used developing countries as guinea pigs to test their models designed in the comfort of their air-conditioned offices in Washington DC was made very clear in a report by the British journal, the *Economist Intelligence Unit*, which stated that 'the World Bank admits privately that if structural adjustment does not work in Zimbabwe, it will not work anywhere in Africa'. The journal then appropriately commented that the World Bank's admission 'could be . . . seen as quite alarming if it implies that the reforms are seen as experimental' (Economist Intelligence Unit 1991).

In the process of testing their economic models, IMF and World Bank policy makers brought untold suffering to the millions of the developing world's poor. Overwhelming evidence shows quite clearly that the poor of the borrowing countries pay very heavily under structural adjustment regimes. In Zimbabwe, a growing number of studies have just begun to document the poor suffering in the three and a half years of IMF reforms. The picture that is emerging is very disquieting, to say the least. For instance, a survey conducted by the International Research and Development Centre in 1993 discovered that, for lower-income workers living in Harare's Kambuzuma high-density suburb, wage levels lagged far behind the 45 percent increase in the cost of living between July 1991 and July 1992, resulting in a decline of 35 percent in real income.⁴

To make matters worse, the decline in real incomes occurred at a time of rising prices for basic commodities as a result of a combination of factors that included high levels of inflation accompanying IMF adjustment programmes, the dwindling purchasing power of the local currency due to IMF-induced devaluation and the removal of price controls by the Zimbabwean government. The government's decision to relax price controls in 1991 led to a rapid escalation of prices for basic consumer goods. According to the consumer price index (CPI) for the year ended 30 June 1991, prices for all items rose by 22 percent for the higher income group compared with the previous year while they rose by 23 percent for the lower income group. In the same period, the cost of living for the lower income group rose by 16.4 percent compared with 11.5 percent for higher income groups. Transport prices rose the fastest for the lower income group, at 50.9 percent, followed by food at 19.4 percent (Sparks 1991; Economist Intelligence Unit 1993).

4 Extracts of the International Research and Development Centre study, reported in *The Daily Gazette* (Harare), 1 March, 1993, 10. Other recent studies that have analysed the social costs of structural adjustment include the following: (Balleis 1992; Berridge 1993).

Following yet another dramatic increase in prices for basic consumer goods in 1992, the CPI for lower income urban families rose from 45 percent in July to 53.9 percent in October. The fastest growing categories in this index were foodstuffs and transport which were 64.7 percent and 55.4 percent higher, respectively, than a year earlier. Meanwhile the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions reported that wage increases in 1992 amounted to only between 7 and 15 percent - which implied a very substantial cut in the living standards of ordinary workers. In 1991, it was reported that since October 1990 the depreciation of the Zimbabwean dollar had accelerated 'from its norm of 1 - 1.5 percent a month to 7.5 percent in July and 12 percent in August, followed by a devaluation of 23 percent at the end of September'. The rapid devaluation meant that 'at a stroke, Zimbabwe's per head income has been reduced from more than US\$600 to about US\$350, so moving the country from the middle income to the lower income category' (Economist Intelligence Unit 1993).

According to a recent article by P. Balleis (1992:63-4), as a result of progressive devaluation and ever-rising inflation rates, minimum wage levels, in real terms, were lower in 1992 than they had been in 1980. For instance, textile workers were reported to be receiving monthly wages of only Z\$217.11 in real terms even though their nominal wages had risen from Z\$355.42 to Z\$426.52 between January 1991 and January 1993. Indeed, it was reported in March 1993 that: 'real wages in Zimbabwe in 1992 were lower than at any time since the 1970s'.

With such a rapid rate of erosion of real incomes of the poor, it becomes clear that even if the adjustment programme succeeds in increasing goods in the local shops, as has been the case in Zimbabwe where formerly scarce goods are now in abundant supply, the cash-strapped poor still cannot afford them. It is thus evident that IMF structural adjustment programmes lead to a serious decline in real incomes and living standards for the populations of the recipient countries in general but particularly for the poor.

Perhaps even ominous for the poor are the cuts in government public social spending in line with the requirements of the IMF. In Zimbabwe, health and education services have been severely crippled by government spending cutbacks since 1990. In the 1980s, Zimbabwe's efforts to improve the health of its citizens were hailed by all. Reporting in 1992, a World Bank Study noted that more than 500 health centres had either been built or upgraded and 'The percentage of children fully immunised has nearly tripled from 25 percent in 1980 to 67 percent in 1988'. Life expectancy was reported to have increased from 55 to 59 years while infant mortality had declined from 82 to 72 per 1 000 births. Indeed, Zimbabwe was commended by the UNDP in its 1991 Human Rights Development Report as a shining example of a country that was promoting human progress by providing

adequate funds for health and educational development (World Bank 1992:x).

By the 1990s, however, the picture was changing radically. Not only did the health budget decline noticeably in real terms between 1991 and 1993, but, according to UNICEF, the quality of Zimbabwe's health services had fallen by 30 percent by 1993. The number of women dying in childbirth in Harare doubled in the first two years of SAP. The introduction of hospital fees in 1991 in line with the IMF's insistence on cost-recovery measures resulted in people making fewer visits to hospitals and clinics. Bed occupancy at Harare Central Hospital fell from 5,766 in December 1990 to 4,795 in December 1991, while at one mission hospital, St. Pauls Musami, it was reported that maternity cases had fallen by one third and X-rays by 40 percent. By 1993, Zimbabwe had been relegated to the rank of 121 from its 1991 position of 111 in the UNDP's Human Development Indicator list (Balleis 1992:63-5; Economist Intelligence Unit 1993).

Explaining the sorry decline of Zimbabwe's health services, the Economist Intelligence Unit (1993) stated:

statistics are in line with the cuts in the health budget, introduction of fees for maternity services, a decrease in qualified nursing staff and reduced availability of drugs. Increasingly, there are fears that the substantial gains in health made in Zimbabwe in the 1980s will be reversed within the next two years.

To make matters worse, Zimbabwe experienced a disturbing brain drain following the introduction of SAP. Devaluation and inflation drastically reduced the real income of doctors, technicians and nurses, among other professionals, fuelling a steady migration of such vital professionals to neighbouring countries that offered better remuneration packages. An Economist Intelligence Unit (1992) report noted that:

In October (1991) doctors and academics were reported to be leaving Zimbabwe in substantial numbers because of unsatisfactory pay and conditions. Five lecturers resigned from medical school in October, and in the first seven months of 1991, 110 doctors, mostly lecturers at the Medical School, resigned to work in neighbouring countries where pay was almost double. As a result of the growing staff shortage, the tuberculosis control programme has broken down, with 9,600 cases reported in 1990, up from 2,000 in 1989.

The picture is equally dismal in other SSA countries. UNICEF (1987) documented an increase in infant mortality in Ghana and Zambia in the 1980s. Following Ghana's reduction in per capita expenditure for health in 1982-83 by 80 percent of the 1974 level, infant mortality rates increased from 86,0 per 1,000 in the 1970s to 107 per 1,000 in the 1980s. Malnutrition among pre-school children rose from 35 to 54 percent between 1980 and 1984. Similarly, in Zambia the percentages of incidence of malnutrition as a

cause of mortality for the 1-14 years age bracket increased from 27 to 43 percent between 1978 and 1982 (UNICEF 1987).

The poor are further disadvantaged by government cuts in expenditure on education and the introduction of cost-recovery measures through charging market rates for educational services hitherto subsidised or provided free of charge. Reduction of expenditure on education leads to a deterioration of educational standards. A 1989 report on the state of education in Tanzania, for example, noted that, because of budgetary austerity: 'Tanzania's schools are suffering shortages of resources, particularly desks and books, which are hampering teaching. Most primary schools in rural areas have no books at all' (Economist Intelligence Unit 1989:iv, 12).

In Zimbabwe, real expenditure on education rose steadily throughout the 1980s but dropped noticeably in the 1990s. According to one source, real current expenditure per capita on primary education dropped from Z\$28.70 in 1990 to Z\$23.71 in 1992 and real expenditure per pupil in primary school from Z\$118 to Z\$98 over the same period. In January 1992, urban primary schools started charging a minimum of Z\$60 (US\$12) school fees per year for children of parents earning less than Z\$400 (US\$80) a month, while secondary school fees were increased by 150 percent. The Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries strongly opposed the introduction of school fees, charging that this 'would raise the drop out rate and lower the quality of the future labour force' (Economist Intelligence Unit 1992:i, 13).

Cost recovery measures in education often lead to a decline in student enrolment as parents find it more difficult to meet the escalating costs of school fees and uniforms and withdraw their children from school. When school fees were increased in the Bendel province in Nigeria, primary school enrolment decreased from 90 to 60 percent over the following 18 months. Similarly, school enrolment dropped sharply following an increase in secondary school fees of between 50 and 100 percent in Tanzania in 1988. By 1989 only 70 percent of the children of school-going age were enrolled in school as compared to 80 percent in 1984. The drop in the enrolment levels was attributed to the fact that the cost of education had become too high for low-income parents, while economic hardships meant that children were now required by their families 'to engage in immediately productive activities to supplement their families' income' (UNICEF 1989:I, 9).

Furthermore, under SAP, education suffers from the loss of teaching personnel as teachers, fed up with rising prices and declining standards of living, vote with their feet and move to other occupations or emigrate in search of greener pastures. Because of deteriorating working conditions during the years of IMF austerity, the Ghana school system lost no less than 4,000 qualified teachers between 1977 and 1981. In Zimbabwe, the loss of

qualified teaching staff reversed the healthy 1980s trend of the improving staff-student ratio. From the 1981 figure of 1:45.4, the ratio had dropped to 1:37.5 by 1990, but had begun to rise to 1:39.5 by 1991 (UNICEF 1987:29; Balleis 1992:66).

The combination of the loss of qualified personnel, low educational budgets, lack of adequate teaching aids and low morale among the teaching staff results in a serious decline in educational standards. The situation is worsened by the fact that sometimes the teachers who remain in the school system are compelled to supplement their incomes by engaging in other income-generating activities outside the classroom. Naturally enough, these teachers become less than effective in the classroom.

IMF structural adjustment programmes also increase unemployment levels in the recipient country, This is because the economic depression induced by IMF prescriptions frequently cripples the domestic capitalist sector and many local businessmen are forced either to go out of business or to curtail their operations. As companies collapse, hundreds, if not thousands, of workers are made redundant. According to the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe, 7,500 workers were retrenched in the country's mining and engineering industries between January and November 1992. The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions gave a significantly higher figure and reported that 7,000, 6,000 and 3,000 jobs had been lost in the sugar, clothing/textile and leather industries respectively by November 1992. Meanwhile, it is estimated that, by the end of the adjustment programme, job losses will amount to approximately 23,000; 2,000 and 20,000 in the public service, in parastatals and in the private sector respectively. Altogether, about 27 percent of all workers who entered employment since Independence are likely to be retrenched by the end of the programme (Sachikonye 1993:V, vii).

The unemployment problems in Zimbabwe are further complicated by the fact that there are over 200,000 school leavers every year who would find it difficult enough to find jobs under normal circumstances but who are now never likely to become employed since IMF adjustment programmes lead to economic contraction rather than expansion. To compound the problems further, the poor also run the risk of losing their homes as retrenchment and the resulting loss of income and/or high mortgage rates make it impossible for them to keep a roof over their heads. The Zimbabwean daily newspaper, *The Herald*, of 16 February 1993 reported that over a hundred houses, mostly in Harare's high-density suburbs, had been auctioned by building societies after their owners defaulted on mortgage payments. In the words of the chairman of the Association of Building Societies in Zimbabwe, Graham Hollick (*The Herald* 1993), the situation was likely to deteriorate 'as the number of people being retrenched

increases, and . . . inflation continues at such a high level leading to a reduction in disposable income'.

Given the disastrous impact of IMF programmes on the poor, it is not surprising that there have been anti-IMF riots in some SSA countries. Examples abound of popular demonstrations against austerity measures judged by the urban poor to be injurious to their interests. For example, there were widespread demonstrations in Tanzania in December 1986 against a rail fare increase of between 150 and 200 percent. In the same month, university students demonstrated for three days demanding higher book allowances because of recent price increases. In 1986 Zambia witnessed widespread food riots in the Copperbelt which left 15 people dead, and in 1987 nurses, teachers and postal and telecommunications workers went on strike (Economist Intelligence Unit, 1987:i,8; East 1988; Predergast 1989).

In Zimbabwe, students at the national University of Zimbabwe demonstrated and boycotted classes in 1992 demanding an increase in their grants to offset financial difficulties resulting from devaluation and inflation. The government conceded a 25 percent increase in student grants but almost immediately afterwards announced that university fees would also go up by 25 percent, effectively cancelling out the earlier grant increase. This triggered off violent student demonstrations in Harare which led to the closure of the University and the expulsion of all the student body in June that year. In 1993, the country experienced a wave of bread riots in the lower-income suburbs of Harare as demonstrators smashed windows of local bakeries and either looted or destroyed bread in protest against recently announced price increases for flour and bread (Economist Intelligence Unit 1992, 1993). The bread riot were caused a sharp rise in the price of bread and flour to 73.5 percent of their 1990 level, following government's decision to decontrol the prices for these commodities. IMF programmes thus promote anti-government feelings and compound the recipient government's problems of how to manage opposition.

IMF programmes also result in several other hidden social costs. Press accounts and reports from Women's organisations in Zimbabwe reveal that wife-beating is on the increase in the country as families come under strain from economic hardships and tempers easily flare up in the home. The streets of Harare as at 1993 have more beggars, more street kids, more 'illegal' vendors than at any other time in the history of the city as unemployment increases, cost-recovery measures in education throw children out of schools and economic necessity forces formerly employed people into the informal sector in order to make ends meet. The problem of the homeless is also looming large as evidenced by the mushrooming squatter camps throughout the city despite repeated efforts by the city council to eradicate such squatter settlements.

Impressionistic evidence suggests that common crime in the form of muggings, armed robberies, burglaries and white-collar crime, particularly fraud and embezzlement of funds, is on the increase. Women, who in most African societies comprise a large percentage of the poor are facing increased hardships under SAP. Not only do women now have to contend with IMF-induced tensions in the home and escalating domestic violence, but some of them also have to work extra hard in the informal sector to keep families fed when husbands are retrenched. Others find that they have to resort to prostitution and other socially 'unacceptable' trades to keep body and soul together.

Faced with mounting criticism concerning the hardships brought about by its programmes, the IMF introduced the Social Dimension Fund (SDF) in Zimbabwe in 1991. Capitalised at Z\$20 million, the fund was designed to mitigate the negative social effects of SAP by providing limited assistance for the purchase of food and payment of school and hospital fees for those vulnerable groups identified by the Department of Social Welfare as deserving such help. While the creation of the SDF is a welcome attempt by the IMF to mitigate the suffering caused by its programmes, it is by no means an effective and lasting solution to the problems of the poor majority.

For instance, it targets only the new poor, namely those who have recently been impoverished by retrenchment and other negative effects of SAP and does not address the problems of the old or habitually poor. Furthermore, the Z\$20 million allocated to the fund is too little to support an unemployed population (estimated at 1.3 million in 1992) and their dependants, especially considering that the sum of Z\$3.5 million was used in 1993 alone to pay school and examination fees for approximately 15,000 students. In addition, many in the targeted group have not been able to take advantage of the SDF facility because of lack of knowledge of how to apply for the funds. Given the immensity of the problems caused by SAP, the Social Dimensions Fund can only be viewed as, in the words of Balleis (1992:67-8), 'a political cover up which tries to give ESAP a more human face'.

With regard to the IMF's contention that, whatever their problems, IMF structural adjustment programmes at least promote the redistribution of income from the urban to the rural producers in order to boost agricultural output. Evidence, however, suggests that only large-scale and not small rural producers benefit from IMF programmes. The peasant producer who is supposed to benefit from higher prices for his commodities is in no position to produce enough to enable him to take advantage of the new prices. His small plot, already exhausted from years of overuse, cannot sustain such an expansion in production.

In any case, the price hikes and removal of subsidies mean that inputs such as fertiliser become unaffordable. In general, the terms of trade for his

primary products, like those for the nation's exports, are ever deteriorating so that, while he might sell more and earn more, he still cannot afford the manufactured products and agricultural inputs he must purchase from the cities. The poor, whether urban or rural, are caught in a no win situation, whatever the IMF may claim. The economy may indeed become more efficient as a result of structural adjustment as the IMF representatives claim but it is clear that it is not the poor who benefit from this increased efficiency.

IMF structural adjustment programmes result in the suffering not only of the present poor but also of their children who will grow up sickly, poorly educated, unemployed or marginalised. The undesirable ripple effects of the IMF adjustment programme on the Zimbabwean people and economy are clearly spelt out by Balleis (1992:7-8):

Already now the number of school drop-outs at primary level is significant and might increase. The problem of street children is the most obvious indicator of this development. This means a new increase of illiteracy among the next generation and in general lower standards of education . . . illiterate or badly educated children will have no chance at all to find a place in a modern economy in the years to come . . . A low standard of education will be an obstacle to real economic growth itself.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is evident that IMF structural adjustment programmes have a deleterious impact on the economies and peoples of the developing countries. Not only do they worsen the poverty of the majority of the population of these countries but they also intensify the problems of dependency. In the words of Adeoye (1991:40), if SAP is 'indeed . . . a revolution, (it is) a revolution of regressions' resulting not in progress but retrogression of the economies of the borrowing countries. Because it is not ideologically neutral and subscribes to the politico-economic philosophy of the industrialised countries, the IMF logically promotes the interests of the powerful industrialised countries at the expense of those of the developing countries.

That this should be the IMF's mission is not surprising since it is not in the interest of the industrialised countries to enable developing countries to stand on their own feet as this would make them less dependent. IMF programmes are a well-calculated attempt to perpetuate dependency and to foist on the poor countries a liberal or free-trade regime which has worked and will continue to work to the detriment of the economies of the poor countries. As Payer (1987:66-82) pointed out:

The entire arsenal of IMF conditionality, which seems at first glance too complex, is actually reducible to the opening of the economy to imports and to foreign investment and technological exploitation . . . in the material interests of the countries which control the Fund and the Bank.

IMF programmes should be shunned if only because they deepen rather than lessen dependency. Moreover, as has already been shown in the cases of Zimbabwe and Zambia, IMF structural adjustment programmes can be costly in political terms for those governments which implement them. Killick and Sutton (1982) have shown that currency devaluation 'roughly triples the probability that the responsible finance minister will lose his job within the following year and roughly doubles the probability that the entire government will fall'. 'While the precise accuracy of this claim can be questioned, there is little doubt that the austerity regime imposed by IMF programmes alienates the elected government from its people and may earn the hostility of the poor, the local businessmen and, indeed, the middle classes whose standard of living is eroded by the structural adjustment exercise.

Why then do governments in the developing countries continue to work with the IMF given the enormity of these problems? Governments resort to IMF funding and continue to struggle to implement IMF programmes despite the risk because they have no choice. They have walked into a trap from which there is no easy escape. The IMF is usually approached by borrowing countries as a last resort when there is no other alternative. The IMF wields enormous power in the global economy, not only because of the vast financial resources it commands but also because all other global financial organisations defer to its opinions. Consequently, very few international organisations will lend to a country which is not approved by the IMF. Developing countries which need external funding, therefore, have to accept the IMF conditions if they are to receive the loan they require.

Governments find themselves in this untenable position partly as a result of external and other forces beyond their control but mostly because of their unwise and inappropriate development strategies. While little can be done to control the effects of the first category, much can be done to minimise the effects of the policies implemented by the governments themselves. Perhaps it is time that governments of the developing countries re-examined their priorities and re-shaped their development strategies in order to minimise foreign borrowing and to utilise resources, both local and borrowed, responsibly and productively, thus avoiding the perennial balance-of-payments problems that afflict most developing countries. The current developmental trajectory of most developing countries which leads eventually to the IMF and its conditions is a dead end.

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Scientific Ethos, Authoritarian Regimes and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Résumé: L'auteur part de l'hypothèse que les régimes autoritaires sont incompatibles avec certains principes fondamentaux de l'éthique scientifique et que par conséquent les conditions d'existence de ces régimes s'opposent à tout changement social progressiste parce que la rationalité scientifique constitue un desideratum important et une condition sine qua non de tout changement social significatif. L'auteur élabore un modèle théorique pouvant contribuer à mieux faire comprendre les rapports imbriqués et dynamiques entre les régimes autoritaires et la science par rapport au changement social, cela dans le cadre de la recherche de formes alternatives socio-économiques et politiques en Afrique au Sud du Sahara.

Preliminary Specifications

From the colonialist era to the present state of nominal/flag independence, the latter of which the period between the late 1950s to early 1960s was an historical watershed in sub-Saharan Africa: the realities in sub-Saharan African societies are characterised by authoritarian regimes (Bangura 1989; Ake 1987; Collier 1982). While nationalist struggles against direct colonialist domination and administration that got to a feverish crescendo during the mid-1950s were in favour of liberal democracy, authoritarian regimes (as well as the military variety), have been the rule rather than the exception across sub-Saharan Africa. Authoritarian military regime, for instance, have predominated in Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sudan, Chad and Angola in their recent histories. In the particular case of Nigeria, only ten (10) of the thirty-one (31) years since nominal independence have witnessed anything that presents a facade of 'liberal democracy'. In the same vein, social relations and structures that approximate 'liberal democracy' have been comparatively more enduring in places like Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya and Zambia.

We say something that approximates or a facade of 'liberal democracy', to the extent that we visualise the civil society and the state in peripheral social formations within the confinement of asymmetrical world-system economy. To the extent that this is so, the forms that liberal democracy would take in peripheral societies could not but be distorted *vis-à-vis*

advanced capitalist economies within the same world system (Wallerstein 1975, 1979; Szymanski 1981; Frank 1966, 1972, 1979; Ninalowo 1987).

It is owing to the relatively high rate of distortions and contradictions within liberal democracies where they ostensibly exist that one has to be cognisant of the structures and relations of authoritarianism under the facade of liberal democracy.¹ It is to be argued below that, to the extent that: (1) Authoritarian regimes are antithetical to some of the key salient properties of scientific ethos and democratic culture (Merton 1968; Lipset 1981); (2) Authoritarian conditions are, therefore, counter-productive to progressive/ameliorative social change. As our subsequent model would show, the latter is on account of the fact that scientific rationality is a key requirement, *sine qua non*, for any meaningful social change. To be sure, the concept of social change herein implies:

... a temporal alteration in the composition, structure or process of day-to-day operations, activities and functions in the society, either in its totality or constituent parts. In other words, the concept of social change is marshalled to capture an alteration over time, the direction, implementation of policies or plans, complexity, roles, functions et cetera, in varying degrees.... (Ninalowo forthcoming: p.4; Ninalowo 1991a).²

The ultimate intention here is to develop a theoretical model that would contribute to the understanding of the dynamics of authoritarian regimes and science in relation to social change. This is with a view of alternative socio-economic and political forms. In the light of the preceding, we look at the question of authoritarianism as an antithesis to progressive/ameliorative social change (Ninalowo 1990a).

Antinomies of Authoritarianism and the Reproduction of Underdevelopment

We proceed from the thesis that democratic properties, both structurally and relationally, are proportionally related with progressive/ameliorative social change, that is authentic human-centred development. Aside from the principle of universal suffrage at the level of practice, other components of democratic culture include social justice, egalitarian distribution of power and resources which will ensure optimal level of employment, freedom of

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- 1 While we shall highlight some of the key properties and essentials of democratic culture, these had been addressed extensively elsewhere — see Ninalowo (forthcoming).
 - 2 It is noteworthy that where there is human-oriented development such as would help bring about the amelioration of lived conditions of people *en masse*, either through state policies and/or by virtue of collective class action; this would be consistent with what has been characterised as progressive social change. The obverse of this retrogressive social change or underdevelopment. For an amplification of conceptual nuances of social change — see Ninalowo (1990a).

speech and association, liberal and equitable distribution of formal educational opportunities, provision of adequate opportunities for nutrition and shelter, and so on. The cardinal essence of democratic properties as specified above is that they help to nurture and reproduce legitimation for a given system of domination or policy. For in the final analysis, the process of legitimation goes far beyond the sheer legalisation (as in Law) of elitist national goals, interests, values or dominant norms (Habermas 1975; Well 1989; Schumpeter 1975; O'Conner 1973; Lipset 1981). Rather, the ultimate acid test of legitimation is the degree to which people are generally able to fulfil their needs, aspirations or values. In other words, the ultimate test of enduring process of legitimation, properly speaking, resides in socio-political legitimacy as opposed to the sheer legal type. The former is consistent with human-centred authentic development, that is, progressive social change:

people may regard a given prevailing status quo, regime, programme or national goals as legitimate or illegitimate in terms of the ways by which dominant ideology or values are consistent with those of the generality of the people since they also have and harbour specific interests that might often be at variance with the dominant elitist ones. The alignment or reconciliation of general interests and values with dominant ones is said to enhance the possibilities of socio-political legitimation of the status quo (Ninalowo forthcoming).

A key corollary of the deliberation hitherto is that both democratic culture and socio-political legitimacy are opposite sides of the same coin. It is hardly conceivable to obtain one without the other. Empirical indicators in recent history have suggested to us that on the one hand, there is comparatively high stability within the systems of domination in technologically and economically advanced societies of North America and Europe. On the other hand, instabilities often punctuated by incessant coup d'état, are common place in the peripheral sphere, including societies in Africa, Latin America and South-East Africa. This differential is a function of the much higher prevalence of concrete dimensions of liberal democracy and the concomitant socio-political legitimacy in advanced societies (Lipset and Schneider 1987; London 1987; Held 1987; Lipset 1981; Boswell and Dixon 1990).

The preceding body of argument presents a logical basis to now advance a counter-thesis. That is, authoritarianism is proportionally related to the reproduction of underdevelopment or retrogressive social change. Before we amplify this counter-thesis, we would like to clarify on our particular appropriation of the concept of authoritarianism. Others have employed the concept of authoritarian personality — as referring to almost a blind submission to dominant or powerful individuals or institutions (Adorno 1950; Lipset 1981). This is, however, not the sense in which the concept is being used at the present time. Rather, the concept is hereby to be understood as connoting situations of anti-democratic social relations,

structures and institutions. In an ideal-typical sense, authoritarianism refers to conditions of extreme asymmetrical structural distribution of power and resources in a given social formation. This asymmetry is particularly heightened by the extreme penchant for kleptocracy amongst African ruling elites. This partly explains why African ruling elites harbour the illusion as though they are able to cling to power indefinitely, even against severe opposition or general crisis of confidence. Annexation of political power in this instance becomes a means towards self-centred economic gratification (Ake 1987; Graf 1988).

Also, under authoritarian circumstances, the powers-that-be have little or no tolerance for deviations from dominant values and beliefs. Consequently, authoritarian dispositions within a given polity are associated with flagrant infringement of fundamental human rights of subaltern groups and classes. Owing to a combination of relatively high degree of asymmetrical distribution of power and resources, in conjunction with low level of tolerance, there is, correspondingly, relatively low level of socio-political legitimacy. Some of the far-reaching consequences of authoritarian conditions in sub-Saharan Africa have recently been captured as follows:

Certainly, under the prevailing circumstances whereby subaltern groups and classes overwhelmingly bear the yolk of pernicious effects of SAP (Structural Adjustment Programme) *vis-à-vis* dominant groups and classes, and where individual citizens are summarily incarcerated in flagrant infringement of their fundamental human rights, principles of social justice are thereby most obviously violated. Such situations are some of the breeding grounds for resistance to domination, for they help to reproduce a crisis of legitimation or 'crisis of confidence' in regard to the dominant status quo, in so far as the class state is unable to satisfy some basic existential requirements and needs of the masses. The *raison d'être* of the ruling class is, therefore, put to question from the ruled— popular masses (Ninalowo forthcoming).

It is against the backdrop of heightened unequal distribution of power and resources that we begin to understand recent anti-SAP popular demonstrations and general critiques against related policies by African states in Cote d'Ivoire, Zambia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Algeria and so on. The popular demonstrations constitute active resistance and challenge to authoritarian conditions. That is a crisis of legitimation.

The episode of authoritarianism and the attendant falling rate of socio-political legitimation have chiefly served as a pretext for the military usurpation of civilian power in places like the Sudan, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Chad, Zaire and Angola. Predictably, military regimes that have been coercively instituted, by virtue of political appropriation of legalised monopoly over the means of violence, have really fared no better than civilian political elites. This is precisely because the contradictions of authoritarianism and socio-political legitimacy have really not been abated

as a result of military intervention into the political realm. Rather, the contradictions have been known to be exacerbated under military regimes. Hence William Graf (1988) was compelled to talk of 'austerity without development' even under military regimes that are ostensibly 'corrective.'

In any event, it would have been rather unrealistic to expect military usurpation of civilian powers to resolve structurally immanent class-related contradictions. The presence of the military in the political arena is, of course, contradictory in its own right *ab initio*, in terms of the expected historical conventional functions and roles of soldiers. More importantly, just as there is a subsystem of stratification in terms of the asymmetrical distribution of power, privileges and resources in major institutions of the society, so is there a similar unequal distribution within the military institution. Furthermore, the substratum of the military institution is part of the totality of the configuration of class within the civil society and the state (Graf 1988; Ninalowo 1987). Consequently, the military elites at the commanding heights of the state structure act essentially to protect the interests of other elites, both on their behalf and/or their behest. By so doing, contradictions of authoritarianism are thereby reproduced.

Consequently, soldiers have been known to shoot their way back; wrestle political power from civilians after a relatively brief inter-regime by the latter. In the particular case of the Nigerian society, for instance, the country witnessed 'indigenous' civilian rule for two periods since 1960, viz., 1960-1966 (1st Republic) and 1979-1983 (2nd Republic). That is, the civilians have been at the commanding heights of the state only for a total of ten years since nominal flag independence from the British colonial power in 1960. The affairs of the state and society have been spearheaded by the military elites outside of these periods to date — i.e., for a total of almost twenty-one years hitherto — consequent upon a crisis of coups and counter coups.

The major point to be deciphered from the foregoing discussion is that, by definition, contradictory moments inevitably ensue from authoritarian situations in ways that nurture and reproduce retrogressive social change or underdevelopment that have recently been elucidated in the following manner by the writer:

The obverse of progressive social change is the retroactive type. This is exemplified by limited opportunities and facilities for housing, communication, health care, education, nutrition, transportation and so on — that is, abject poverty and deprivation on a rather large scale among the masses...

Situations of underdevelopment are aggravated by ubiquitous instances of retrenchments in the private and public sectors, grossly inflated prices of basic consumer goods (particularly food), exorbitant rents and so on. However, these negative socio-economic indicators are experienced mainly by subaltern classes and groups. In contrast, those at the helms of affairs

are comparatively insulated from adverse socio-economic constraints...
(Ninalowo 1990:2-3).

Now, whereas antinomies of authoritarianism and underdevelopment mutually reinforce and reproduce each other, a practical negation of the strain towards the reproduction of underdevelopment may not really be too far-fetched. There has historically been an ideal-typical mutual affinity of scientific ethos with democratic culture. That is, components of both do mutually reinforce one another. The proportionality in the relationship between scientific precepts and democratic principles is congruent with the possibilities for the reproduction of progressive social change.

Interface of Scientific Ethos, Democratic Properties and Social Change

Once again, we proceed here on the basis of a counter-thesis. That is, the properties of authoritarianism are inconsistent with the precepts of scientific ethos. Moreover, this inverse relationship posited between authoritarian properties and scientific ethos, as we shall see later, is incongruent with the possibilities for progressive social change.

By scientific ethos, it is meant to refer to a set of guiding beliefs, values or norms that inform both the professional activities and orientation of a group of people in the course of the pursuance of their vocationally-related roles and functions. Robert Merton (1968:595) captures the full essence of the notion of scientific ethos thus:

The ethos of science refers to an emotionally toned complex of rules, prescriptions, mores, beliefs, values, and presuppositions which are held to be binding upon the scientist. Some phases of this complex may be methodologically desirable, but observance of the rules is not dictated solely by methodological considerations. This ethos, as social codes generally, is sustained by the sentiments of those to whom it applies. Transgression is curbed by internalised prohibitions and by disapproving emotional reactions which are mobilised by the supporters of the ethos....

By definition, scientific ethos is inextricably compatible with democratic properties. There are four salient properties of scientific ethos (Merton 1968), we shall invoke in order to demonstrate this mutual affinity:

(1) Universalism, (2) collective epistemic ownership, (3) selflessness, and (4) institutionalised scepticism. We shall now discuss these seriatim.

Universalism³

Crucial components of the principle of universalism consist of objectivity and fairness. This implies that peer adjudication of validity or knowledge

3 For a more encompassing and detailed discussion of the concept of universalism—see Parsons (1951).

claims would be based on criteria that portray institutional grounding. The criteria also have to be applied indiscriminately without favour or bias. Particularistic or non-universalistic criteria have no place in science, indeed, they constitute a violation of scientific ethos. Acceptance or rejection of validity claims can not be pursued on the basis of ideological, ethnic, racial, lingual, class, religious or similar biographical attributes of the claimant. This would constitute a violation of institutionalised scientific ethos.

For instance, there are compelling scientific grounds and data with which to demonstrate that the female folks with similar socio-economic status and opportunities, would be able to perform certain professionally or occupationally-related roles to similar component or efficient degree as their male counterparts. Neither male chauvinistic propensity nor patriarchal relations and structures of control ought not to contaminate the demonstrability of such a proposition in the spirit of scientific ethos. In a similar vein, some notable scholars have convincingly made pronouncements, based on systematic data procurement, analysis and logic, to the effect that deleterious fall-outs from the so-called Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) are experienced almost exclusively by subaltern classes and groups at various locations within the peripheral sphere. That is, the gap between the haves and the have-nots gets increasingly wider with the incessant implementation of SAP-related policies. Such scientific revelation ought not to lead to the persecution or vilification of intellectuals by the state as is often the case in sub-Saharan Africa (Bangura 1989; Ninalowo 1987, 1990b).

Where the state and the civil society harbour authoritarian or anti-democratic postures in flagrant violation of the principle of universalism, this is very likely to limit the extent to which intellectuals are able to contribute to progressive social change. This is consequent on the conduciveness of authoritarianism to alienation among intellectuals and scientists (Gouldner 1979), in the same vein, Robert Merton (1968:609-10) observes as follows:

.... Democratisation is tantamount to the progressive elimination of restraints upon the exercise and development of socially valued capacities.... In so far as such restraints persist, they are viewed as obstacles in the path of full democratisation.... The political apparatus designed to put democratic values into practice may thus vary, but universalistic standards are maintained. To the extent that a society is democratic, it provides scope for the exercise of universalistic criteria in science.

Collective Epistemic Ownership

In a given epistemic (or knowledge-seeking/producing) community, both the ownership of the means as well as products of scientific inquisition are common to all and sundry within a particular epistemic or scientific community. There is, in any event, one basic historical reason for the

ownership of formal knowledge to be collective. The reasons inhere in the cumulative nature of scientific or formal knowledge. Any scientific or formal knowledge or innovation is, from a strict technical standpoint, traceable to common precepts, guidelines, paradigms or some other form of common heritage in the past. It is indeed, the hallmark of the scientific enterprise that advancement in science relies on the inputs of the past, present, as well as future generations. Consequently, any claim to property right cannot but be minimal and modest, properly speaking.

Once again, as Robert Merton (1968:610-11) puts it:

.... The scientists' claim to 'their' intellectual 'property' is limited to that of recognition and esteem which, if the institution functions with a modicum of efficiency, is roughly commensurate with the significance of the increments brought to the common fund of knowledge The institutional conception of science as part of the public domain is linked with the imperative for communication of findings. Secrecy is the antithesis of this norm, full and open communication its enactment, the pressure for diffusion of results is reinforced by the institutional goal of advancing the boundaries of knowledge and by the incentive of recognition which is, of course, contingent upon publication.

In the light of the foregoing observations, it is intrusive to note that private ownership as well as appropriation of both the means and results of production in capitalistic-oriented economies are inconsistent with the ethos of collective epistemic ownership. To the extent that this might be the case, it would further lead to some additional strains for democratic culture. That is, authoritarian relations and structures are likely to be heightened in ways that can be antithetical to progressive social change. It is noteworthy in this context that privatised property relations and structures under peripheral or advanced capitalism provide legalised legitimacy for ruling or economic elites, in terms of their claims to property rights and their dominant positions. This serves to consolidate and reproduce structural inequalities and class-related contradictions.

Selflessness

Ideal-typically, the essential underlying motive behind the activities of scientists or other professionals is not for the fulfilment of personal interests or goals, as per the scientific ethos. Rather, the essential motive underpinning the activities of the scientist is a combination of deep-seated passion for sheer acquisition and propagation of knowledge, idle curiosity, altruistic concern *et cetera* with a view to helping the society at large. The scientist is institutionally compelled to conform to the ethos of selflessness on the threat of possible negative sanctions. Besides, where the norm has been internalised, the possible pain of psychological conflict provides an additional incentive for conformity (Merton 1968:613).

Be that as it may, a caveat is in order, nonetheless: The phenomenon of 'publish or perish syndrome' may have a tendency to lead a handful of scientists and intellectuals among university dons, in particular, to the possible temptation of less than morally sound posture, in their bid to enhance their particular chances of upward social mobility. This is to say that there have been isolated cases of self-centred motive and impropriety underlying the pursuance of scientific or epistemic activities. But then such cases would, indeed, be exceptions to the rule. Moreover, such deviant cases, would, of course, not be condoned by the particular community of co-experts, scientists or colleagues. Indeed, negative sanctions range from sneering, rebuking, ostracising to outright termination of appointments of erring individuals.

It must be emphasised that cases of professional self-centredness are comparatively rare amongst scientists. This is certainly not unrelated to the institutional system of verification and authentication of claims by fellow scientists and experts. That is to say '....the activities of scientists are subject to rigorous policing, to a degree perhaps unparalleled in any other field of activity' (Merton 1968:613). It is to be noted that the scientific ethos of selflessness is, in real terms, not consistent with the realities of peripheral capitalist state as it is witnessed in sub-Saharan Africa. Where there is the pervasiveness of authoritarian structures and social relations, coupled with the attendant immanent contradictions. The prevalent hidden agenda amongst the ruling elites have primarily been self-centred. As it has been documented elsewhere, institutionalised corruption and kleptocracy are deep-seated within the social structures and relations in sub-Saharan Africa. (Onimode 1988; Ninalowo, 1987; Ake, 1981). Under these circumstances, expressions of structural alienation are enacted and reproduced amongst scientists and intellectuals. These are, of course, counter-productive to any meaningful progressive social change. (Gouldner 1979; Brym 1980; Ninalowo 1990b).

A fourth and final component of scientific ethos we shall discuss here is institutionalised scepticism.

Institutionalised Scepticism

One of the hallmarks of the scientific enterprise happens to be institutionalised scepticism. It is, indeed *sine qua non* for science, properly conceived. A claim, assertion, argument, thesis, proposition, hypothesis, conjectures et cetera cannot, of course, be logically sustained without concrete demonstrable substantiation or evidence. A claim that cannot withstand the principle of verifiability or falsifiability does not, of course, belong to the realm of science. In effect, the extent of the scientific status of a claim is a function of the degree to which it may be proven to be true or

false — that is, the extent of its falsifiability or verifiability potential (Popper 1965, 1968, 1976; Winch 1958).

On the one hand, institutional trait of scepticism is normatively consistent with scientific culture as well as democratic properties (i.e. freedom of speech and expression). On the other hand, the conflict-generating potential congealed within the attributes of scepticism for social relations between the scientist and the powers-that-be is of almost infinite proportion; especially under authoritarian regimes such as are common-place in Africa. Scientific ethos that incites or encourages the scientist to question, say, fiscal mismanagement, kleptomania, corruption, or to generally reveal inadequacies in the running of the affairs of the society and the state by the ruling elites, would quite obviously receive hostilities in a variety of forms. These may range from reprimand, blockage of upward mobility to incarceration or even surreptitious elimination of allegedly erring individuals.

It is of course, axiomatic that persecution or vilification of scientists or other particular professional groups, simply as a result of the performance of their roles in line with their vocational guidelines and principles, is bound to be counter-productive for any meaningful social change. The point can hardly be over-emphasised that any violation of the features of the scientific ethos, which are, to reiterate, consistent with democratic properties either by the state or the civil society, is bound to reproduce structural alienation amongst the intellectuals. With increasingly deep-seated structural alienation, one would witness concomitant attitudinal and behavioural expressions of alienated state. This episode would, of course, be inversely related to ameliorative human-centred social change (Gouldner 1979; Ninalowo 1984, 1988, 1990b).

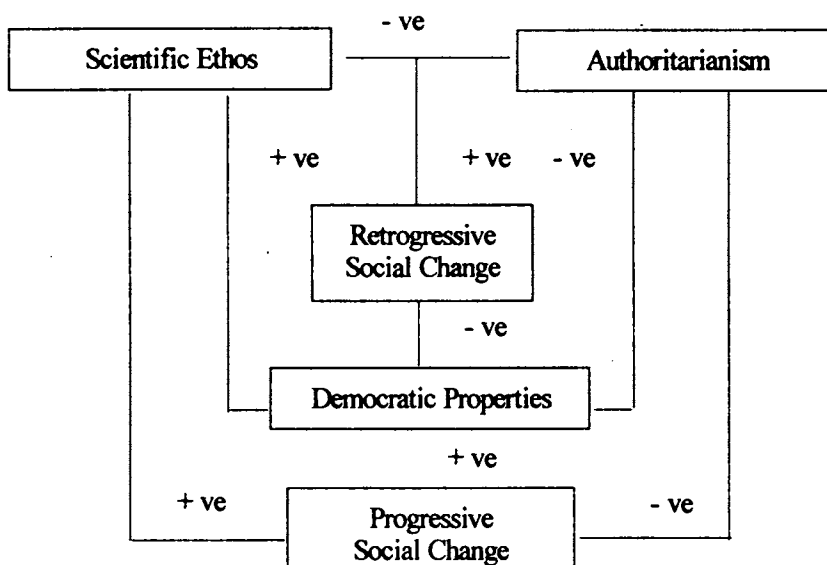
The deliberations hitherto afford us a theoretical frame of reference for the issues we have raised up to this point. The summary of these will now be crystallised in the final section IV that follows. Figure I provides a schematic reference point.

In Retrospect and Prospect: Towards Progressive Social Change

According to the theoretical model that is distilled in Figure I. First, it is posited that there is an inverse relationship between the components of scientific ethos — i.e. universalism, collective epistemic ownership, selflessness and institutionalised scepticism — and authoritarian social relations and structures. This is on account of the fact that authoritarianism constitutes a violation of scientific ethos. Second, the tenuous relationship between scientific ethos and authoritarian circumstances help to reproduce expressions of structural alienation amongst scientists and other professional groups. Owing to the strategic importance of these social groups, the inverse relationship between scientific ethos and authoritarian properties is only

consistent with retrogressive social change. That is, the negative relationship buttresses the possibilities for retrogressive social change or reproduction of features of underdevelopment.

Figure I: Theoretical Model on the Relationship Between Scientific Ethos, Authoritarianism and Social Change



By the same token, the inverse relationship between scientific ethos and authoritarianism militates against the possibilities for progressive social change. Finally, the inherent mutual harmony and affinity between the properties of scientific ethos and those of democratic culture are, in turn, proportionally related to progressive/ameliorative and human centred social change.

To reiterate, the practical corollary that we distill from all of the preceding discussions has to be that, the pervasive realities of authoritarian social relations and structure in sub-Saharan Africa portend inordinate tendency to enhance the reproduction of underdevelopment. This is partly consequent on the alienation of scientists and other professional groups, who happen to be key agents for progressive social change. Having said that, a viable alternative path, therefore, for authentic human centred development reside in situations whereby both the state and civil society would make consistently genuine decisive practical efforts in order to provide for conducive and enabling environment for the harmonisation of the features of

scientific ethos with those of democratic culture. In other words, for any human-centred progressive development to unfold, there has to be an alignment of the properties of scientific ethos with those of democratic principles in consistently practical forms.

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Book Review

Cultural Nationalism and Western Hegemony: A Review Essay on Appiah's Universalism

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It is a truism that the history of Africa's interaction with the West has been dominated by the urge of the Africans to define their identity in opposition to that of their oppressors. It is also true that this same desire has been very important in shaping the focus of all the intellectual disciplines relating to Africa. This theme of identity is a response to the ethnocentrism of the European invaders who reduced the totality of Africanity to the sub-human level in order to justify their plundering of the continent and the subjugation of the peoples of the continent. African scholars have reacted to this ethnocentrism of the West by articulating both a cultural integrity and identity for Africa. Anthony Appiah's recent book: *In My father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992) is another reaction to this theme.

The position of Appiah in this book is opposed to the cultural nationalism of most African scholars. He argues extensively in the book that the nationalism of the Africans is a manifestation of racism. Pan-Africanism according to him as a philosophy of African unity was conceived in the womb of racism outside Africa. Pan-Africanism and its racialist tendency he says was originated by the Africans in the diaspora who were victims of racial prejudice (1992:10). It is the exiled Africans who tried to cut out an identity for the Africans. They accepted the myth that Africans are genetically and culturally different from the Europeans and formulated a philosophy of solidarity on the basis of this assumption.

Appiah's position is that the concepts: race racism and racialism, are myths created in Europe to subjugate others (1992:5). His position is that there are no races because neither the biological nor the cultural explanation of race is tenable.¹ Africa he concludes is neither a racial nor a cultural entity. Its unity and identity according to him is an invention of the West. The fact that Africa is not a united entity culturally according to Appiah can

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1 For an extensive discussion of the Myth of Race. See the chapter two of the book, 1992, pp. 28-46.

be seen in the diverse cultures in the continent (1992:24). What Africans have in common he concludes is simply the fact that they are seen as one entity by the West. Beyond this, Africa is merely a geographical entity, a piece of land mass that accommodates diverse peoples, almost as divergent as those that live in the entire globe.

Based upon this position that Africa's identity is a product of racism, the author devoted the latter chapters of the book to an attack of variations of cultural nationalism in all aspects of Africa's intellectual life. Pan-Africanism as a philosophy of cultural solidarity, he observes gave birth to nationalistic scholarship in Africa. Virtually all the human sciences relating to Africa manifest the racialism of Pan-Africanism. All those disciplines he says are devoted to the unnecessary and unfortunate mission of proving that Africa is intellectually different.

Identifying African literature as an example of this tendency, he traces the development of African literature and its goal of attaining a completely authentic African literature independent of Western influence. Nativism as Appiah calls this orientation in literature is the attempt to challenge the claim of the Western scholars that Africa is incapable of contributing to the development of arts and letters. Nativism, Appiah argues is presently getting out of hand in Africa because it is gradually turning to the effort of making African discourse completely insulated from its Western counterpart. This extremism of nativism in Africa, according to Appiah, is exemplified by the book: *Towards the Decolonisation of African Literature* (Chinweizu 1981). The book he says is all out to denounce any form of compromise with the West by African writers. The objective, he goes on is to attain a completely African literary tradition independent of any external influence.

The position of Appiah against Nativism particularly in its extreme form is that such a unique and insulated African literature is not attainable in an Europeanised and Eurocentric African society of today. The mere fact that such a literature will be produced by the Eurocentric elites, who have completely lost touch with African culture is enough reason for the impossibility of an authentic African literature such an attempt which depends on the European language can not but manifest the culture of the West. All these factors according to Appiah make the quest for an authentic African literature an utopian dream. The truth of the matter he continues, is that Africa has so much admitted a lot of European values to itself that it can no more talk of cultural independence. Africa according to him cannot forget or neglect this fact:

[...] to forget Europe is to suppress the conflicts that have shaped our identities; since it is too late for us to escape each other, we might seek to turn to our advantage the mutual interdependence history has thrust upon us (Appiah 1992:72).

Appiah's critique of nativism does not stop at this, he goes further to denounce the assumption that there is an African cultural mindset in dialectical conflict with the European world view. He particularly condemns the celebration of an African world by the literary giant, Wole Soyinka in his collection of essays: *Myth, Literature and the African World* (1976). Exposing the goal of the essays as that of explaining the mysterious dark continent to the European elites, Appiah (1992:80) criticises the said African world to be nothing but a myth. The African world he says is neither completely different nor completely homogenous to warrant such a dialectical opposition to the Western world.

But there is an inherent tension in the entire literary project of Soyinka according to Appiah. This tension he says is an expected consequence of adopting a false position, the position that Africa is a distinct and united cultural space. The tension inherent in Soyinka's project exists between the idealism of Soyinka, the essayist who operates on the myth of a cultural unity and Soyinka, the dramatist, who is realistic to the point of exploiting the materials of his local culture; the Yoruba culture for his dramatic texts (Appiah 1992:80). This conflict between the theoretical Soyinka and the practical Soyinka Appiah argues, is a concrete refutation of the claim that there is an insulated and homogenous African world by those who invented this myth.

The essence of Soyinka's myth he says is to establish an ideological programme (Appiah 1992:83); an ideology of cultural solidarity despite the constant denial of this by him. Soyinka according to Appiah is not at all comfortable with the bitter truth that Africa's unity is a product of European gaze. The literary giant therefore seeks to create an ideology of cultural identity for the diverse peoples of the continent even if such entity does not exist. Soyinka's ultimate objective is to make Africa present a common front in what he considers to be a highly competitive global community where the African society is already at a disadvantage. But this philosophy of cultural solidarity Appiah says falters not only because of the weak racialist foundation, but also because of the interaction and interdependency of the contemporary global society. Modernity by its very essence he says, abhors the nationalism, the type of which Soyinka aims at propagating. Modern culture by virtue of printing technology encourages privacy and individualism (Appiah 1992:84). If there is going to be any solidarity within the modern society he says it is going to be the solidarity of humanity rather than that of race.

Also focusing on the debate going on in philosophy between the advocates of ethno-philosophy and the professionally trained philosophers, Appiah conceives the position of the former as another variant of the cultural nationalist project. Ethno-philosophy, he says is the attempt to show that there exists a discourse that is qualified to be described as philosophy

within the indigenous traditional culture of the African people (Appiah 1992:87). The ethno-philosophers like their nationalist counterparts in literature according to Appiah will constantly maintain that this philosophy of the African people is completely different from that of the West, forgetting that for anything to pass as philosophy, it must enjoy a bit of resemblance with those discourses defined as such in other cultures.

Ethno-philosophy, Appiah argues was motivated by the desire of the African nationalists to challenge the claims of many European scholars that African people are incapable of rigorous and critical reflection that philosophy demands. To show that the ethnocentric claim is false, the African nationalists he says are presenting the folk philosophy of the community as their own contribution to philosophy. In doing this, he says they are playing into the hands of their opponents because they are merely confirming that African philosophy is permanently at the level of folk thought—which exists in all societies — and is therefore incapable of transcending this level for a more sophisticated realm of strict and rigorous philosophy.

However, Appiah's position in respect of the debate between ethno-philosophy and its opponents is rather reconciliatory. Much as he does not agree with the relativism of this orientation for reasons which we earlier discussed, he still believes that the materials of ethno-philosophy can still be annexed to serve as raw materials for rigorous analysis by their opponents who advocate for such a method in opposition to the mere descriptive approach of ethno-philosophy (Appiah 1992:100). His own position is that the synthesis of the two opposing orientations is desirable for the future of African philosophy. In this respect, Appiah is reaffirming the position of his countryman Professor Kwasi Wiredu in an earlier book: *Philosophy and an African Culture* (1980:171). Like Wiredu, Appiah also advocates that the future African philosophy must not strive to be completely different from its Western counterpart, but should see problems as universal and try to reflect on them only with the African conscience.

The position that Appiah employs as his premise in his earlier arguments that is the position that the world is culturally interdependent is given extensive attention in the latter chapters of the essay. Africa, according to Appiah is presently going through a cultural renaissance. This emerging cultural revolution involves a synthesising of the aspects of traditional and modern culture. The cultural integration going on in Africa he says, is such that traditional values are complimenting the modern culture in a way that is revolutionary in the sense that a new culture is emerging that is neither traditional nor modern. This new culture emerging in Africa is aptly captured by Appiah (1992:157) with allegory of 'The Yoruba Man on a bicycle'. This artistic image captures the modern African man as an eclectic figure, a child of diverse cultures; who as a result of modernity is presently a

polyglot and travelling wider than he can do in a traditional setting. The symbol of the neo-culture in Africa is described further by Appiah (1991:157):

The Man with a bicycle' is produced by someone who does not care that the bicycle is the white man's invention — it is not there to be 'Other' to the Yoruba self; it is there because someone cared for solidity; it is there because it will take us further than our feet will take us; it is there because machines are now as African as novelists — and as fabricated as the Kingdom of Nakem.

It is not only the traditional culture that is at the receiving end of this radical transformation, modern institutions according to Appiah is also receiving inspiration and support from traditional culture. He in fact maintains that without such a support from the traditional sector the modern institutions adopted from the West would have collapsed. To drive this fundamental point home, he alludes to the role that traditional values are playing presently in the prevailing overwhelming crisis in Africa. According to him, the present crisis has not degenerated into total collapse of all the structures holding the society together because of the simple reason that the age-long values of traditional culture such as the norms of brotherhood and corporate survival are still preventing the modern institutions from giving way (1992:168). Without the aid of traditional values filtering into the contemporary African society through the medium of civil society, the State, a modern institution, Appiah concludes could have witnessed a permanent exit from the continent.

The thesis of Appiah in this book if we can recap and attempt a summary is that between the past and future of African culture, a lot of events have taken place which demands that the desire to attain a unique African identity must be jettisoned, since such an ambition can not be realised in an interdependent global community of today. Appiah also criticises any scholarship that seeks to celebrate difference in whatever form whether racial, cultural or intellectual, since the contemporary world does not encourage dialectical opposition but promotes overwhelming integration. Relating this fact to the issue of the crisis of development in Africa, Appiah posits that the ideal of development can only be realised if Africa gives serious expression to this cultural interrelationship rather than cultural insularity and adopt ideas from those cultures that it earlier seeks to isolate. Development according to Appiah will come to Africa if we recoil from the path of antagonism and accept the syntheses of all hitherto opposing camps; modernism and traditionalism, Africanity and Eurocentricity to forge for us the desired progress.

Antony Appiah's discourse represents an attempt at transporting the revolutionary scholarship of post-modernism to Africa. The author's critique of culture employing the rigorous analytical tool of philosophy is a complete

departure from the orthodox scholarship of excluded middle in Africa where a scholar is either a traditionalist or a modernist. Post modernism as an intellectual movement in the West is out to question the conventions and accepted methodologies of modernism. It has put itself in opposition to the positions of traditional scholarship in all ramifications. It is a call for interdependence of ideas with the assumption that universal or absolute truth is a myth. Post modernism subscribes to the position that diverse interpretations can be given to one fact and it is therefore imperative for all positions to cohabit in an interdependent manner. It is this assumptions that Appiah is bringing to bear on his analysis of African culture.

Having summarised the theses of Appiah, it is pertinent for us to begin to advance our objections to his project. First let us begin with Appiah's discussion of the issue of African identity and his indictment of Pan-Africanism for asserting a racist identity for Africa. Our intention is not to contest issues with Appiah on the claim that race as a concept and racism as an idea are myths, rather we intend to question the severe attack he gave to Pan-Africanism for responding to the myth of racism created by the West. Appiah is not justified in combating Pan-Africanism for making race the basis of its philosophy of African solidarity. Racism of the Africans is a logical response in a world which has been unfair to them for being of a different colour. It is normal for the Africans to mobilise themselves on the platform of race which has been exploited to their own disadvantage. Anything short of this could have been ineffective in challenging the arrogance of Western imperialism. As Fanon (1967:171) once said in defence of racial solidarity of the Africans:

Negroism ... was the emotional if not the logical anti-thesis of that insult which the white man flung at humanity. This rush of Negroism against the white man's contempt showed itself in certain spheres to be one ideal capable of lifting interdictions and anathema.

It is in this same respect that we will take up the critique of cultural nationalism of African scholarship by Appiah. His attack of the cultural nationalism of the Africans fails to take into consideration the situation that generated this phenomenon. This tendency ought to be seen within its historical context as a response to the ethnocentrism of the West. Cultural nationalism was very relevant and appropriate at the time of its emergence. It emerged at a time when Africans were psychologically deflated. It was therefore a sort of psychological rearmament; a morale boosting enterprise after a loss of battle in order to forestall the total loss of war. It is this type of cultural rearmament that Ousman Sembene has in mind when he says: 'To confront colonialism ... there is only one weapon: culture' (Miller 1991:19).

The cultural nationalism in its totality is expected to lift the people up from their lethargy. It is a weapon directed at the most subtle but most

effective of all aspects of imperialism: the cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism as we know involves the replacement of a culture of the colonised with the colonisers' culture which in time make the former permanently subservient to the latter. This process of cultural nationalism has been discussed extensively by some radical scholars such as Amin (1989) and Said (1978). Cultural imperialism according to Fanon (1967:167) is the process of distorting, disfiguring and destroying of the peoples past. Culture is an important target for decolonisation without which a colonised people would remain under-developed even if they have attained nominal independence. The essence of cultural nationalism of the African scholars is to purge a once colonised society of the remnants of colonialism; to restore lost hope and confidence. A reassurance that all is not lost. Fanon (1967:182) describes the objective of cultural nationalism thus:

The claims to a national culture in the past does not only rehabilitate the nation and serve as justification for the hope of a future national culture. In the sphere of psycho-affective equilibrium, it is responsible for an important change in the native.

Although it is true that in the process of this cultural revival some aspects of our cultural nationalist project deteriorated into a negative venture, the type of negativism that Onoge has in mind when he talks of Negritude as involving two variants: the mystical affirmation and the revolutionary affirmation (Miller 1991:20), but that is not to say that the positive variant of cultural nationalism should not be encouraged.

In fact, the unworthy aspect of the cultural nationalist project has been denounced by many African scholars.² But the act of throwing away the baby with the bathwater that Appiah's severe critique of cultural nationalism amounts to is not acceptable. Cultural nationalism for the objective of total decolonisation and for the ultimate goal of progress and development in Africa now or in the future is a desirable enterprise that should be encouraged.

Let us also turn to another cardinal thesis of Appiah, the claim that there is nothing like an African identity independent of the Europeans. Appiah as we earlier mentioned argues that African unity and identity before the European invasion is a myth. This position is one that we find to be historically speaking false. It is true that there are diverse cultures in pre-Colonial Africa, but that fact is not enough to justify the conclusion that there is no cultural unity and identity. It is a fact that the Akan society that is matrilineal is different from the Yoruba society that is patrilineal, but that

2 For detailed attack of this type of negative nationalism see *The Criticism of Negritude in Adotevi* (1972).

is not to say that the societies do not share some cultural traits like communal brotherhood and ancestral worship which will differentiate them from non-African societies.

The history of Africa has revealed that prior to European incursion, there have been interactions among the people of the continent in form of trade, intermarriage and migration. In all these processes of intermingling, a unified identity has begun to emerge, the European invasion only came as a catalyst to quicken the process. We know from historical and anthropological evidence that there is cultural unity and identity in pre-Colonial Africa. Historians like Cheikh Anta Diop and Anthropologists like Jacques Maquet (1972:16) have argued that there is cultural unity in Africa despite the visible diversities. Maquet (1972) in his seminal book: *Africinity: The Cultural Unity of Black Africa*, reveals how the African environment has produced cultural features which permeate the entire African society; features which are different and unique from those cultural traits of non-Africans. Africinity as he calls those cultural traits are products of adaptation and diffusion which have been acquired after many years of dynamic interaction with the environment. The gist of Maquet's argument is that African people as a result of being inhabitants of the same geographical space must manifest cultural traits given to them by their common environment.

The argument of Appiah that African identity is a product of European gaze needs to be re-examined. Identity by its very essence can best be perceived through comparison. As Maquet argues in his book discussed earlier, the cultural unity of Africa can only be appreciated by the non-Africans and Africans who have travelled out of their society. Only the strangers to a community and members who have seen other societies can clearly perceive the cultural identity of a community. Identity is better seen when a community is considered in relation to another. 'To realise that certain styles of life and work are common in New England or in California', Maquet (1972:4) argues further 'one must leave the United States, and more or less consciously, compare them to the French or the Germans'. It is true that you can intuitively perceive cultural unity within your society, but that intuition can only be confirmed explicitly when you compare your society with the other.

In concluding our critique of Appiah's discourse, let us examine the fundamental thesis of his book. The central theme of Appiah's book as we have earlier mentioned is that the global community has witnessed an intermingling of cultures to the extent that racial or cultural differences cannot be maintained. There is therefore an interdependency of cultures and interrelationship of societies within the global community. Appiah's position is that the global community is an integrated society combining aspects of all cultures to form a universal culture. The development of Africa, he

maintains will come from a recognition of this situation. Our own position is this, granted that the African society has been integrated into the world culture, the question can be asked: Is the situation favourable to Africa's development? What is the position of Africa within this integrated global society?

Appiah's unquestioned acceptance of the global order is nothing but a mere adoption of the position of the catch up theorists. The scholars who belong to this school argue that Africa only need to 'catch up' with the developed nations of the world in order to be fully developed. But the many years of independence of many African countries and the adoption of this strategy of development have revealed that the development of Africa will not come rather easily. Appiah's assumption that Africa will develop after a conscious effort to follow the example of the developed nations is a sign of naivety or mere pretension. The issue of Africa's development is rather more complex than the simplistic approach that Appiah is advocating.

Appiah as a philosopher ought to investigate the nature of the cultural integration of the global community before adopting this simplistic position. As a trained philosopher, he ought to investigate the nature of the power relation within this society. He ought to see whether the interdependency of the world order is symbiotic or not. He ought to see whether all members of the said global order are equal. Whether the members are integrated out of their own will or coopted into the system against the will and interest of some of them. Whose interest is the prevailing global order serving? Is it the interest of all or of the few? These are questions that we expect him to raise.

These questions have been answered by some scholars who present themselves as the antagonists of the modernisation theory; the dependency theory of development. The scholars who defend this theory have argued that the global community is an unjust one. According to them, the world community is organised in a way that the developed nations are reaping the fruit of the situation; while the third world countries are being exploited. The integration of the African nations into the world order according to them is not in their interest. The linking of the African economies with the world economic system, they argue will therefore not promote the development of the continent. The way out according to these scholars is for those nations to delink. Only when this is carried out, they conclude can Africa be on the path of development.

It is true that Appiah himself is aware of the prevailing crisis that Africa is witnessing as a result of her adoption of capitalism. Appiah identifies the state in Africa — a product of Western influence — as one of the crisis-ridden institutions. He in fact acknowledges that the prevailing survival of the state is due to the support given to it by the traditional values. But Appiah fails to question the nature of this borrowed institutions and why they are not working in Africa. It has been argued that the state in

Africa has been modelled not to favour the development of the continent but to serve the interest of the metropolitan powers. The state in Africa as Ntalaja (1987:2) argues 'is not properly structured to undertake development tasks'. Our position is that Appiah fails to give the required attention to the analysis of the adopted foreign ideas and institutions. He does not give serious attention to the suitability or otherwise of those ideas to Africa. One would expect a philosopher like him to dig deeper and make a more rigorous analysis of those concepts instead of scratching the surface as he has done.

The celebration of universalism by Appiah and his denunciation of cultural nationalism is a clear indication that Appiah does not find anything intrinsically wrong with the borrowed ideas and institutions. This fact is also an acceptance of the prevailing socio-economic and political order in Africa despite the overwhelming crisis that the society is experiencing. The discussion of the synthesis of European ideas and African value by him will give the impression that the synthesis is smooth and everything is in order. This is not true, all over Africa today, the tension is visible between traditionalism and modernism. The scholars in Africa, particularly the philosophers should therefore reflect on how to resolve the prevailing tension rather than give expression to the synthesis of cultures as Appiah simply advised. The African scholars should strive to attain for Africa a new social order devoid of the prevailing tension. This position has been advocated by Serequeberham (1991:23) when he says:

The concrete resurrection of Africa, beyond the tutelage of Europe, requires in all spheres of life — a rethinking of the contemporary state of affairs in terms that are conducive and congenial to the emancipation and growth of Africa and its diverse peoples. This then is the task of African philosophy.

The question then is this: Has Appiah satisfied this condition? Has he performed the task of rethinking the prevailing state of affairs in Africa? I will not hesitate to answer these questions in the negative.

Finally, let us end our discussion by asserting that we do not contest the fact that between the past and the future of Africa, a lot of changes have occurred which our scholars must recognise and analyse. But this is not to say that those structural changes that are unfavourable to Africa's progress cannot be reversed. We believe that every African scholar must stand up to the challenge of liberating our productive forces from foreign control. To embark on an opposite path is to partake in an imperialist project. And we consider Appiah's discourse as such.

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